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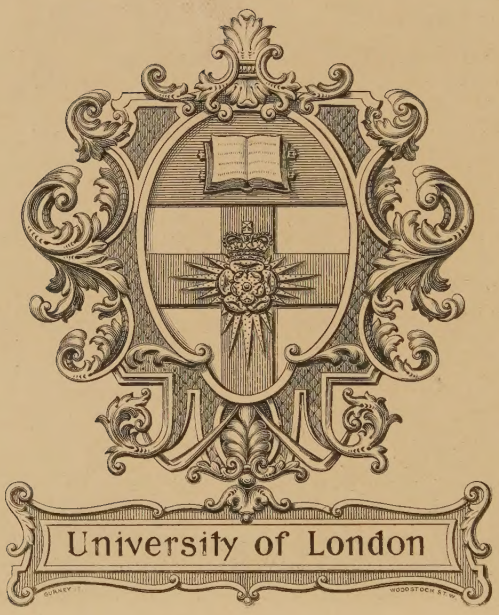

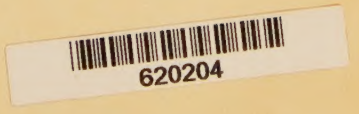
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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

53 & 54 VICTORIÆ, 1890.

VOL. CCCXLI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE ELEVENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1890,

TO

THE FOURTH DAY OF MARCH, 1890.

First Volume of the Session.

THE HANSARD PUBLISHING UNION, LIMITED,

CATHERINE STREET, STRAND, AND GREAT QUEEN STREET, W.C.,

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UNDER CONTRACT WITH H.M. GOVERNMENT.

1890.

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Chronology of Hansard's Debates.

The PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal: Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

The PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

HISTORY.

CONQUEST to 34 GEO. II. 1066 to 1760.

Vol. 1 to 15, 1 WILL. I. to 34 GEO. II. 1066-1760

REIGN OF GEORGE III. 1760 to 1820.

Vol. 15 to 35, 1 GEO. III. to 40 GEO. III. 1760-1800.

(FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

— 35....41 GEO. III... 1801
— 36....42 — .. 1802

(SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

— 36....43 GEO. III .. 1802/3

DEBATES.

First Series.

(SECOND PARLIAMENT—*continued.*)

Vol. 1 to 2 ..44 GEO. III. 1803/4
— 3 „ 5..45 — 1805
— 6 „ 7..46 — 1806

(THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

— 8 to 9..47 — 1806/7

(FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 9 to 11..48 — 1807/8
— 12 „ 14..49 — 1809
— 15 „ 17..50 — 1810
— 18 „ 20..51 — 1810/11
— 21 „ 23..52 — 1812

(FIFTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 24 to 26..53 — 1812/13
— 27 „ 28..54 — 1813/14
— 29 „ 31..55 — 1814/15
— 32 „ 34..56 — 1816
— 35 „ 36..57 — 1817
— 37 „ 38..58 — 1818

(SIXTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 39 to 40..59 — 1819
— 41 — ..60 — 1819/20

Second Series.

REIGN OF GEORGE IV. 1820 to 1830.

(SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3..1 GEO. IV. 1820
— 4 „ 5..2 — 1821
— 6 „ 7..3 — 1822
— 8 „ 9..4 — 1823
— 10 „ 11..5 — 1824
— 12 „ 13..6 — 1825/6
— 14 „ 15..7 — 1826

(EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 16 —.. 7 GEO. IV. 1826
— 17 —.. 8 — 1827
— 18 to 19.. 9 — 1828
— 20 „ 21..10 — 1829
— 22 „ 25..11 — 1830

Third Series.

REIGN OF WILLIAM IV. 1830 to 1837.

(NINTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3..1 WILL. IV 1830/1

(TENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 4 to 8..2 — 1831
— 9 „ 14..3 — 1832

(ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 15 to 20..4 — 1833
— 21 „ 25..5 — 1834

(TWELFTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 26 to 30..6 — 1835
— 31 „ 35..7 — 1836
— 36 „ 38..8 — 1837

REIGN OF VICTORIA, 1837 to

(THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 39 to 44..1 VICTORIA 1838
— 45 „ 50..2 — 1839
— 51 „ 55..3 — 1840
— 56 „ 58..4 — (a) 1841

(FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 59 — .. 4 — (b) 1841
— 60 to 65.. 5 — 1842
— 66 „ 71.. 6 — 1843
— 72 „ 76.. 7 — 1844
— 77 „ 82.. 8 — 1845
— 83 „ 88.. 9 — 1846
— 89 „ 94..10 — (a) 1847

(FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 95 — ..10 — (b) 1847
— 96 to 101..11 — 1848
— 102 „ 107..12 — 1849
— 108 „ 113..13 — 1850
— 114 „ 118..14 — 1851
— 119 „ 122..15 — (a) 1852

(SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 123 — ..15 VICT. (b) 1852
— 124 to 129..16 — 1853
— 130 „ 135..17 — 1854
— 136 „ 139..18 — 1855
— 140 „ 143..19 — 1856
— 144 — ..20 — (a) 1857

(SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT)

— 145 to 147..20 — (b) 1857
— 148 „ 151..21 — 1858
— 152 „ 153..22 — (a) 1859

(EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 154 to 155..22 — (b) 1859
— 156 „ 160..23 — 1860
— 161 „ 164..24 — 1861
— 165 „ 168..25 — 1862
— 169 „ 172..26 — 1863
— 173 „ 176..27 — 1864
— 177 „ 180..28 — 1865

(NINETEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 181 to 184..29 — 1866
— 185 „ 189..30 — 1867
— 190 „ 193..31 — 1867/8

(TWENTIETH PARLIAMENT.)

— 194 to 198..32 — 1868/9
— 199 „ 203..33 — 1870
— 204 „ 208..34 — 1871
— 209 „ 213..35 — 1872
— 214 „ 217..36 — 1873

(TWENTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

— 218 to 221..37 — 1874
— 222 „ 226..38 — 1875
— 227 „ 231..39 — 1876
— 232 „ 236..40 — 1877
— 237 „ 242..41 — 1878
— 243 „ 249..42 — 1878/9
— 250 251..43 — (a) 1880

(TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

— 252 to 256..43 — (b) 1880
— 257 „ 265..44 — 1881
— 266 „ 273..45 — (a) 1882
— 274 „ 275..45 — (b) 1882
— 276 „ 283..46 — 1883
— 284 „ 292..47 — 1884
— 293 „ 301..48 — 1884/5

(TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

— 302 to 307..49 —(a) 1886

(TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

— 308 & 309..49 —(b) 1886
— 310 to 321..50 — 1887
— 322 to 332..51 — 1888
— 333 to 340..52 — 1889

ERRATA.

Feb. 21. Earl of BELMORE, on page 850, line 17, *alter* Landlords' *to* Landowners'; page 854, line 31, *alter* a new court *to* such a fund.

Mar. 4. Mr. H. H. FOWLER, on page 1807, at end of line 11, *insert* not; page 1811, lines 24 to 32, "Let us think," *down to the words* "in years to come," should be marked as a quotation from Mr. Bright.

THE MINISTRY

Of the Most Noble the Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G., At the Opening of the Session on the 11th February, 1890.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	Most Hon. Marquess of Salisbury, K.G.
First Lord of the Treasury	Right Hon. William Henry Smith.
Lord Chancellor of England	Right Hon. Lord Halsbury.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Lord President of the Council	Right Hon. Viscount Cranbrook, G.C.S.I.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Right Hon. George Joachim Goschen.
Lord Privy Seal	Right Hon. Earl Cadogan.
Secretary of State, Home Department	Right Hon. Henry Matthews.
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Right Hon. Lord Knutsford, G.C.M.G.
Secretary of State for War	Right Hon. Edward Stanhope.
Secretary of State for India	Right Hon Viscount Cross, G.C.B.
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Right Hon. Lord George Francis Hamilton.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Right Hon. Duke of Rutland, G.C.B.
President of the Board of Agriculture	Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.
President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. Sir M. E. Hicks Beach, Bart.
President of the Local Government Board	Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Field Marshal Commanding in Chief	H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, K.G.
Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education	Right Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, Bart.
Secretary for Scotland and Vice President of the Scotch Education Department	Right Hon. Marquess of Lothian, K.T.
First Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings	Right Hon. David Robert Plunket.
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Lords of the Admiralty	Vice Admiral Sir R. V. Hamilton, K.C.B., Vice Admiral J. O. Hopkins, Captain F. G. D. Bedford, C.B., Vice Admiral H. Fairfax, C.B. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, Esq.
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Secretary to the Admiralty	Arthur Bower Forwood, Esq.
Secretary to the Board of Trade	Lord Balfour of Burley.
Secretary to the Local Government Board	Walter H. Long, Esq.
Under Secretary, Home Department	Charles Beilby Stuart Wortley, Esq.
Under Secretary, Foreign Department	Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, Bart., G.C.S.I.
Under Secretary for Colonies	Right Hon. Baron Henry de Worms.
Under Secretary for War	Right Hon. Earl Brownlow.
Under Secretary for India	Right Hon. Sir John Eldon Gorst, Q.C.
Paymaster General	Earl of Jersey.
Postmaster General	Right Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes.
Financial Secretary to the War Department	Hon. W. St. John Brodrick.
Judge Advocate General	Right Hon. Sir William Thackeray Marriott, Kt.
Attorney General	Sir Richard Everard Webster, Q.C.
Solicitor General	Sir Edward George Clarke, Q.C.

SCOTLAND.

Lord Advocate	Right Hon. James Patrick Bannerman Robertson
Solicitor General	Moir T. Stormonth Darling, Esq.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Earl of Zetland
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Attorney General	Right Hon. Dodgson Hamilton Madden.
Solicitor General	J. Atkinson, Esq.

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Lord Chamberlain	Right Hon. Earl of Lathom.
Master of the Horse	His Grace the Duke of Portland.
Treasurer of the Household	Right Hon. Earl of Radnor.
Comptroller of the Household	Right Hon. Lord Arthur Hill
Vice Chamberlain of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount Lewisham.
Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms	Right Hon. Earl of Rosslyn.
Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard	Right Hon. Earl of Limerick.
Master of the Buckhounds	Right Hon. Earl of Coventry.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	Colonel Sir G. A. Maude, K.C.B.
Mistress of the Robes	Her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch.

ROLL OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

---

53 VICTORIÆ, 1890.

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

His Royal Highness THE PRINCE OF WALES.

His Royal Highness ALFRED ERNEST ALBERT Duke of EDINBURGH.

His Royal Highness ARTHUR WILLIAM PATRICK ALBERT Duke of CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN.

His Royal Highness LEOPOLD CHARLES EDWARD GEORGE ALBERT Duke of ALBANY.

His Royal Highness GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK CHARLES Duke of CAMBRIDGE.

EDWARD WHITE Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY, *Lord High Chancellor.*

WILLIAM Archbishop of YORK.

GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK, *Lord President of the Council.*

GEORGE HENRY Earl CADOGAN, *Lord Privy Seal.*

HENRY Duke of NORFOLK, *Earl Marshal of England.*

ARCHIBALD HENRY ALGERNON Duke of SOMERSET.

CHARLES HENRY Duke of RICHMOND.
AUGUSTUS CHARLES LENNOX Duke of GRAFTON.
HENRY CHARLES FITZROY Duke of BEAUFORT.
WILLIAM AMELIUS AUBREY DE VERE Duke of SAINT ALBANS.
GEORGE GODOLPHIN Duke of LEEDS.
FRANCIS CHARLES HASTINGS Duke of BEDFORD.
WILLIAM Duke of DEVONSHIRE.
GEORGE CHARLES Duke of MARLBOROUGH.
JOHN JAMES ROBERT Duke of RUTLAND.
WILLIAM ALEXANDER LOUIS STEPHEN Duke of BRANDON. (*Duke of Hamilton.*)
WILLIAM JOHN ARTHUR CHARLES JAMES Duke of PORTLAND.
WILLIAM DROGO Duke of MANCHESTER.
HENRY PELHAM ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS Duke of NEWCASTLE.
ALGERNON GEORGE Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND.
His Royal Highness ERNEST AUGUSTUS WILLIAM ADOLPHUS GEORGE FREDERICK Duke of CUMBERLAND AND TEVIOTDALE.
HENRY Duke of WELLINGTON.
GEORGE GRANVILLE WILLIAM Duke of SUTHERLAND.
HARRY GEORGE Duke of CLEVELAND.
HUGH LUPUS Duke of WESTMINSTER.
ALEXANDER WILLIAM GEORGE Duke of FIFE.
AUGUSTUS JOHN HENRY BEAUMONT Marquess of WINCHESTER.
HENRY CHARLES KEITH Marquess of LANSDOWNE.
JOHN VILLIERS STUART Marquess TOWNSHEND.
ROBERT ARTHUR TALBOT Marquess of SALISBURY.
JOHN ALEXANDER Marquess of BATH.
JAMES Marquess of ABERCORN. (*Duke of Abercorn.*)
HUGH DE GREY Marquess of HERTFORD.
JOHN PATRICK Marquess of BUTE.
WILLIAM ALLEYNE Marquess of EXETER.
WILLIAM Marquess of NORTHAMPTON.
JOHN CHARLES Marquess CAMDEN.
HENRY Marquess of ANGLESEY.
GEORGE HENRY HUGH Marquess of CHOLMONDELEY.
GEORGE WILLIAM THOMAS Marquess of AILESBURY.
FREDERICK WILLIAM JOHN Marquess of BRISTOL.
ARCHIBALD Marquess of AILSA.
GEORGE AUGUSTUS CONSTANTINE Marquess of NORMANBY.
GEORGE FREDERICK SAMUEL Marquess of RIPON.
WILLIAM Marquess of ABERGAVENNY.
GAVIN Marquess of BREADALBANE.
FREDERICK TEMPLE Marquess of DUFFERIN AND AVA.

WILLIAM HENRY Earl of MOUNT EDGCUMBE, *Lord Steward of the Household.*
EDWARD Earl of LATHOM, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*
CHARLES HENRY JOHN Earl of SHREWSBURY.
EDWARD HENRY Earl of DERBY.
WARNER FRANCIS JOHN PLANTAGENET Earl of HUNTINGDON.
GEORGE ROBERT CHARLES Earl of PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY.
EDWARD BALDWIN Earl of DEVON.
HENRY CHARLES Earl of SUFFOLK AND BERKSHIRE.
RUDOLPH WILLIAM BASIL Earl of DENBIGH.
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MONTAGUE Earl of LINDSEY.
HARRY Earl of STAMFORD.
MURRAY EDWARD GORDON Earl of WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM.
EDWYN FRANCIS Earl of CHESTERFIELD.
EDWARD GEORGE HENRY Earl of SANDWICH.
ARTHUR ALGERNON Earl of ESSEX.
GEORGE JAMES Earl of CARLISLE.
WILLIAM HENRY WALTER Earl of DONCASTER. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
ANTHONY Earl of SHAFTESBURY.
———— Earl of BERKELEY.
MONTAGU ARTHUR Earl of ABINGDON.
ALDRED FREDERICK GEORGE BERESFORD Earl of SCARBROUGH.
GEORGE THOMAS Earl of ALBEMARLE.
GEORGE WILLIAM Earl of COVENTRY.
VICTOR ALBERT GEORGE Earl of JERSEY.
WILLIAM HENRY Earl POULETT.
JOHN FRANCIS ERSKINE Earl of MAR. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

SHOLTO GEORGE WATSON Earl of MORTON. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

CLAUDE Earl of STRATHMORE AND KING HORN. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

GEORGE Earl of HADDINGTON. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

FREDERICK HENRY Earl of LAUDERDALE (*Elected for Scotland.*)

JOHN TROTTER Earl of LINDSAY. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

DAVID STANLEY WILLIAM Earl of AIRLIE (*Elected for Scotland.*)

GEORGE JOHN Earl of NORTHESK. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

DOUGLAS MACKINNON BAILLIE HAMILTON Earl of DUNDONALD. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

SEWALLIS EDWARD Earl FERRERS.

WILLIAM WALTER Earl of DARTMOUTH.

CHARLES Earl of TANKERVILLE.

CHARLES WIGHTWICK Earl of AYLESFORD.

FRANCIS THOMAS DE GREY Earl COWPER.

ARTHUR PHILIP Earl STANHOPE.

THOMAS AUGUSTUS WOLSTENHOLME Earl of MACCLESFIELD.

DOUGLAS BERESFORD MALISE RONALD Earl GRAHAM. (*Duke of Montrose.*)

WILLIAM FREDERICK Earl WALDEGRAVE.

BERTRAM Earl of ASHBURNHAM.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS Earl of HARRINGTON.

ISAAC NEWTON Earl of PORTSMOUTH.

GEORGE GUY Earl BROOKE and Earl of WARWICK.

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WILLIAM Earl of RADNOR.

JOHN POYNTZ Earl SPENCER.

ALLEN ALEXANDER Earl BATHURST.

ARTHUR WILLS JOHN WELLINGTON BLUNDELL TRUMBULL Earl of HILLSBOROUGH. (*Marquess of Downshire.*)

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WILLIAM HENRY Earl of MOUNT EDGCUMBE. (*In another Place as Lord Steward of the Household.*)

HUGH Earl FORTESCUE.

HENRY HOWARD MOLYNEUX Earl of CARNARVON.

GEORGE HENRY Earl CADOGAN. (*In another Place as Lord Privy Seal.*)

EDWARD JAMES Earl of MALMESBURY.

JOHN VANSITTART DANVERS Earl of LANESBOROUGH. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

EDWARD NUGENT Earl of MILLTOWN. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HENRY ERNEST NEWCOMEN EARL OF KINGSTON (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HUGH Earl ANNESLEY. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

CECIL RALPH Earl of WICKLOW. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JOHN HENRY REGINALD Earl of CLONMELL. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

SOMERSET RICHARD Earl of BELMORE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES FRANCIS Earl of BANDON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES Earl of CALEDON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

FRANCIS ROBERT Earl of ROSSLYN.

WILLIAM GEORGE ROBERT Earl of CRAVEN.

WILLIAM HILLIER Earl of ONSLOW.

CHARLES Earl of ROMNEY.

WALTER JOHN Earl of CHICHESTER.

SEYMOUR JOHN GREY Earl of WILTON.

EDWARD JAMES Earl of POWIS.

HORATIO Earl NELSON.

LAWRENCE Earl of ROSSE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

SYDNEY WILLIAM HERBERT Earl MANVERS.

HORATIO Earl of ORFORD.

HENRY Earl GREY.

HUGH CECIL Earl of LONSDALE.

DUDLEY FRANCIS STUART Earl of HARROWBY.

HENRY THYNNE Earl of HAREWOOD.

WILLIAM HUGH Earl of MINTO.

ALAN FREDERICK Earl CATHCART.

JAMES WALTER Earl of VERULAM.

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WILLIAM ARCHER Earl AMHERST.

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JOHN GEORGE Earl of DURHAM.

GRANVILLE GEORGE Earl GRANVILLE.

HENRY Earl of EFFINGHAM.

HENRY JOHN Earl of DUCIE.

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EDWARD MONTAGU STUART GRANVILLE Earl of WHARNCLIFFE.

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———Earl CAIRNS.

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EDWARD Earl of LATHOM. (*In another Place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*)

GEORGE WATSON Earl SONDES.

ROUNDELL Earl of SELBORNE.

WALTER STAFFORD Earl of IDDESLEIGH.

CORNWALLIS Earl DE MONTALT.

WILLIAM HENRY FORESTER Earl of LONDESBOROUGH.

ROBERT Viscount HEREFORD.

JAMES DAVID Viscount STRATHALLAN. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

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EVELYN EDWARD THOMAS Viscount FALMOUTH.

GEORGE MASTER Viscount TORRINGTON.

GERALD Viscount LEINSTER. (*Duke of Leinster.*)

FRANCIS WHELER Viscount HOOD.

MERVYN EDWARD Viscount POWERSCOURT. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HENRY WILLIAM CROSBIE Viscount BANGOR. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

CORNWALLIS Viscount HAWARDEN. (*Elected for Ireland.*) (*In another Place as Earl de Montalt.*)

CARNEGIE PARKER Viscount ST. VINCENT.

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GEORGE STEPHENS Viscount GOUGH.

CHARLES LINDLEY Viscount HALIFAX.

ALEXANDER NELSON Viscount BRIDPORT.

WILLIAM HENRY BERKELEY Viscount PORTMAN

GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK. (*In another Place as Lord President of the Council.*)

ROBERT Viscount SHERBROOKE.

HENRY BOUVERIE WILLIAM Viscount HAMPDEN.

GARNET JOSEPH Viscount WOLSELEY.

WILLIAM JOHN Viscount OXENBRIDGE.

RICHARD ASSHETON Viscount CROSS.

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———Bishop of DURHAM.

EDWARD HAROLD Bishop of WINCHESTER

JOHN THOMAS Bishop of NORWICH.

JAMES COLQUHOUN Bishop of BANGOR.

HENRY Bishop of WORCESTER.

CHARLES JOHN Bishop of GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

THOMAS LEGH Bishop of ST. ALBANS.

JAMES Bishop of HEREFORD.

WILLIAM CONNOR Bishop of PETERBOROUGH.

HARVEY Bishop of CARLISLE.

ARTHUR CHARLES Bishop of BATH AND WELLS.

RICHARD Bishop of CHICHESTER.

WILLIAM BASIL Bishop of ST. DAVID'S.

ANTHONY WILSON Bishop of ROCHESTER.

WILLIAM DALRYMPLE Bishop of LICHFIELD.

JOHN CHARLES Bishop of LIVERPOOL.

ERNEST ROLAND Bishop of NEWCASTLE.

RICHARD Bishop of LLANDAFF.

GEORGE HOWARD Bishop of TRURO.

WILLIAM Bishop of OXFORD.

GEORGE Bishop of SOUTHWELL.

WILLIAM BOYD Bishop of RIPON.

EDWARD Bishop of LINCOLN.

HENRY THURSTAN LORD KNUTSFORD. (*One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.*)

DUDLEY CHARLES Lord DE ROS.

ALFRED JOSEPH Lord MOWBRAY.

GEORGE MANNERS Lord HASTINGS.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL Lord DE CLIFFORD.

GILBERT HENRY Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY

THOMAS CROSBY WILLIAM Lord DACRE.

CHARLES HENRY ROLLE Lord CLINTON.

ROBERT NATHANIEL CECIL GEORGE Lord ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH.

RAWDON GEORGE GREY Lord GREY DE RUTHYN.

CHARLES EDWARD HASTINGS Lord BOTREAUX. (*Earl of Loudoun.*)

FRANCIS ROBERT Lord CAMOYS.

HENRY Lord BEAUMONT.

HENRY Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

HUBERT GEORGE CHARLES Lord VAUX OF HARROWDEN.

RALPH GORDON Lord WENTWORTH.

ALFRED THOMAS TOWNSHEND Lord BRAYE.

ROBERT GEORGE Lord WINDSOR.

WILLIAM HENRY JOHN Lord NORTH.

BEAUCHAMP MOWBRAY Lord ST. JOHN OF BLETSO.

FREDERICK GEORGE Lord HOWARD DE WALDEN.

WILLIAM JOSEPH Lord PETRE.

JOHN FIENNES Lord SAYE AND SELE.

JOHN FRANCIS Lord ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR.

JOHN STUART Lord CLIFTON. (*Earl of Darnley.*)

JOHN BAPTIST JOSEPH Lord DORMER.

HENRY GEORGE Lord TEYNHAM.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK FITZ-HERBERT Lord STAFFORD.

GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM Lord BYRON.

LEWIS HENRY HUGH Lord CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH.

WILLIAM COUTTS Lord ASHFORD.

HORACE COURTENAY GAMMELL Lord FORBES. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

ALEXANDER WILLIAM FREDERICK Lord SALTOUN. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Lord SINCLAIR. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

CHARLES Lord BLANTYRE. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

ALEXANDER HUGH Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEY. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

WALTER HUGH Lord POLWARTH. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

RICHARD EDMUND SAINT LAWRENCE Lord BOYLE. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)

GEORGE Lord HAY. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)

DIGBY WENTWORTH BAYARD Lord MIDDLETON.

FREDERICK GEORGE BRABAZON Lord PONSONBY. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)

ALFRED NATHANIEL HOLDEN Lord SCARSDALE.

GEORGE FLORANCE Lord BOSTON.

CHARLES GEORGE Lord LOVELL AND HOLLAND. (*Earl of Egmont.*)

George William Henry Lord Vernon.
Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord Digby.
George Douglas Lord Sundridge. (*Duke of Argyll.*)
Martin Bladen Lord Hawke.
Henry Thomas Lord Foley.
Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor.
Thomas Lord Walsingham.
William Lord Bagot.
Charles Henry Lord Southampton.
John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley.
George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney.
Henry George Lord Lovaine.
Philip Reginald Lord Somers.
Richard Henry Lord Berwick.
Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne.
John Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone. (*Marquess of Waterford.*)
Richard Henry Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon.*)
Charles Lord Suffield.
Dudley Wilmot Lord Dorchester.
Lloyd Lord Kenyon.
Charles Cornwallis Lord Braybrooke.
George Augustus Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall.*)
Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage.*)
Thomas John Lord Thurlow.
William George Lord Auckland.
Charles George Lord Lyttelton.
Henry George Lord Mendip. (*Viscount Clifden.*)
George Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray.*)
Alan Plantagenet Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway.*)
James George Henry Lord Saltersford. (*Earl of Courtown.*)
William Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton.*)
Frederick Henry William Lord Calthorpe.
Peter Robert Lord Gwydir.
Charles Robert Lord Carrington.
William Henry Lord Bolton.
Thomas Lyttleton Lord Lilford.
Thomas Lord Ribblesdale.
Edward Donough Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Robert Lord Clonbrock. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Hercules Edward Lord Langford. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Eyre Challoner Henry Lord Clarina. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Henry Francis Seymour Lord Moore. (*Marquess of Drogheda.*)
John Henry Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely.*)
William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort.*)
George Ralph Lord Abercromby.
Charles Edmund Lord Ellenborough.
Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys.
Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield.*)
William Macnaghten Lord Erskine.
George John Lord Monteagle. (*Marquess of Sligo.*)
Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard.*)
Hungerford Lord Crewe.
——— Lord Gardner.
John Thomas Lord Manners.
John Adrian Louis Lord Hopetoun. (*Earl of Hopetoun.*)
Richard Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly.*)
George Frederick Lord Ross. (*Earl of Glasgow.*)
Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen.*)
William Hale John Charles Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick.*)
Victor Albert Francis Charles Lord Churchill.
George Robert Canning Lord Harris.
Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester.
Schomberg Henry Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian.*)
Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham.*)

James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde.*)

Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss.*)

John Strange Lord Clanbrassill. (*Earl of Roden.*)

Thomas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford.*)

Clotworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel. (*Viscount Massereene.*)

Hugh Lord Delamere.

Orlando Watkin Weld Lord Forester.

John William Lord Rayleigh.

Edric Frederic Lord Gifford.

Hubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde.*)

James Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.*)

Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. (*Earl of Ranfurly.*)

John Byrne Leicester Lord De Tabley.

Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden.

William Conyngham Lord Plunket.

William Henry Ashe Lord Heytesbury.

Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery.*)

Richard James Lord Clanwilliam. (*Earl of Clanwilliam.*)

William Draper Mortimer Lord Wynford.

William Henry Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll.*)

Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall.*)

William Philip Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton.*)

Robert Bermingham Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim.*)

Thomas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort.*)

Reginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath.*)

Charles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore.*)

Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore.

Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn.

Henry Spencer Lord Templemore.

Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry.

John St. Vincent Lord De Saumarez.

Thomas Lord Denman.

William Frederick Lord Abinger.

Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley.

Francis Danzil Edward Lord Ashburton.

Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton.

Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford.*)

William Frederick Lord Stratheden.

Geoffrey Dominick Augustus Frederick Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Simon Joseph Lord Lovat.

William Bateman Lord Bateman.

James Molyneux Lord Charlemont. (*Earl of Charlemont.*)

Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore.*)

George Ponsonby Lord Lismore. (*Viscount Lismore.*)

Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore.

Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew.

Charles Frederick Ashley Cooper Lord De Mauley.

Arthur Lord Wrottesley.

Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley.

Frederick Henry Paul Lord Methuen.

Henry Edward John Lord Stanley of Alderley.

William Henry Lord Leigh.

Beilby Lord Wenlock.

William Lord Lurgan.

Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon.

John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton.

John Manley Arbuthnot Lord Keane.

John Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair.*)

Hussey Crespigny Lord Vivian.

Henry William Lord Congleton.

Denis St. George Lord Dunsandle and Clanconal. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.*)

Charles Robert Claude Lord Truro.

Arthur Lord De Freyne.

Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards.

George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan.

Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare.*)

Henry Lord Belper.

Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide.

Robert Lord Ebury.

Charles Compton William Lord Chesham.

Frederic Augustus Lord Chelmsford.

John Lord Churston.

Henry Lord Leconfield.

Wilbraham Lord Egerton.

Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar.

FitzPatrick Henry Lord Lyveden.

Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux.

Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird.

Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury.

Francis William Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge.

Luke Lord Annaly.

Robert Offley Ashburton Lord Houghton.

William Lord Romilly.

James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney.*)

Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)

Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck.*)

John Major Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker.*)

Hedworth Hylton Lord Hylton.

George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn.

Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne.*)

John Henry Lord Kesteven.

Arthur Lord Ormathwaite.

Edward Lord O'Neill.

Robert Cornelis Lord Napier.

Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston.*)

Thomas Kane Lord Rathdonnell. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Hamilton Lord Lawrence.

James Plaisted Lord Penzance.

John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo.*)

James Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk.*)

William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel.*)

Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop.

Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown.

John Emerich Edward Lord Acton.

Thomas Charles Lord Robartes.

Frederick Lord Wolverton.

Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville.

Thomas Towneley Lord O'Hagan.

William Lord Sandhurst.

Francis Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier.*)

James Charles Herbert Welbore Ellis Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton.*)

Henry Austin Lord Aberdare.

James Lord Moncreiff.

John Duke Lord Coleridge.

William Lord Emly.

Chichester Samuel Lord Carlingford. (*Lord Clermont.*)

Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe.

Edmund Lord Hammond.

John Slaney Lord Hampton.

John Lord Winmarleigh.

Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. (*Earl of Home.*)

Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsay. (*Earl of Dalhousie.*)

John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne.*)

William Richard Lord Harlech.

Henry Gerard Lord Alington.

John Lord Tollemache.

William Cansfield Lord Gerard.

Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville.

Colin Lord Blackburn.

Charles Bowyer Lord Norton.

Percy Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington.*)

William Lord Watson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

Lawrence Hesketh Lord Haldon.

Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne.

Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun.

Alexander Dundas Ross Lord Lamington.

Charles Frederick Lord Donington.

Arthur Edwin Lord Trevor.

Montagu William Lord Rowton.

Edward Hugessen Lord Brabourne.

Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill.

William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale.*)

William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. (*Earl of Howth.*)
Donald James Lord Reay.
Harcourt Lord Derwent.
Henry James Lord Hothfield.
Dudley Coutts Lord Tweedmouth.
George William Wilshere Lord Bramwell.
Frederick Beauchamp Paget Lord Alcester.
Alfred Lord Tennyson.
James Lord Strathspey. (*Earl of Seafield.*)
John George Lord Monk Bretton.
Walter Charles Lord Northbourne.
Arthur Saunders William Charles Fox Lord Sudley. (*Earl of Arran.*)
John Robert William Lord de Vesci. (*Viscount de Vesci.*)
Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries.
Hardinge Stanley Lord Halsbury. (*In another Place as Lord High Chancellor.*)
Mervyn Edward Lord Powerscourt (*In another Place as Viscount Powerscourt.*)
Anthony Henley Lord Northington (*Lord Henley.*)
Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild.
Edward Charles Lord Revelstoke.
Robert Lord Monkswell.
Arthur Lord Hobhouse.
Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord Lingen.
Edward Lord Ashbourne.
Rowland Lord Saint Oswald.
Robert James Lord Wantage.
William Baliol Lord Esher.
Thomas Lord Deramore.
Henry John Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.
William Buller Fullerton Lord Elphinstone.
Charles John Lord Colville of Culross.
Farrer Lord Herschell.
Charles Henry Lord Hillingdon
Samuel Charles Lord Hindlip.
Edmund Lord Grimthorpe
Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge.
William Lord Kensington.
Michael Arthur Lord Burton.
John Glencairn Carter Lord Hamilton of Dalzell.
Thomas Lord Brassey.
Henry Lord Thring.
Frederick Arthur Lord Stanley of Preston.
Edward Lord Macnaghten. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)
Robert Lord Connemara.
Claude Lord Bowes (*In another place Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn.*)
George Edmund Milnes Monckton Lord Monckton (*Viscount Galway.*)
John Lord Saint Levan.
James Macnaghten Lord Macheramorne.
William George Lord Armstrong.
George Lord Basing.
William Henry Lord De Ramsey.
Henry William Lord Cheylesmore.
Egerton Lord Addington.
Henry Thurston Lord Knutsford. (*In another Place as one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.*)
John Lord Savile.
Michael Lord Morris. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

There is a vacancy in the representation of the Peers for Ireland caused by the death of the Viscount Templetown.

LIST OF THE COMMONS.

THE NAMES OF MEMBERS

RETURNED TO SERVE IN THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, SUMMONED TO MEET AT WESTMINSTER THE FIFTH DAY OF AUGUST, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY SIX, AS BY THE SEVERAL RETURNS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY APPEARS. CORRECTED TO THE MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT ON THE 11TH FEBRUARY, 1890.

BEDFORD.

NORTHERN, or BIGGLESWADE DIVISION,
Viscount Baring.

SOUTHERN, or LUTON DIVISION,
Cyril Flower.

BEDFORD BOROUGH.
Samuel Whitbread.

BERKS.

NORTHERN, or ABINGDON DIVISION,
Philip Wroughton.

SOUTHERN, or NEWBURY DIVISION,
William George Mount.

EASTERN, or WOKINGHAM DIVISION,
Sir George Russell, bt.

READING BOROUGH.
Charles Townshend Murdoch.

WINDSOR (NEW) BOROUGH.
Robert Richardson-Gardner.

BUCKS.

NORTHERN, or BUCKINGHAM DIVISION,
Captain Edmund H. Verney, R.N.

MID, or AYLESBURY DIVISION,
Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild.

SOUTHERN, or WYCOMBE DIVISION,
Viscount Curzon.

CAMBRIDGE.

NORTHERN, or WISBECH DIVISION,
Captain Charles William Selwyn.

WESTERN, or CHESTERTON DIVISION,
Charles Hall.

EASTERN, or NEWMARKET DIVISION,
George Newnes.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY,
Rt. Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, M.A.
Sir George Gabriel Stokes, bt.

CAMBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Robert Uniacke Penrose Fitzgerald.

CHESTER.

WIRRAL DIVISION,
Lieut.-Col. Edward Thomas Davenant Cotton.

EDDISBURY DIVISION,
Henry James Tollemache.

MACCLESFIELD DIVISION,
William Bromley Davenport.

CREWE DIVISION,
Walter Stowe Bright McLaren.

NORTHWICH DIVISION,
John Tomlinson Brunner.

ALTRINCHAM DIVISION,
Sir William Cunliffe Brooks, bt.

CHESTER—*cont.*

HYDE DIVISION,
Joseph Watson Sidebotham.

KNUTSFORD DIVISION,
Hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

BIRKENHEAD BOROUGH.
Lieut.-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.B.

CHESTER BOROUGH.
Robert Armstrong Yerburgh.

STOCKPORT BOROUGH.
Louis John Jennings,
Sydney Gedge.

CORNWALL.

WESTERN, or ST. IVES DIVISION,
Thomas Bedford Bolitho.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CAMBORNE DIVISION,
Charles Augustus Vansittart Conybeare.

TRURO DIVISION,
William Bickford Smith.

MID, or ST. AUSTELL DIVISION,
William Alexander M'Arthur.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or BODMIN DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Leonard Henry Courtney.

NORTH-EASTERN, or LAUNCESTON DIVISION,
Charles Thomas Dyke Acland.

PENRYN AND FALMOUTH BOROUGH.
William George Cavendish Bentinck.

CUMBERLAND

NORTHERN, or ESKDALE DIVISION,
Robert Andrew Allison.

MID, or PENRITH DIVISION,
James William Lowther.

COCKERMOUTH DIVISION,
Sir Wilfrid Lawson, bt.

WESTERN, or EGREMONT DIVISION,
Lord Muncaster.

CARLISLE BOROUGH.
William Court Gully.

WHITEHAVEN BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. George Augustus Cavendish Bentinck.

DERBY.

HIGH PEAK DIVISION,
William Sidebottom.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Thomas Dolling Bolton.

CHESTERFIELD DIVISION,
Alfred Barnes.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Lord Edward Cavendish.

MID DIVISION,
James Alfred Jacoby.

ILKESTON DIVISION,
Sir Balthazar Walter Foster.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Henry Wardle.

DERBY BOROUGH.
Thomas Roe,
Rt. Hon. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, kt.

DEVON.

EASTERN, or HONITON DIVISION,
Sir John Henry Kennaway, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or TIVERTON DIVISION,
Col. Sir William Hood Walrond, bt.

NORTHERN, or SOUTH MOLTON DIVISION,
Viscount Lymington.

NORTH-WESTERN, or BARNSTAPLE DIVISION,
George Pitt Lewis.

WESTERN, or TAVISTOCK DIVISION,
Viscount Ebrington.

SOUTHERN, or TOTNES DIVISION,
Francis Bingham Mildmay.

TORQUAY DIVISION,
Richard Mallock.

MID, or ASHBURTON DIVISION,
Charles Seale-Hayne.

DEVONPORT BOROUGH.
Sir John Henry Puleston, kt.
Captain George Edward Price.

EXETER BOROUGH.
Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote, bt., C.B.

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Edward Bates, bt.
Sir Edward George Clarke, kt.

DORSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman.

EASTERN DIVISION,
George Hawkesworth Bond.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Lieut.-Col. Charles Joseph Theophilus Hambro.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Henry Richard Farquharson.

DURHAM.

JARROW DIVISION,
Sir Charles Mark Palmer, bt.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING DIVISION,
Nicholas Wood.

CHESTER-LE-STREET DIVISION,
James Joicey.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Llewellyn Archer Atherley-Jones.

MID DIVISION,
William Crawford.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Lieut.-General Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, bt., V.C., K.C.B.

BISHOP AUCKLAND DIVISION,
James Mellor Paulton.

BARNARD CASTLE DIVISION,
Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, bt.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH.
Theodore Fry.

DURHAM BOROUGH.
Thomas Milvain.

GATESHEAD BOROUGH.
Hon. Walter Henry James.

HARTLEPOOLS (THE) BOROUGH.
Thomas Richardson.

SOUTH SHIELDS BOROUGH.
James Cochran Stevenson.

STOCKTON BOROUGH.
Sir Horace Davey, kt.

SUNDERLAND BOROUGH.
Samuel Storey,
Edward Temperley Gourley.

ESSEX.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or WALTHAMSTOW DIVISION,
Colonel William Thomas Makins.

ESSEX—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, or ROMFORD DIVISION,
James Theobald.

WESTERN, or EPPING DIVISION,
Right Hon. Sir Henry John Selwin-Ibbetson, bt.

NORTHERN, or SAFFRON WALDEN DIVISION,
Herbert Colstoun Gardner.

NORTH-EASTERN, or HARWICH DIVISION,
James Round.

EASTERN, or MALDON DIVISION,
Charles Wing Gray.

MID, or CHELMSFORD DIVISION,
William James Beadel.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Major Frederick Carne Rasch.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH.
Lord Brooke

WEST HAM BOROUGH.
North Division,
James Forrest Fulton.
South Division,
Major George Edward Banes.

GLOUCESTER.

MID, or STROUD DIVISION,
George Holloway.

NORTHERN, or TEWKESBURY DIVISION,
Sir John Edward Dorington, bt.

EASTERN, or CIRENCESTER DIVISION,
Arthur Brend Winterbotham.

FOREST OF DEAN DIVISION,
Godfrey Blundell Samuelson.

SOUTHERN, or THORNBURY DIVISION,
Lord DUNSANY.

BRISTOL BOROUGH.
West Division,
Rt. hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks Beach, bt.
North Division,
Lewis Fry.
East Division,
Handel Cossham.
South Division,
Lt.-Col. Edward Stock Hill, C.B.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH.
James Tynte Agg-Gardner.

GLOUCESTER BOROUGH.
Thomas Robinson.

HANTS.

NORTHERN, or BASINGSTOKE DIVISION,
Arthur Frederick Jeffreys.

WESTERN, or ANDOVER DIVISION,
William Wither Bramston Beach.

EASTERN, or PETERSFIELD DIVISION,
Viscount Wolmer.

SOUTHERN, or FAREHAM DIVISION,
General Sir Frederick Wellington John FitzWygram, bt.

NEW FOREST DIVISION,
Francis Compton.

CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH.
Charles Edward Baring Young.

PORTSMOUTH BOROUGH.
Major.-Gen. Sir William Crossman, K.C.M.G.
Sir Samuel Wilson.

SOUTHAMPTON BOROUGH.
Alfred Giles.
Francis H. Evans.

WINCHESTER BOROUGH.
Richard Moss.

HEREFORD.

NORTHERN, or LEOMINSTER DIVISION,
James Rankin.

SOUTHERN, or ROSS DIVISION,
Michael Biddulph.

HEREFORD BOROUGH.
Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, bt.

HERTFORD.

NORTHERN, or HITCHIN DIVISION,
Robert Dimsdale (Baron of the Russian Empire).

EASTERN, or HERTFORD DIVISION,
Abel Smith.

MID, or ST. ALBAN'S DIVISION,
Viscount Grimston.

WESTERN, or WATFORD DIVISION,
Thomas Frederick Halsey.

HUNTINGDON.

SOUTHERN, or HUNTINGDON DIVISION,
Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry.

NORTHERN, or RAMSAY DIVISION,
Hon. Ailwyn Edward Fellowes.

ISLE OF WIGHT.

Sir Richard Everard Webster, kt.

KENT.

WESTERN, or SEVENOAKS DIVISION,
Hon. Charles William Mills.

NORTH-WESTERN, or DARTFORD DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, bt.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or TUNBRIDGE DIVISION,
Robert Norton.

MID, or MEDWAY DIVISION,
Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy.

NORTH-EASTERN, or FAVERSHAM DIVISION,
Hon. Herbert Thomas Knatchbull-Hugessen.

SOUTHERN, or ASHFORD DIVISION,
William Pomfret Pomfret.

EASTERN, or ST. AUGUSTINE'S DIVISION,
Aretas Akers-Douglas.

ISLE OF THANET DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. James Lowther

CANTERBURY BOROUGH.
John Henniker Heaton.

CHATHAM BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon Gorst, kt.

DEPTFORD BOROUGH.
Charles John Darling.

DOVER BOROUGH.
George Wyndham.

GRAVESEND BOROUGH.
John Bazley White.

GREENWICH BOROUGH.
Thomas William Boord.

HYTHE BOROUGH.
Sir Edward William Watkin, bt.

LEWISHAM BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Viscount Lewisham.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH.
F. S. Wykeham Cornwallis.

ROCHESTER BOROUGH.
Hon. Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH.
Col. Edwin Hughes.

LANCASTER.

North Lancashire,

NORTH LONSDALE DIVISION,
William George Ainslie.

LANCASTER DIVISION,
James Williamson.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BLACKPOOL DIVISION,
Sir Matthew White Ridley, bt.

CHORLEY DIVISION,
Lieut.-Gen. Randle Joseph Feilden, C.M.G.

North-East Lancashire.

DARWEN DIVISION,
Viscount Cranborne.

CLITHEROE DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Sir Ughtred James Kay-Shuttleworth, bt.

ACCRINGTON DIVISION,
Robert Trotter Hermon-Hodge.

ROSSENDALE DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Marquess of Hartington.

South-East Lancashire,

WESTHOUGHTON DIVISION,
Frank Hardcastle.

HEYWOOD DIVISION,
Isaac Hoyle.

MIDDLETON DIVISION,
Thomas Fielden.

RADCLIFFE-CUM-FARNWORTH DIVISION,
Robert Leake.

ECCLES DIVISION,
Hon. Alfred John Francis Egerton.

STRETFORD DIVISION,
John William Maclure.

GORTON DIVISION,
William Mather.

PRESTWICH DIVISION,
Robert Gray Cornish Mowbray.

South-West Lancashire,

SOUTHPORT DIVISION,
Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon.

ORMSKIRK DIVISION,
Arthur Bower Forwood.

BOOTLE DIVISION,
Colonel Thomas Myles Sandys.

WIDNES DIVISION,
Tom Cottingham Edwards-Moss.

NEWTON DIVISION,
Thomas Wodehouse Legh.

INCE DIVISION,
Colonel Henry Blundell Hollinshead Blundell, C.B.

LEIGH DIVISION,
Caleb Wright.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BOROUGH.
John Edmund Wentworth Addison.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BARROW-IN-FURNESS BOROUGH.
William Sproston Caine.

BLACKBURN BOROUGH.
William Coddington.
William Henry Hornby.

BOLTON BOROUGH.
Herbert Shepherd Cross.
Colonel Hon. Francis Charles Bridgeman.

BURNLEY BOROUGH.
J. Spencer Balfour.

BURY BOROUGH.
Right Hon. Sir Henry James, kt.

LIVERPOOL BOROUGH.

Kirkdale Division,
Sir George Smyth Baden-Powell, K.C.M.G.

Walton Division,
Miles Walker Mattinson.

Everton Division,
Edward Whitley.

West Derby Division,
Hon. William Henry Cross.

Scotland Division,
Thomas Power O'Connor.

Exchange Division,
Ralph Neville.

Abercromby Division,
William Frederick Lawrence.

East Toxteth Division,
Rt. Hon. Baron Henry de Worms.

West Toxteth Division,
Thomas Bland Royden.

MANCHESTER BOROUGH.

North-West Division,
Sir William Henry Houldsworth, bt.

North Division,
Charles Ernest Schwann.

North-East Division,
Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, bt., G.C.S.I.

East Division,
Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

South Division,
Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe, kt.

South-West Division,
Jacob Bright.

OLDHAM BOROUGH.
James Mackenzie Maclean.
Elliott Lees.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

PRESTON BOROUGH.
William Edward Murray Tomlinson.
Robert William Hanbury.

ROCHDALE BOROUGH.
Thomas Bayley Potter.

SALFORD BOROUGH.
North Division,
Edward Hardcastle.
West Division,
Lees Knowles.
South Division,
Henry Hoyle Howorth.

ST. HELENS BOROUGH.
Henry Seton-Karr.

STALYBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Tom Harrop Sidebottom.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH.
Sir Gilbert Greenall, bt.

WIGAN BOROUGH.
Francis Sharp Powell.

LEICESTER.

EASTERN, or MELTON DIVISION,
Marquess of Granby.

MID, or LOUGHBOROUGH DIVISION,
Edwin Joseph Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle.

WESTERN, or BOSWORTH DIVISION,
James Ellis.

SOUTHERN, or HARBOROUGH DIVISION,
Thomas Keay Tapling.

LEICESTER BOROUGH.
James Allanson Picton.
Alexander M'Arthur.

LINCOLN.

WEST LINDSEY, or GAINSBORO' DIVISION,
Col. Henry Eyre.

NORTH LINDSEY, or BRIGG DIVISION,
Samuel Danks Waddy.

EAST LINDSEY, or LOUTH DIVISION,
Arthur Raymond Heath.

SOUTH LINDSEY, or HORNCASTLE DIVISION,
Right Hon. Edward Stanhope.

NORTH KESTEVEN, or SLEAFORD DIVISION,
Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.

LINCOLN—*cont.*

SOUTH KESTEVEN, or STAMFORD DIVISION.
John Compton Lawrance.

HOLLAND, or SPALDING DIVISION,
Halley Stewart.

BOSTON BOROUGH.
Henry John Atkinson.

GRANTHAM BOROUGH.
Malcolm Low.

GREAT GRIMSBY BOROUGH.
Right Hon. Edward Heneage.

LINCOLN BOROUGH.
Frederick Harold Kerans.

MIDDLESEX.

ENFIELD DIVISION,
Captain Henry Ferryman Bowles.

TOTTENHAM DIVISION,
Joseph Howard.

HORNSEY DIVISION,
Henry Charles Stephens.

HARROW DIVISION,
William Ambrose.

EALING DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Lord George Hamilton.

BRENTFORD DIVISION,
James Bigwood.

UXBRIDGE DIVISION,
Frederick Dixon Dixon-Hartland.

BETHNAL GREEN BOROUGH.
North-East Division,
George Howell.
South-West Division,
Edward Hare Pickersgill.

CHELSEA BOROUGH.
Charles Algernon Whitmore.

FINSBURY BOROUGH.
Holborn Division,
Gainsford Bruce.
Central Division,
Captain Frederick Thomas Penton
East Division,
James Rowlands.

FULHAM BOROUGH
William Hayes Fisher.

MIDDLESEX—*cont.*

HACKNEY BOROUGH.

North Division,

Major-Gen. Sir Lewis Pelly, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

Central Division,

Surgeon-General Sir William Guyer Hunter, K.C.M.G.

South Division,

Sir Charles Russell, kt.

HAMMERSMITH BOROUGH.

Major-Gen. Walter Tuckfield Goldsworthy.

HAMPSTEAD BOROUGH.

Edward Brodie Hoare.

ISLINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

George Christopher Trout Bartley.

West Division,

Richard Chamberlain.

East Division,

Cowley Lambert.

South Division,

Sir Albert Kaye Rollit, kt.

KENSINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

Sir Roper Lethbridge, kt., K.C.I.E

South Division,

Sir Algernon Borthwick, bt.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.

Rt. Hon. Sir John Lubbock, bt.

MARYLEBONE BOROUGH.

East Division,

Edmund Boulnois.

West Division,

Frederick Seager Hunt.

PADDINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

John Aird.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Lord Randolph Henry Spencer Churchill.

ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE.

Rt. Hon. George Joachim Goschen.

ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH.

North Division,

Hon. Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Cochrane-Baillie.

East Division,

Robert Grant Webster.

MIDDLESEX—St. Pancras Boro'—*cont.*

West Division,

Harry Lawson Webster Lawson.

South Division,

Sir Julian Goldsmid, bt.

SHOREDITCH BOROUGH.

Hoxton Division,

James Stuart.

Haggerston Division,

William Randal Cremer.

STRAND BOROUGH.

Right Hon. William Henry Smith.

TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH.

Whitechapel Division,

Samuel Montagu.

St. George's Division,

Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

Limehouse Division,

Edward Samuel Norris.

Mile End Division,

Spencer Charrington.

Stepney Division,

Frederick Wootton Isaacson.

Bow and Bromley Division,

Sir John Charles R. Colomb, K.C.M.G.

Poplar Division,

Sydney Charles Buxton.

WESTMINSTER BOROUGH.

William Lehmann Ashmead-Bartlett Burdett-Coutts.

LONDON CITY.

Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, bt.
Thomas Charles Baring.

MONMOUTH.

NORTHERN DIVISION,

Thomas Phillips Price.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Cornelius Marshall Warmington.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,

Col. Hon. Frederick Courtenay Morgan.

MONMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir George Elliot, bt.

NORFOLK.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,

Lord Henry Bentinck.

NORFOLK—*cont.*

SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
William Amhurst Tyssen Amherst.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Herbert Hardy Cozens-Hardy.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Sir Edward Birkbeck, bt.

MID DIVISION,
Robert Thornhagh Gurdon.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Francis Taylor.

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Henry Whatley Tyler, kt.

KING'S LYNN BOROUGH.
Alexander Weston Jarvis.

NORWICH BOROUGH.
Jeremiah James Colman.
Samuel Hoare.

NORTHAMPTON.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Lord Burghley.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Francis Allston Channing.

MID DIVISION,
Hon. Charles Robert Spencer.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Sir Rainald Knightley, bt.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH.
Henry Labouchere,
Charles Bradlaugh.

PETERBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Alpheus Cleophas Morton.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

WANSBECK DIVISION,
Charles Fenwick.

TYNESIDE DIVISION,
Wentworth Blackett Beaumont.

HEXHAM DIVISION,
Miles MacInnes.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED DIVISION,
Sir Edward Grey, bt.

MORPETH BOROUGH.
Thomas Burt.

NORTHUMBERLAND—*cont.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE BOROUGH.
Right Hon. John Morley.
James Craig.

TYNEMOUTH BOROUGH.
Richard Sims Donkin.

NOTTINGHAM.

BASSETLAW DIVISION,
William Beckett.

NEWARK DIVISION,
Viscount Newark.

RUSHCLIFFE DIVISION,
John Edward Ellis.

MANSFIELD DIVISION,
Cecil George Savile Foljambe.

NOTTINGHAM BOROUGH.

West Division,
Henry Broadhurst.

East Division,
Arnold Morley.

South Division,
Henry Smith Wright.

OXFORD.

NORTHERN, or BANBURY DIVISION,
Sir Bernhard Samuelson, bt.

MID, or WOODSTOCK DIVISION,
Francis William Maclean.

SOUTHERN, or HENLEY DIVISION
Hon. Francis Parker.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. Sir John Robert Mowbray, bt., D.C.L.
John Gilbert Talbot, D.C.L.

OXFORD BOROUGH.
Alexander William Hall.

RUTLAND.

George Henry Finch.

SALOP.

WESTERN, or OSWESTRY DIVISION,
Stanley Leighton.

NORTHERN, or NEWPORT DIVISION,
Col. William Slaney Kenyon-Slaney.

MID, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Alexander Hargreaves Brown.

SALOP—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, or LUDLOW DIVISION,
Robert Jasper More.

SHREWSBURY BOROUGH.
James Watson.

SOMERSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Evan Henry Llewellyn.

WELLS DIVISION,
Colonel Sir Richard Horner Paget, bt.

FROME DIVISION,
Viscount Weymouth

EASTERN DIVISION,
Henry Hobhouse.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Right Hon. Earl of Cavan.

BRIDGWATER DIVISION,
Edward James Stanley.

WESTERN, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Charles Isaac Elton.

BATH BOROUGH.
Edmond Robert Wodehouse,
Col. Robert Peter Laurie, C.B.

TAUNTON BOROUGH.
Hon. Alfred Percy Allsopp.

STAFFORD.

LEEK DIVISION,
Harry Tichborne Davenport.

BURTON DIVISION,
Sydney Evershed.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hamar Alfred Bass.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Justinian Heathcote Edwards-Heathcote.

LICHFIELD DIVISION,
Sir John Swinburne, bt.

KINGSWINFORD DIVISION,
Alexander Staveley Hill.

HANDSWORTH DIVISION,
Henry Wiggin.

HANLEY BOROUGH.
William Woodall.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH.
Douglas Harry Coghill.

STAFFORD—*cont.*

STAFFORD BOROUGH.
Thomas Salt.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT BOROUGH.
William Leatham Bright.

WALSALL BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Forster, bt.

WEDNESBURY BOROUGH.
Hon. Philip James Stanhope.

WEST BROMWICH BOROUGH.
James Ernest Spencer.

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH.
West Division,
Sir William Chichele Plowden, K.C.S.I.
East Division,
Rt. Hon. Henry Hartley Fowler.
South Division,
Rt. Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

SUFFOLK.

NORTHERN, or LOWESTOFT DIVISION,
Sir Savile Brinton Crossley, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or EYE DIVISION,
Francis Seymour Stevenson.

NORTH-WESTERN, or STOWMARKET DIVISION,
Edward Greene.

SOUTH, or SUDBURY DIVISION,
William Cuthbert Quilter.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or WOODBRIDGE DIVISION,
Col. Robert Hamilton Lloyd Anstruther.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS BOROUGH.
Lord Francis Hervey.

IPSWICH BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Dalrymple, bt.
Lord Elcho.

SURREY.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHERTSEY DIVISION,
Frederick Alers Hankey.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or GUILFORD DIVISION,
Hon. William St. John Fremantle Brodrick.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or REIGATE DIVISION,
Sir James John Trevor Lawrence, bt.

SURREY—*cont.*

MID, or EPSOM DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. George Cubitt.

KINGSTON DIVISION,
Sir John Whittaker Ellis, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or WIMBLEDON DIVISION,
Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor.

BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM BOROUGH.
Battersea Division.
Octavius Vaughan Morgan.

Clapham Division.
John Saunders Gilliat.

CAMBERWELL BOROUGH.
North Division,
John Richards Kelly.

Peckham Division,
Arthur Anthony Baumann.

Dulwich Division.
John Blundell Maple.

CROYDON BOROUGH.
Hon. Sidney Herbert.

LAMBETH BOROUGH.
North Division,
Lieut.-Gen. Charles Crawfurd Fraser, V.C., C.B.

Kennington Division,
Mark Hanbury Beaufoy.

Brixton Division.
Marquess of Carmarthen

Norwood Division,
Thomas Lynn Bristowe.

NEWINGTON BOROUGH.
West Division,
Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe Cooke.

Walworth Division,
Lewis Henry Isaacs.

SOUTHWARK BOROUGH.
West Division,
Richard Knight Causton.

Rotherhithe Division,
Colonel Charles Edward Hamilton.

Bermondsey Division,
Alfred Lafone.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH.
Henry Kimber.

SUSSEX.

NORTH-WESTERN, or HORSHAM DIVISION,
Colonel Sir Walter Barttelot Barttelot, bt., C.B.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or CHICHESTER DIVISION,
Lord Walter C. Gordon Lennox.

NORTHERN, or EAST GRINSTEAD DIVISION,
Hon. Alfred Erskine Gathorne-Hardy.

MID, or LEWES DIVISION,
Sir Henry Fletcher, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EASTBOURNE DIVISION,
Admiral Edward Field.

EASTERN, or RYE DIVISION,
Arthur Montagu Brookfield.

BRIGHTON BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Sir William Thackeray Marriott, kt.
Gerald W. E. Loder.

HASTINGS BOROUGH.
Wilson Noble.

WARWICK.

NORTHERN, or TAMWORTH DIVISION,
Philip Albert Muntz.

NORTH-EASTERN, or NUNEATON DIVISION,
John Stratford Dugdale.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or STRATFORD-ON-AVON DIVISION,
Frederick Townsend.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or RUGBY DIVISION,
Henry Peyton Cobb.

ASTON MANOR BOROUGH.
George Kynoch.

BIRMINGHAM BOROUGH.
Edgbaston Division,
George Dixon.

West Division,
Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.

Central Division.
John Albert Bright.

North Division,
William Kenrick.

East Division,
Right Hon. Henry Matthews.

Bordesley Division,
Jesse Collings.

South Division,
Joseph Powell Williams.

WARWICK—*cont.*

COVENTRY BOROUGH.
William Henry Walter Ballantine.

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel.

WESTMORELAND.

NORTHERN, or APPLEBY DIVISION,
Hon. William Lowther.

SOUTHERN, or KENDAL DIVISION,
Earl of Bective.

WILTS.

NORTHERN, or CRICKLADE DIVISION,
Mervyn Herbert Nevil Story-Maskelyne.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHIPPENHAM DIVISION,
Lord Henry Bruce.

WESTERN, or WESTBURY DIVISION,
George Pargiter Fuller.

EASTERN, or DEVIZES DIVISION,
Walter Hume Long.

SOUTHERN, or WILTON DIVISION,
Sir Thomas Fraser Grove, bt.

SALISBURY BOROUGH.
Edward Henry Hulse.

WORCESTER.

WESTERN, or BEWDLEY DIVISION,
Sir Edmund Anthony Harley Lechmere, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EVESHAM DIVISION,
Sir Richard Temple, bt., G.C.S.I.

MID, or DROITWICH DIVISION.
John Corbett.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Benjamin Hingley.

EASTERN DIVISION,
George Woodyatt Hastings.

DUDLEY BOROUGH.
Brooke Robinson.

KIDDERMINSTER BOROUGH.
Augustus Frederick Godson.

WORCESTER BOROUGH.
Hon. George Higginson Allsopp.

YORK.

North Riding,

THIRSK AND MALTON DIVISION,
Colonel Hon. Lewis Payn Dawnay.

RICHMOND DIVISION,
George William Elliot.

CLEVELAND DIVISION,
Henry Fell Pease.

WHITBY DIVISION,
Ernest William Beckett.

East Riding,

HOLDERNESS DIVISION,
Commander George Richard Bethell, R.N.

BUCKROSE DIVISION,
Christopher Sykes.

HOWDENSHIRE DIVISION,
Arthur Duncombe.

West Riding, Northern Part,

SKIPTON DIVISION,
Walter Morrison.

KEIGHLEY DIVISION,
Isaac Holden.

SHIPLEY DIVISION,
Joseph Craven.

SOWERBY DIVISION,
Edward Crossley.

ELLAND DIVISION,
Thomas Wayman.

West Riding, Southern Part,

MORLEY DIVISION,
Charles George Milnes-Gaskell.

NORMANTON DIVISION,
Benjamin Pickard.

COLNE VALLEY DIVISION,
Henry Frederick Beaumont.

HOLMFIRTH DIVISION,
Henry Joseph Wilson.

BARNSLEY DIVISION,
Earl Compton.

HALLAMSHIRE DIVISION,
Sir Frederick Thorpe Mappin, bt.

ROTHERHAM DIVISION,
Arthur Herbert Dyke Acland.

DONCASTER DIVISION,
Hon. W. Henry W. Fitzwilliam.

YORK—*cont.*

West Riding, Eastern Part,

RIPON DIVISION,
John Lloyd Wharton.

OTLEY DIVISION,
John Barran.

BARKSTON ASH DIVISION,
Colonel Robert Gunter.

OSGOLDCROSS DIVISION,
John Austin.

PUDSEY DIVISION,
Briggs Priestley.

SPEN VALLEY DIVISION,
Joseph Woodhead.

BRADFORD BOROUGH.

West Division,
Alfred Illingworth.

Central Division,
Right Hon. John George Shaw Lefevre.

East Division,
Henry Byron Reed.

DEWSBURY BOROUGH.
Mark Oldroyd.

HALIFAX BOROUGH.
Thomas Shaw.
Rt. Hon. James Stansfeld.

HUDDERSFIELD BOROUGH.
William Summers.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL BOROUGH.

East Division,
Frederick Brent Grotrian.

Central Division,
Henry Seymour King.

West Division,
Charles Henry Wilson.

LEEDS BOROUGH.

North Division,
William Lawies Jackson.

Central Division,
Gerald William Balfour.

East Division,
John Lawrence Gane.

West Division,
Herbert John Gladstone.

South Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.C.B.

MIDDLESBROUGH BOROUGH.
Isaac Wilson.

YORK—*cont.*

PONTEFRACT BOROUGH.
Hon. Rowland Winn.

SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Joshua Rowntree.

SHEFFIELD BOROUGH.

Attercliffe Division,
Hon. Bernard John Seymour Coleridge.

Brightside Division,
Rt. Hon. Anthony John Mundella.

Central Division,
Charles Edward Howard Vincent, C.B.

Hallam Division,
Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley.

Ecclesall Division,
Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett.

WAKEFIELD BOROUGH.
Sir Edward Green, bt.

YORK BOROUGH.
Alfred Edward Pease.
Frank Lockwood.

WALES.

ANGLESEA.
Thomas Lewis.

BRECKNOCK.
William Fuller Maitland.

CARDIGAN.
William Bowen Rowlands.

CARMARTHEN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
David Pugh.

WESTERN DIVISION,
John Lloyd Morgan.

CARMARTHEN BOROUGH.
Sir Emile Algernon Arthur Keppel Stepney-Cowell, bt.

CARNARVON.

SOUTHERN OR EIFION DIVISION,
John Bryn Roberts.

NORTHERN OR ARFON DIVISION,
William Rathbone.

CARNARVON BOROUGH.
Edmund Swetenham.

DENBIGH.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. George Osborne Morgan.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Colonel William Cornwallis West.

DENBIGH BOROUGH.
Hon. George Thomas Kenyon.

FLINT.
Samuel Smith.

FLINT BOROUGH.
John Roberts.

GLAMORGAN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Alfred Thomas.

RHONDDA DIVISION,
William Abraham.

WESTERN OR GOWER DIVISION,
David Randell.

MID DIVISION,

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Arthur John Williams.

CARDIFF BOROUGH.
Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B.

MERTHYR TYDVIL BOROUGH.
David Alfred Thomas.
Pritchard Morgan.

SWANSEA BOROUGH.
Swansea Town,
Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn.

Swansea District,
Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, bt.

MERIONETH.
Thomas Edward Ellis.

MONTGOMERY.
Stuart Rendel.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH.
Hon. Frederick Stephen Archibald Hanbury-Tracy.

PEMBROKE.
William Davies.

PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST BOROUGH.
Adm. Richard Charles Mayne, C.B.

RADNOR.
Hon. Arthur Henry John Walsh.

SCOTLAND.

ABERDEEN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Peter Esslemont.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Robert Farquharson, M.D.

ABERDEEN BURGH.
North Division.
William Alexander Hunter.

South Division,
James Bryce.

ARGYLL.
Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm.

AYR.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Hugh Frederick Hislop Elliot.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Greville Richard Vernon.

AYR DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Sinclair.

KILMARNOCK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Stephen Williamson.

BANFF.
Robert William Duff.

BERWICK.
Right Hon. Edward Marjoribanks.

BUTE.
Right Hon. James Patrick Bannerman Robertson.

CAITHNESS.
Gavin Brown Clark.

WICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Macdonald Cameron.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS.
Rt. Hon. John Blair Balfour.

DUMBARTON.
Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, bt.

DUMFRIES.
Sir Robert Jardine, bt.

DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Robert Threshie Reid.

EDINBURGH (MID LOTHIAN).
Rt. Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

EDINBURGH—*cont.*

EDINBURGH BURGH.

East Division,
Robert Wallace.

West Division,
Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.

Central Division,
William McEwan.

South Division,
Rt. Hon. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers.

EDINBURGH AND ST. ANDREW'S UNIVERSITIES.
Moir T. Stormonth Darling.

LEITH DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Ronal Crawfurd Munro Ferguson.

ELGIN AND NAIRN.
John Seymour Keay.

ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Asher.

FIFE.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Herbert Henry Asquith.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Augustine Birrell.

KIRKCALDY DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Sir George Campbell, kt., K.G.S.I.

ST. ANDREW'S DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Henry Torrens Anstruther.

FORFAR.
James William Barclay.

DUNDEE BURGH.
Edmund Robertson,
John Leng.

MONTROSE DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Shiress Will.

HADDINGTON.
Richard Burdon Haldane.

INVERNESS.
Charles Fraser-Mackintosh.

INVERNESS DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Robert Bannatyne Finlay.

KINCARDINE.
General Sir George Balfour, K.C.B.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.
Mark John Stewart.

LANARK.

GOVAN DIVISION,
John Wilson.

PARTICK DIVISION,

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Robert Bontine Cuninghame Graham.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Donald Crawford.

MID DIVISION,
John Wynford Philipps.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
James Henry Cecil Hozier.

GLASGOW BURGH.

Bridgeton Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, bt.

Camlachie Division,
Hugh Watt.

St. Rollox Division,
James Caldwell.

Central Division,
John George Alexander Baird.

College Division,
Charles Cameron, M.D., LL.D.

Tradeston Division,
Archibald Cameron Corbett.

Blackfriars and Hutchesontown Division,
Andrew Dryburgh Provand.

GLASGOW AND ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIE
James Alexander Campbell, LL.D.

LINLITHGOW.
Peter McLagan.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.
Leonard Lyell.

PEEBLES AND SELKIRK
Walter Thorburn.

PERTH.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Sir John George Smyth Kinloch, bt.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Sir Donald Currie, K.C.M.G.

PERTH BURGH.
Charles Stuart Parker.

RENFREW.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Sir Archibald Campbell Campbell, bt.

GREENOCK BURGH.
Thomas Sutherland.

PAISLEY BURGH.
William Boyle Barbour.

ROSS AND CROMARTY.
Dr. Roderick Macdonald.

ROXBURGH.
Hon. Arthur Ralph Douglas Elliot.

HAWICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Laing Brown.

STIRLING.
Joseph Cheney Bolton.

FALKIRK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
William Pirrie Sinclair.

STIRLING DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Right Hon. Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

SUTHERLAND.
Angus Sutherland.

WIGTON.
Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, bt.

IRELAND.

ANTRIM.

NORTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
Sir Charles Edward Lewis, bt.

MID ANTRIM DIVISION,
Hon. Robert Torrens O'Neill.

EAST ANTRIM DIVISION,
Captain James Martin M'Calmont.

SOUTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
William Grey Ellison Macartney.

BELFAST BOROUGH.

East Belfast Division,
Edward Samuel Wesley de Cobain.

South Belfast Division,
William Johnston.

West Belfast Division,
Thomas Sexton.

North Belfast Division,
Sir Edward J. Harland, bt.

ARMAGH.

NORTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Colonel Edward James Saunderson.

MID ARMAGH DIVISION,
Sir James Porter Corry, bt.

SOUTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Alexander Blane.

CARLOW.

James Patrick O'Gorman (The O'Gorman Mahon)

CAVAN.

WEST CAVAN DIVISION,
Joseph Gillis Biggar.

EAST CAVAN DIVISION,
Thomas O'Hanlon.

CLARE.

EAST CLARE DIVISION,
Joseph Richard Cox.

WEST CLARE DIVISION,
Jeremiah Jordan.

CORK.

NORTH CORK DIVISION,
James Christopher Flynn.

NORTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
William O'Brien.

MID CORK DIVISION,
Dr. Charles Kearns Deane Tanner.

EAST CORK DIVISION,
William John Lane.

WEST CORK DIVISION,
James Gilhooly.

SOUTH CORK DIVISION,
Joseph Edward Kenny.

SOUTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
John Morrogh.

CORK CITY.
Charles Stewart Parnell.
Maurice Healy.

DONEGAL.

NORTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
James Edward O'Doherty.

WEST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Patrick O'Hea.

EAST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Arthur O'Connor.

SOUTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
John Gordon Swift Mac Neill

DOWN.

NORTH DOWN DIVISION,
Colonel Thomas Waring.

EAST DOWN DIVISION,
Richard William Blackwood Ker.

WEST DOWN DIVISION,
Right Hon. Lord Arthur Hill.

SOUTH DOWN DIVISION,
Michael McCartan.

NEWRY BOROUGH.
Justin Huntly McCarthy.

DUBLIN.

NORTH DUBLIN DIVISION,
John Joseph Clancy, M.A.

SOUTH DUBLIN DIVISION,
Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, bt.

DUBLIN CITY.

College Green Division,
Timothy Daniel Sullivan.

Dublin Harbour Division,
Timothy Charles Harrington.

St. Stephen's Green Division,
Thomas Alexander Dickson.

St. Patrick's Division,
William Martin Murphy.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. David Robert Plunket, LL.D.
Rt. Hon. Dodgson Hamilton Madden.

FERMANAGH.

NORTH FERMANAGH DIVISION,
William Hoey Kearney Redmond.

SOUTH FERMANAGH DIVISION,
Henry Campbell.

GALWAY.

CONNEMARA DIVISION,
Patrick James Foley.

NORTH GALWAY DIVISION,
Colonel John Philip Nolan.

EAST GALWAY DIVISION,
Matthew Harris.

SOUTH GALWAY DIVISION,
David Sheehy.

GALWAY TOWN.
John Pinkerton.

KERRY.

NORTH KERRY DIVISION,
John Stack.

WEST KERRY DIVISION,
Edward Harrington.

SOUTH KERRY DIVISION,
Denis Kilbride.

EAST KERRY DIVISION,
Jeremiah Daniel Sheehan.

KILDARE.

NORTH KILDARE DIVISION,
James Laurence Carew.

SOUTH KILDARE DIVISION,
James Leahy.

KILKENNY.

NORTH KILKENNY DIVISION,
Edward P. Mulhallen Marum.

SOUTH KILKENNY DIVISION,
Patrick Alexander Chance.

KILKENNY CITY.
Thomas Quinn.

KING'S COUNTY.

BIRR DIVISION,
Bernard Charles Molloy.

TULLAMORE DIVISION,
Dr. Joseph Francis Fox.

LEITRIM.

NORTH LEITRIM DIVISION,
Michael Conway.

SOUTH LEITRIM DIVISION,
Luke Patrick Hayden.

LIMERICK.

WEST LIMERICK DIVISION,
William Abraham.

EAST LIMERICK DIVISION,
John Finucane.

LIMERICK CITY.
Francis A. O'Keeffe.

LONDONDERRY.

NORTH DERRY DIVISION,
Henry Lyle Mulholland.

SOUTH DERRY DIVISION,
Thomas Lea.

LONDONDERRY CITY.
Justin M'Carthy.

LONGFORD.

North Longford Division,
Timothy Michael Healy.

South Longford Division,
James G. Fitzgerald.

LOUTH.

North Louth Division,
Joseph Nolan.

South Louth Division,
Thomas Patrick Gill.

MAYO.

North Mayo Division,
Daniel Crilly.

West Mayo Division,
John Deasy.

East Mayo Division,
John Dillon.

South Mayo Division,
James Frederick Xavier O'Brien.

MEATH.

North Meath Division,
Pierce Mahony.

South Meath Division,
Edward Sheil.

MONAGHAN.

North Monaghan Division,
Patrick O'Brien.

South Monaghan Division,
Sir Joseph Neale McKenna, kt.

QUEEN'S COUNTY.

Ossory Division,
William Archibald Macdonald.

Leix Division,
Richard Lalor.

ROSCOMMON.

North Roscommon Division,
James J. O'Kelly.

South Roscommon Division,
Andrew Commins.

SLIGO.

North Sligo Division,
Peter McDonald.

South Sligo Division,
Edmund Leamy.

TIPPERARY.

North Tipperary Division,
Patrick Joseph O'Brien.

Mid Tipperary Division,
Thomas Mayne.

South Tipperary Division,
John O'Connor.

East Tipperary Division,
Thomas Joseph Condon.

TYRONE.

North Tyrone Division,
Lord Ernest W. Hamilton.

Mid Tyrone Division,
Matthew Joseph Kenny.

East Tyrone Division,
William James Reynolds.

South Tyrone Division,
Thomas Wallace Russell.

WATERFORD.

West Waterford Division,
Jasper Douglas Pyne.

East Waterford Division,
Patrick Joseph Power.

WATERFORD CITY.
Richard Power.

WESTMEATH.

North Westmeath Division,
James Tuite.

South Westmeath Division,
Donal Sullivan.

WEXFORD.

North Wexford Division,
John Edward Redmond.

South Wexford Division,
John Barry.

WICKLOW.

West Wicklow Division,
Garrett Michael Byrne.

East Wicklow Division,
William Joseph Corbet.

An Asterisk at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Printed by Contract with H.M.'s Government.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1890.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 11th February, 1890.

THE PARLIAMENT, which had been Prorogued successively from Friday, the 30th day of August, 1889, to Saturday, the 16th day of November, 1889, thence to the 11th February, 1890, met this day for the despatch of Public Business.

The Session was opened by Commission.

THE HOUSE OF PEERS being met,

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House,

"That Her Majesty, not thinking it fit to be personally present here this day, has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Great Seal, in order to the opening and holding of this Parliament."

Then Five of the LORDS COMMISSIONERS — namely, the LORD CHANCELLOR, the EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE, the EARL OF LIMERICK, VISCOUNT CROSS, and LORD KNUTSFORD—being in their robes, and seated on a form placed between the Throne and the Woolsack, commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the COMMONS know "The Lords Commissioners desire their immediate attendance in this House to hear the Commission read."

Who being at the Bar, with their Speaker :—The Commission was read by the Clerk :—Then

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR delivered HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH to both Houses of Parliament as follows :—

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"My relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

"An armed force under a Portuguese officer was dispatched during the autumn from the Colony of Mozambique into ter-

ritory where British settlements had been formed, and where there are native tribes who have been taken under my protection. A collision, attended with bloodshed, took place, and acts were committed inconsistent with the respect due to the flag of this country. The Portuguese Government have now, at my request, promised to withdraw their military forces from the territory in question.

"A Conference of the Powers interested in the suppression of the Slave Trade has been convoked at Brussels by the King of the Belgians. I earnestly hope that the results of its deliberations will advance the great cause for which it is assembled.

"A Commercial Convention has been concluded with the Khedive of Egypt, and a Provisional Arrangement for the adjustment of pressing fiscal questions has been made with the Government of Bulgaria.

"Papers on all these questions will be presented to you.

"The Convention concluded by me with the Emperor of Germany and the Republic of the United States with respect to the Government of Samoa will be laid before you, together with the Protocols of the Conference; as also a Treaty which has been concluded with the United States for amending the Law of Extradition between the two countries. The latter instrument still awaits the ratification of the Senate.

"The disordered condition of Swaziland having rendered it necessary to make provision for the better government of that territory, the independence of which was recognised by the Convention of London, I have, acting in conjunction with the President of the South African Republic, sent a Commissioner to learn the views of the Swazis and of the white settlers.

"I shall await with lively interest the result of the Conference now being held to discuss the important question of the federation of the Australian Colonies. Any well-considered measure which, by bringing these great Colonies into closer union, will increase their welfare and strength, will receive my favourable consideration.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"The estimates of the year for defraying the cost of the Government of the country will be laid before you. They have been drawn with a due regard to economy and to the necessities of the public service.

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"The continued improvement in the state of Ireland, and the further diminution in the amount of agrarian crime, have made it possible very largely to restrict the area in which it is necessary to deal with certain offences by summary process. Proposals for increasing under due financial precaution the number of occupying owners; for extending to Ireland the principles of local self-government which have already been adopted in England and Scotland, so far as they are applicable to that country; and for improving the material well-being of the population in the poorer districts, will be submitted to you.

"A Bill for facilitating and cheapening the transfer of land in England will be again presented to you.

"Provisions will be submitted to you for diminishing the difficulty and cost which at present attend the passage of private legislation required for Scotland.

"A Bill for improving the procedure by which tithe is now levied, and for facilitating its redemption, will be laid before you.

"I have appointed a Commission to report upon the best means of improving the economic conditions which affect the inhabitants of some parts of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

"Your attention will be invited again to a Bill for ascertaining the liability of

employers in case of accidents, and to a measure for improving the procedure in winding up insolvent Companies under the Limited Liability Acts.

"There will be laid before you Bills for the consolidation and amendment of the Laws with respect to public health in the Metropolis, and to the dwellings of the working classes; and also a Bill for the better regulation of savings banks and friendly societies.

"Your attention will be directed to the state of the accommodation now provided in camps and barracks, and you will be asked to make better provision for the distribution as well as for the health and comfort of my troops.

"I commend you earnestly in the discharge of your high responsibility to the care and guidance of Almighty God."

Then the Commons withdrew.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

PRAYERS.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

Garter King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Fourth Session of the Twenty-fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom: The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR SCOTLAND.

The Clerk of the Crown in Chancery delivered a certificate that the Viscount Strathallan and the Lord Saltoun had been elected Representative Peers for Scotland in the room of the Earl of Leven and Melville and the Earl of Orkney: Certificate read.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Addington, after the death of his father; the Lord Seaton, after the death of his father; the Lord Teynham, after the death of his father.

Several Lords took the Oath.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro formâ*, read 1ª.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.
ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

The QUEEN'S SPEECH reported by the LORD CHANCELLOR.

LORD DE RAMSEY (who wore the uniform of the Huntingdonshire Light Horse): My Lords, I rise to move an humble Address thanking Her Majesty for Her Gracious Speech. I ask your Lordships to extend your consideration and forbearance, and I know I shall not ask in vain, to one who addresses you for the first time, and especially on an occasion like this. I shall endeavour concisely and clearly, if possible, to present my own views to your Lordships freely, and I will endeavour at the same time to avoid encroaching too far on what may be called hotly-disputed ground. Your Lordships have been told that the relations of this country with Foreign Powers continue to be of a friendly character. The two Conferences, three Conventions, and two Commissions mentioned in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech I think are proof of the peaceful means which are being employed by the Government in their endeavours to arrange and to settle the difficulties and troubles of this great Empire. With all Europe bristling with arms—with myriads of armed men all over the Continent, our Unionist Government which has now been going on for nearly four years has certainly held an even course, and has kept the Union Jack in the van of civilisation, of humanity, and of peace. A cloud has, however, arisen; difficulties have occurred with our old friend, our old ally—the country of Portugal. In that country a new Government has replaced the old one. A new Minister either has arrived or is on the point of arriving on these shores, and I think we have every reason to hope and to believe that the difficulty which has arisen will be shortly settled, and settled to the mutual satisfaction of the two countries. We have, I hope, every reason to believe that the Portuguese Government will admit the justice of the claim that has been put before them; and I am sure your Lordships will allow that at any rate in a matter like this which has arisen between a great Power and a small one, immense tact has been shown on the part of our Foreign Minister in

dealing with this difficulty. I think, my Lords, we need take but little notice of the ebullitions of feeling that have taken place in Oporto, Lisbon, and other parts of Portugal. It would ill become us as a country to pay too much attention to the spiteful remarks which have been uttered. Portugal must remember what we have done for her in the past, and Portugal must know that we should not for an instant think of doing anything that would do her harm. Portugal must also know that there is a line to be drawn, and that we, knowing the justice of our cause, insist upon the withdrawal of her troops from the disputed territory. A double error has been committed; territory in which British settlements had been formed, was invaded, and native tribes that were under our protection were attacked. We read of Greater Britain, we hear and see efforts, most laudable efforts, being made for bringing to a head the scheme of Imperial Federation. I hope that we shall see and hear more of these efforts. But, my Lords, what would be the use of any efforts in that direction if, when an occasion like this Portuguese difficulty arises, we were not to show a bold front to the world and to declare at once that the territory is ours, and that we mean to hold on to it until we are driven out of the field? I think, my Lords, that it is hardly necessary for me to pursue that subject much further, but with our enormous population—an ever increasing population—a population emigrating and spreading itself all over the globe, it is an absolutely imperative necessity that they should know that where they are legally employed, either in colonisation or in trade, if they get into difficulties from no fault of their own, the strong arm of the Mother Country is ready to support them. Equally imperative is it that the native races with which we have had so much to do in the formation of this huge Empire should know that when they have enlisted themselves under our protection they shall not be molested, and certainly not massacred. I cannot pass this subject by altogether without once again expressing my individual admiration at the way in which this intricate subject has been treated by our Government. Then, my Lords, a Conference of Powers for the suppression of the Slave Trade, which has been convoked by the King of the Belgians, will be held at Brussels. It is, I think, almost useless for this country to hope for a satisfactory and complete scheme for suppressing the slave traffic unless we can induce our great neighbour, the French Republic, to allow us that right of search of vessels, which we ourselves allow, but which she denies to us. It is impossible when vessels are sailing under French colours, and we cannot search them, to stop the traffic in slaves; and I most earnestly hope that at this Conference France may see fit to give way on this point; and if that be so, we may find some better means of arriving at what we all desire. There is no country in the world that comes near us, certainly not in colonisation, and certainly not in dealing with native races—there is nobody that can touch us, I believe, in our zeal to free slaves, and I hope that as we have before now left others in the background in colonisation and in the knowledge of treating natives properly, no other nation will be able to approach us in our zeal to suppress this odious slave traffic. In Egypt I hope again that France may see fit to give way on a matter which would largely assist in placing financial affairs of Egypt in better order. It is greatly to be desired that the finances of that country which have caused us such an amount of trouble should be rapidly put on a firm and proper basis. The affairs of that country, I think, my Lords, I may congratulate this country by saying are improving very rapidly; and very lately we have had the opinion expressed by a distinguished and recently returned traveller that the trade of the Soudan may be opened up, and if that be so it opens, indeed, a happy vista for the prosperity of Egypt; and I am convinced of this, that if trade is to be opened in the Soudan English traders will not be behind. My Lords, what I may almost call the triangular difficulty in Samoa is mentioned again in this year's Gracious Speech, as it was in last year's; and I do hope that in the course of the present Session that difficulty will be overcome to the mutual satisfaction of the three Powers concerned. I do not propose to trespass upon your Lordships' time on the all-important question of Ireland and Irish administration. The noble Earl who will second this

Address, from family ties in connection with land in that country, is far better able to express his opinion upon Irish matters, and to give, I daresay, a more detailed account of what is going on in that country than I can, and I leave it with confidence in his hands. But I cannot pass away from it without complimenting the noble and learned Lord who sits below me upon the extraordinary success that has attended the working of the Act called the Ashbourne Act. My Lords, that most difficult subject of Land Transfer will come before Parliament this Session. Parliament has already done something to facilitate the sale of land, but I am bound to say that it has dismally failed in cheapening it. If some measure could be introduced and carried which would effect the object that I know many have at heart, namely, making easy the sale and purchase of small pieces of land, it would be of the very highest advantage to those in rural districts; and I cannot help thinking that solicitors would find that if they would agree to a reduction of the scale of fees which are so high on the sale and purchase of small properties, they would by the increased business that would be brought to them amply recoup themselves for the reduction of that scale of fees. My Lords, I now come to what I think is one of the most pressing, one of the most important subjects that affects us in this country at the present time—a matter which I make bold to press upon Her Majesty's Government. It is a matter of the vastest importance both for the peace and goodwill of all men—and that is the settlement of the Tithes Question. I hope, and I feel convinced it is the intention of the Government to press this matter forward. For my own part, I shall be glad to see a strong Bill brought in somewhat on the basis of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. Most certainly tithe and agricultural prices have gone down together with a run. The clergy in many parts are dreadfully distressed. The Welsh clergy have been greatly reviled and abused with no reason whatever, because they have endeavoured to gain what is lawfully and legally their own. The poor clergy, not only in Wales but elsewhere, have in many cases suffered the pangs of hunger because in some places of the dishonesty of the tenant, and in some places of his inability to pay the tithe. That has been the root of the difficulty in connection with the tithes. My Lords, any measure that will reduce the friction which is now existing in regard to the collection of tithe, and any measure that will give us a fair redemption of tithe would be most satisfactory to all concerned. Parliament has already passed a Bill for the sale of glebe lands. I wish I could see that Act more used and more brought into force, for it is a dreadful state of things to see a clergyman with no capital and with sometimes from 150 to 200 acres of heavy land, and a large family; and that heavy land, his glebe, being his only means of subsistence. Prompt attention to this matter I have no doubt we shall get. I believe that every right-minded man in this country would like to see that question settled, and I believe that those who do not are only those who would like to see the settlement of it delayed and deferred either from a wish to use it for the purpose of political agitation, or to the harm and destruction of the Established Church of England. I have had the honour for many years of wearing Her Majesty's uniform, and as a soldier I must express my pleasure at seeing that at the close of the Speech Her Majesty's Government announce their intention of at once setting about housing our troops and providing them with proper and fitting accommodation. Public opinion on this matter has risen to a point now when it would not be well to delay that matter, and I am sure this country will grant ungrudgingly whatever sums in reason Her Majesty's Government may require, so that no longer will our gallant soldiers be seen lodged in what I may call nothing but nurseries of typhoid. Our soldiers rarely, I may almost say never, grumble, but your Lordships will agree that it is not only wrong but it is false economy not to house them properly and treat them well. My Lords, in conclusion, you will allow me to congratulate the Unionist Party on the prospects that are now before us. I think that the general aspect of affairs is decidedly re-assuring. There is a very decided revival of Trade: I wish I could say the same of Agriculture. I hope the revival of trade will not be delayed and retarded, aye, and perhaps trade half ruined in the Port of London, by any increased struggles between labour and

capital. I do trust that the labouring classes will realise the fact that as long as their demands are just and are put forward in a proper way they have every reasonable chance of being attended to. When their demands are just and reasonable the labouring classes carry public opinion and public sympathy with them; but once they go outside that, it reverses the case, and they achieve a result which is an absolutely fatal one to them, that is, they compel capital to coalesce with capital, and there is thus a war between Capital and Labour. My Lords, I do, if any words of mine should be read by the labouring classes of this country, urge upon them most strenuously to think awhile and be very careful before they place their trust in men, many of whom I am sorry to say take a prominent position solely for the sake of aggrandisement. If the labouring classes would only think that by entrusting their fortunes to adventurers they were, instead of bettering their lot, only leading their wives and children to the verge of starvation, they would pause and ponder before throwing over regular employment and regular wages all the year round for the very doubtful blessing of a strike. But, my Lords, on the other side, I think we have a right to insist on freedom of contract as the main basis on which we must act, and then these matters will cure themselves. Every difficulty of this sort must be grappled with in strictly legal fashion, and we must have no illegal picketing, no illegal boycotting, but we must have the strong arm of the law to shelter capital as well as labour. I beg to thank your Lordships most cordially for your attention, and for the very great kindness you have shown to me. I trust I have not wearied you, and my first speech in this House I shall ever remember with the greatest pleasure. I beg to move the Address.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament:

We humbly thank Your Majesty for the information that Your Majesty's relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that an armed force under a Portuguese Officer was dispatched during the autumn from the Colony of Mozambique into territory where British Settlements had been formed, and where there are Native tribes who have been taken under Your Majesty's protection; and that a collision, attended with bloodshed, took place; that acts were committed inconsistent with the respect due to the flag of this Country; and that the Portuguese Government have now, at Your Majesty's request, promised to withdraw their military forces from the territory in question:

We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that a Conference of the Powers interested in the suppression of the Slave Trade has been convoked at Brussels by the King of the Belgians, and that Your Majesty earnestly hopes that the results of its deliberations will advance the great cause for which it is assembled:

We thank your Majesty for the information that a Commercial Convention has been concluded with the Khedive of Egypt, and that a Provisional Arrangement for the adjustment of pressing fiscal questions has been made with the Government of Bulgaria; that Papers on all these questions will be presented to us:

We learn with satisfaction that the Convention concluded by Your Majesty with the Emperor of Germany and the Republic of the United States with respect to the Government of Samoa will be laid before us, together with the Protocols of the Conference; as also a Treaty which has been concluded by Your Majesty with the United States for amending the Law of Extradition between the two Countries, the latter instrument still awaiting the ratification of the Senate:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the disordered condition of Swaziland having rendered it necessary to make provision for the better government of that territory, the independence of which was recognised by the Convention of London, Your Majesty has, acting in conjunction with the President of the South African Republic, sent a Commissioner to learn the views of the Swazis and of the white settlers:

We thank Your Majesty for the information that your Majesty awaits with lively interest the result of the Conference now being held to discuss the important question of the federation of the Australian Colonies, and that any well considered measure which, by bringing

these great Colonies into closer union, will increase their welfare and strength, will receive Your Majesty's favourable consideration:

We learn with satisfaction that the continued improvement in the state of Ireland, and the further diminution in the amount of agrarian crime, have made it possible very largely to restrict the area in which it is necessary to deal with certain offences by summary process; that proposals for increasing under due financial precaution the number of occupying owners; for extending to Ireland the principles of local self-government which have already been adopted in England and Scotland, so far as they are applicable to that Country; and for improving the material well-being of the population in the poorer districts, will be submitted to us:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that a Bill for facilitating and cheapening the transfer of land in England will be again presented to us; and that provisions will be submitted to us for diminishing the difficulty and cost which at present attend the passage of Private Legislation required for Scotland:

We thank Your Majesty for the information that a Bill for improving the procedure by which Tithe is now levied, and for facilitating its redemption, will be laid before us:

We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty has appointed a Commission to report upon the best means of improving the economic conditions which affect the inhabitants of some parts of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be invited again to a Bill for ascertaining the Liability of Employers in case of Accidents, and to a measure for improving the procedure in winding up insolvent Companies under the Limited Liability Acts:

We thank Your Majesty for the information that there will be laid before us Bills for the consolidation and amendment of the Laws with respect to public health in the Metropolis, and to the Dwellings of the Working Classes; and also a Bill for the better regulation of Savings Banks and Friendly Societies:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be directed to the state of the accommodation now provided in Camps and Barracks, and that we shall be asked to make better provision for the distribution as well as for the health and comfort of Your Majesty's Troops:

We humbly assure Your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust that in regard to these and all other matters pertaining to our function the keeping and guidance of Almighty God may be vouchsafed to us."—(*The Lord De Ramsey.*)

THE EARL OF STRADBROKE (who wore the uniform of the First Norfolk Volunteer Artillery): My Lords, in rising to second the Motion that has been so ably moved by the noble Lord near me, I would crave from your Lordships that kind indulgence which is usually accorded to anyone addressing this august Assembly for the first time. The opening paragraph of the Queen's Speech, referring to the peaceful relations existing between this country and other nations, will, I feel sure, be received by your Lordships and by the whole nation with the greatest satisfaction. Difficulties have arisen, and consequent friction has occurred during the past few months between this country and Portugal, but owing to the firm and at the same time just action of Her Majesty's Government those difficulties have been removed. It might have been thought that the Government were acting in a somewhat peremptory manner, but we now know that strong measures were necessary from the fact that on the day previous to that on which Mr. Petre received the message from the Portuguese Foreign Minister, stating that Portugal would acquiesce in the demands of England, the Governor General of Mozambique published a notice in the Official Gazette that Portugal had conquered the region of the Shiré River, and intended to administer that district. I hope it will not be considered presumptuous on my part if I add one word of congratulation to the noble Marquess for the way in which he has conducted these negotiations. I feel sure that your Lordships will agree with me that the thanks of the whole country are due to, and are most cordially accorded to, the noble Marquess for the way in which all matters connected with the Foreign Office have been managed since he has been at its head. I very much hope that as an outcome of the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels, France will waive the objection she has hitherto maintained to the right of mutual search of sus-

pected vessels, and I am sure that this country generally will welcome any assistance from any Foreign Power in the matter of suppressing the Slave Trade. It is a matter of congratulation that the difficulties with regard to Samoa, which have been so long a bone of contention, are approaching a satisfactory termination. And I think Her Majesty's Government are taking a most wise and at the same time just course in sending a Commissioner into Swaziland to inquire into the real wants and requirements of the natives and white settlers there before finally settling as to the government of that territory. My Lords, turning from foreign countries, we find that success has also attended the policy of Her Majesty's Government here at home. I refer especially to the great improvement in Ireland. I am glad to see in one of the paragraphs in the Speech that, owing to the great diminution in crime, it is considered possible to reduce the area in which it is necessary to deal with certain crimes by summary process. We all wish, I am sure, that the Act for the prevention of crime in Ireland could be repealed altogether, but we must bear in mind that that Act becomes a dead letter if no crimes are committed of the kind to restrain which that Act was passed. It was with very great regret that I read in to-day's papers that a fresh outrage has been committed in County Clare, but I hope we shall not hear of many more such outrages. I think we must all admit that the improvement in Ireland is due to the firm, and, at the same time, just action of the Executive in Ireland, and especially is credit due to the Chief Secretary for Ireland for the great ability which he has displayed in carrying out his difficult and delicate, I might almost say dangerous, task. But another great cause of the improvement in Ireland is to be found in the fact of the enormous success which has attended the working of Lord Ashbourne's Act. As your Lordships know, during the last four years £10,000,000 have been granted by way of loans to enable occupiers of land to become possessed of their farms; the applications for loans under this Act have been most numerous, and they may, in fact, be counted by thousands. Up to the end of November last loans under this Act had been approved of to the amount of over £8,000,000, of which over £6,000,000 were provisionally granted, and over £4,700,000 were actually issued. And what is more satisfactory is that the arrears on the £225,000 which were due up to the end of last October amount to less than £3,000. It would appear that the Act is working most successfully from a financial point of view; but what is really of more importance is, that wherever the provisions of the Act have been in force there a spirit of content and peace is to be found. I hope that when the proposal, which is referred to in the Gracious Speech to-day for increasing the number of occupiers of land, comes up for discussion, your Lordships will not forget the advantageous results which have attended the working of this Act. Reference has also been made to a Bill which will be introduced for the redemption of tithe. This Bill will be most anxiously looked for by all who have an interest in agriculture, and I believe that if a Bill can be introduced which will facilitate and make feasible the redemption of tithe it will be welcomed most heartily not only by the payers, but by the receivers, of tithe. I am very glad to find that a Bill for the Regulation of Friendly Societies is also to be introduced, because I know that very great distress has often been occasioned in rural districts owing to the failure of such societies. The failure of such societies tends to discourage that spirit of thrift which we should all be anxious to encourage. I entirely agree with what the noble Lord who moved the Address has said with regard to the importance of improving the accommodation for our soldiers. I trust the policy which has been so clearly sketched in the Queen's Speech to-day will meet with only such opposition as will lead to a fair and just criticism of the various Bills as they are introduced, and I am sure that the Government may rely on the same loyal support which has been tendered to them by the Liberal Unionists in the past, at great personal self-sacrifice on their part. Before resuming my seat I would venture to offer to the Government my congratulations on the aspect of the trade and commerce of the country. During the time the present Government have been in office the expenditure has been very largely reduced; owing to their firm administration credit and confidence have been

so far restored that the Trade Returns have shown an increase from £618,000,000, when they came into office, to £742,000,000. I only wish that a corresponding improvement could be seen in the state of agriculture. The improved state of trade has, however, been rather shaken by the formidable proportions which strikes have assumed. I trust if any differences occur in the future between capital and labour, that those difficulties will be settled amicably, and that each side will display a spirit of conciliation. My Lords, I thank you for the kind indulgence you have shown me this afternoon, and I beg leave to second the Motion that an humble Address be sent to Her Majesty in response to the Gracious Message from the Throne.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I have long entertained the opinion that to move or second the Address on such occasions as this was one of the most difficult things a man could have to do in Parliament; yet for some years past I have constantly had to offer compliments to the Mover and Seconder of the Address, as I most cordially do to-day, and I begin to think that my conviction, founded on long personal experience and observation, must to a certain extent be erroneous. One piece of wisdom I must specially give the noble Mover and the noble Seconder credit for. They did not attempt to give any explanation of why Parliament meets so unusually late—I say unusually late, when there has been no Autumn Session. The noble Marquess seems to differ, but I think he will find that is the case; and I should have thought that if Her Majesty's Government intended to pass so many Bills as are set forth in the Queen's Speech, they would have been desirous not to have lost one or two early weeks of the year. I desire, however, to give expression to a feeling in regard to which I represent, not merely the small number of noble Lords who now sit behind me, but the great majority of this House, by saying what pleasure it is to us to see the leader of the House, and certainly one of the most eminent Members of it, here present, and I trust in a state of complete convalescence. Reference has often been made to the pleasure of anticipating posthumous praise, and learning while yet alive what will be said of one when dead. It has been said that some statesmen have caused their death to be reported in order to enjoy the non-posthumous knowledge of hearing what people think about them. A few weeks' cold has given this pleasure to Lord Salisbury without any action on his part. He has heard himself discussed in every way in consequence of it, and not only that but it has also raised questions of great importance, which have been carried very far. I remember when the present Government was formed I was presumptuous enough to complain of the office of Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary being held by the same individual. I suggested that it took away a useful check in the conduct of foreign affairs, and I pointed out how intolerably hard it was on any individual who undertook it, and that it naturally led to a very unsatisfactory system of Government being conducted very much by departments. It is certainly an exercise of authority by one whose great labours prevent him from continuously following out every detail. That remark has been accentuated in the course of time. I would follow up that remark with another, and that is that Cabinets seem to exist for a very short time, and that fact I never heard even alluded to except by one Member of the actual Cabinet. But now you have everybody talking and writing on this particular subject. There is one thing which, I trust, it is not quite out of place to mention, though, perhaps, it is not quite the place of a Member of Mr. Gladstone's late Administration to make such a criticism—and that is, the largeness of the Cabinet. One thing I trust is that successive Governments are not going to vie with each other in order to have one or two more in each Cabinet than in the preceding. I remember when the late Lord Derby formed his first Administration, Lord Palmerston criticised him very severely on not having taken the opportunity of diminishing the number of the Cabinet. I remember Lord Derby himself on the platform at Waterloo Station, just after he had given in his resignation, when I asked him how many there were to be in the next Cabinet, said:—"I have made out a list of 36 who have absolute claims to it." The last time I had the honour of a political conversation with Lord Beaconsfield, he said:—"Mind and follow my advice. If you have anything to do

with forming Cabinets in the future, make them as small as possible." My Lords, while I rejoice at the recovery of the health of the noble Marquess, it is impossible not to be reminded that this House has, during the last Recess, lost an unusual number of its Members—has lost a large number of Peers, respected and esteemed by this House, but who did not take any prominent part in our public proceedings. We have lost, besides others, Lord Napier of Magdala, who was respected and admired both as a soldier and a man. We have lost Lord Fitzgerald, who was not only an eminent Irish Judge, but one who, so far as I remember, since his accession to the House, gave almost more attention than any other Member, both to its political and judicial business. We have lost the Bishop of Durham, a great scholar and a great theologian. We have lost also Lord Blachford, a personal friend of mine and a personal friend of many of your Lordships, who was once the head of one of the great permanent Services, and whose presence aided so materially to strengthen this Assembly. With regard to the last two Peers, I heard the Bishop of Durham make two speeches. The first was a very poor performance indeed. But the next year I heard him speak with all the power, weight, and authority which you might expect from so great a Prelate. Lord Blachford, I think, I only heard once. He was followed by Lord Cairns, no mean judge, who declared that he had made a speech which no other Member of this Assembly was capable of making. I cannot help thinking that among those who have come later into the House there is a great deal of latent power which is not sufficiently developed. My Lords, the first subject in the Speech from the Throne, rightly and properly, concerns foreign affairs. I read the other day an acknowledgment of Sir M. Hicks Beach as to the attitude which Mr. Gladstone has maintained in Opposition with regard to foreign policy, and it is not the first time I have noticed the very great fairness of Sir Michael in matters of this sort with regard to opponents. The noble Marquess the other day volunteered, I think in a somewhat unprovoked way, at Nottingham, to make an attack on the foreign policy of Mr. Gladstone's late Administration. He named five different subjects to animadvert upon. The first was with regard to the defeat at Majuba Hill. I do not really understand how a local check in South Africa could have been more injurious to our reputation than the check which Lord Chelmsford, under a Conservative Government, unfortunately sustained. It appears to me that to make such matters subjects of reproach against the Home Government is really absurd; but if the noble Marquess meant to repeat the complaint which was made at the time that we did not continue the war out of a feeling of prestige, when we had no practical object in view, I will very willingly submit to the censure. The noble Marquess went on to use the heroic name of Gordon. Now I feel that Gordon's mission is the subject of the greatest sorrow and regret. But I adhere to the opinion now that, after viewing the facts, it would have been almost impossible for the Government at that moment to have refused the assurances and the offer of General Gordon to go out on the instructions he himself formulated. With regard to the rescue of General Gordon having failed, I know no better answer than that which was given by a distinguished general, a very strong Conservative, who said—"I am opposed strongly to Mr. Gladstone, but I am bound to admit that, considering the dangers and risks of an expedition to Khartoum, Her Majesty's Government was bound to consider every possible alternative before trying it." Then the noble Marquess referred to the bombardment of Alexandria. This is rather ancient history; but it is not my fault that the noble Marquess has introduced it. The only thing to be said about the bombardment of Alexandria is, that it did not take place. We did not bombard Alexandria. I do not think we even threw a shell into Alexandria. We bombarded the fortress. It may be a fair question whether it was right and necessary to do so. But I deny that the noble Marquess had any right to make the complaint he did, because he has probably not forgotten that up to the moment of the bombardment he attacked us for sacrificing the honour and interest of the country. Then there is another question brought forward by the noble Marquess—the question of Penjdeh—which was very nearly settled. How was Penjdeh settled? It was settled by a concession on the part

of the noble Marquess entirely abandoning the point of honour, so that I think the difference in the politics of the two Governments does not appear to be very obvious. The noble Marquess then alluded to the 11 millions spent in a war scare. That allusion I do not understand.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): Does the noble Lord remember when I said all these things?

EARL GRANVILLE: At Nottingham.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not remember them.

EARL GRANVILLE: It was reported in the *Times*. I am very glad that it was a post-prandial speech by the noble Marquess in which these very serious charges were made against the Government which preceded him. However, I will not argue the question of the 11 millions, as the noble Marquess has so entirely forgotten. The next question is with regard to Portugal. My Lords, I think the noble Marquess will find that this rather unprovoked attack of his in the Provinces will not induce me to adopt a hostile tone in any question of this sort. The fact that the Portuguese question is a difficulty for the Government, that it has irritated a people with whom we have every reason to be on good terms, with whom we have long historical associations, the fact that we have been much criticised by all the Continental Press, makes one feel that it is the duty of the Opposition to discuss in the calmest possible way what seems to concern the great interests at stake and the principle of comity connected with it. My Lords, I am quite sure the noble Marquess will regret as much as we do that the Congo Treaty was never ratified. That treaty was negotiated for two and a half years, and I am bound to say that the chief credit of it was due to my noble Friend Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice. In that treaty there was one clause which stopped the Portuguese at the confluence of the Shiré and another river, the pronunciation of which I would rather not undertake, and which left the whole, or practically the whole, of the territory now in question to ourselves and not to Portugal. That Treaty also settled nearly every outstanding difference between Portugal and ourselves. During the whole of the negotiations and after the signature the opposition was so warm, not only on the part of influential Conservatives both in the House of Commons and at Manchester, but on the part of a sort of ex-representative of the noble Marquess, Mr. Bourke, that it ended by exciting the opposition both of France and Germany, who objected only at the last moment to the Treaty, and we were obliged to postpone the ratification, and go to the Conference at Berlin. There is another question which I should like to ask the noble Marquess. I see in the Portuguese Papers that they allude to an informal arrangement made between themselves and that excellent Consul Mr. Johnston, which would have settled this question, but which appears, and very likely for excellent reasons, not to have been acceptable to the Foreign Office. It was no fault of Portugal's that it was not carried out, and it would be very satisfactory if the noble Marquess would explain to us how that matter really stands. Nobody feels more strongly than I do how great are the interests of this country in Africa—interests which must not be interfered with. But I hold that it is most important that we should act in a manner as little likely to excite irritation as possible. I do not wish to give an opinion, but I am not sure whether the determination of the Government could not have been shown as strongly with a little less suddenness, and I also feel that in the very able and argumentative despatches of the noble Marquess stating our case it would have been better to have omitted some very brilliant sarcasms which do not really add to the strength of the reasoning, but have an irritating effect upon a small country, our former friend and ally, whose people are very proud of their traditions. As this is an important question I wish to avoid any unnecessary references to our relations with other nationalities, and to avoid arousing national susceptibilities, but I would ask whether it is true that there are going to be naval manœuvres in the Mediterranean? We possess Gibraltar. Our possession of it is a perfectly legitimate one, and we have not the slightest intention of giving it up, but there is no doubt that it is a thorn in the side of Spain that we should hold a fortified rock so very near her

territory. The policy of successive Governments has been to avoid doing anything calculated to make our proximity to Spain unnecessarily galling or prominent. I do not know whether the rumour as to these manœuvres is founded upon a myth or not; I do not know whether the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary was consulted about that; but in any case I may point out that there is no sufficient practical reason for making these particular waters the scene of such manœuvres, which certainly might cause some friction. Another subject requiring attention is the announcement that Sir Lintorn Simmons was gazetted as Envoy to the Pope. There is a legal aspect and there is a political aspect in any such appointment, and I only wish to raise the legal question. I, myself, formerly when the Pope was a Temporal Sovereign, was anxious that there should be means of regular communication between Her Majesty's Government and the Pope, and it is clear there is, in that, a convenience. That the Roman Catholic population of this country should have fitting means of communication with Rome on subjects affecting their interests is, of course, reasonable. One very convenient method of communication is through our Ambassador in Italy, but to that the Pope will not consent. We have therefore had recourse to different modes of communication, which have been indirect and inconvenient. The question I now want to raise is whether the sending of this special Envoy is legal? A good many years ago I gave a notice of Motion in the House of Commons, with the sanction of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, with regard to our diplomatic relations with Rome. But just as the Motion was coming on, Lord Palmerston asked me to postpone it. He said—"The Conservative Government will not last long" (sanguine expectations are sometimes entertained in these matters), "there is no real impediment to diplomatic communication, and when we go in we will do it without making a fuss about the matter." Well, the Liberal Government did come in, the matter was considered by the Cabinet, and the Cabinet came to the conclusion that it was not possible to do this without the sanction of Parliament. A Bill was introduced into Parliament and was passed through the House of Commons, but in this House it was made unworkable. The Act remained in operation for some years, but under Lord Beaconsfield's Administration a Statute was passed for repealing obsolete Acts, and among the obsolete Acts was the Statute to which I have just referred. Now as not only a previous Government, but a previous Cabinet, thought it necessary to have Parliamentary sanction for such an Act, as that sanction was given and was afterwards repealed by an Act of Parliament, it appears to me to be exceedingly doubtful whether the step that has been taken, which may be a good one in itself, is either legal or constitutional. I have no doubt the noble Marquess has considered the question, and that he will be able to give a satisfactory answer on that point. Now, my Lords, there are other foreign questions which have been alluded to by both the Mover and Seconder of the Address. On the question of the Belgian Conference I am in entire sympathy with the action of the noble Marquess, but, as I have had an opportunity of publicly expressing my sympathy with that action I need not dwell upon that. There is another question upon which I have an exactly similar feeling, namely, the prospect of a North-American Federation. I heartily hope that the projects of the Government may meet with success, and that the result may be the federation of Her Majesty's North American Colonies. Now, my Lords, coming to the Bills mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, I find that, in spite of much that we have been told, Ireland still leads the way. We hear a great deal about Ireland not being allowed to interfere with legislation, butsome how or other Ireland does assert herself. I can only say that, with regard to the Bills which are named, some of them will contain qualifications I should wish to see carried, and if the Bills relating to Ireland are really likely to be remedial, they must, of course, command our most attentive consideration. Amongst the other Bills mentioned some are old and some new, but as they are not of great import I will not go into them in much detail. With the Mover and the Seconder of the Address I rejoice over the Bill for cheapening and facilitating the transfer of land, and I gladly repeat my offer to the noble Marquess of my assistance in passing a measure of that

kind. Here I may take the opportunity of saying that my position on this side of the House has not been strengthened since last Session. The noble Marquess, I understand, has been more fortunate, and has found several useful recruits on his side of the House. Another Bill was alluded to by the Mover and Seconder with regard to tithes. The noble Mover gave his views of the general manner in which that question would be settled. The Government were obliged to change a good deal the Bill they introduced last year, and I am afraid that however desirable it may be to settle this important question, it is one of more difficulty than would at first appear. My Lords, with regard to other Bills of a social character, Bills of a sanitary character, whether applied to civil life or military life, for the better accommodation of our soldiers, I have no doubt whatever that the Government will gain the support of the Opposition as well as that of their own supporters. Adverting to the project with regard to Scotland in the matter of private legislation, I may observe that I regret very much Lord Rosebery is unavoidably prevented from being here to-day, for I think he would have liked to be present in order to point out that the scheme, if it is to be satisfactory, must embody a representative as well as a judicial element. Another matter for complaint which, I think, Lord Rosebery would have liked to have the opportunity of making, is the sudden disappearance of the Bill promised at the beginning of last Session with reference to local government. That the defects in the legislation dealing with that important question should not be remedied is a matter which cannot but cause dissatisfaction on both sides of the House. My Lords, there is another question upon which I think there was a positive pledge given by Her Majesty's Government last year. I observe that a Bill to amend the legislation relating to allotments is not included in the Government scheme. Then we were told at the beginning of last year that it was necessary to have Parliamentary sanction to the Sugar Convention. This year, however, nothing is said about the subject, and I should be very glad to know whether the absence of any allusion to it means what would be eminently satisfactory to myself, and I believe, to the great majority of the people of this country, namely, the abandonment of the Sugar Bounties Convention itself. There is another subject which does not appear, and which we rather expected to appear, and that is free education. Perhaps the noble Marquess has forgotten that on a certain occasion he alluded to free education, and I have a sort of notion that he may have been reminded of it since. On that occasion the noble Marquess, not content with performing the duties both of Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, undertook, in addition, the functions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and went even further than any Chancellor of the Exchequer I have ever known has done, because they have never been in the habit of confiding to the public the principal point of their Budget for the ensuing year. Dealing with the Budget the noble Marquess gave assurances with respect to free education which have excited very strong feeling on the subject. The fact is, that formerly nearly all the experts on free education gave very plausible reasons, and reasons of considerable weight, against free education. But a very great change of opinion has taken place upon the subject. A strong feeling has taken hold of the popular mind. Depend upon it, after the endorsement of the principle of free education by the noble Marquess, the subject cannot be entirely dropped. My Lords, there is no mention in the Speech of the Parnell Commission, and quite properly so, because we have not yet got the Report. I do not know whether the noble Marquess will be able to tell us when it will be in our hands. Without going over the whole of this old question, I may remind the House that the objections to the Bill which created that tribunal were stated in both Houses, and by no one so strongly and so forcibly as by my noble and learned Friend Lord Herschell, to whom absolutely no answer was given. He pointed out every objection to it. He showed how extremely unfair it would be to the individual accused to depart from the usual precedent, and to refuse to appoint a Committee of Members to investigate the charges affecting his character. The argument on the side of the Government was that a Committee of the House of Commons would not be an impartial tribunal, that it was impossible to get even the best men in the House of Commons to be impartial on a subject in which

their political feelings were aroused. Mr. Parnell was told on high authority that, an anonymous newspaper writer having attacked him in a newspaper which differed from him entirely in political opinions, unless he was prepared at once to go into a Court of Justice, he must be deemed to be guilty, contrary to the absolutely recognised principle of English Law, that until a man has been proved to be guilty he must be deemed to be innocent. My Lords, I do not wish to go into detail, but I can only say it appears to me, without giving the slightest opinion upon the action of anybody in the matter, that the course of the evidence given before that tribunal more than justified the objections to this interweaving of political action with an inquiry of this sort. With regard to Ireland, the Government point out with great satisfaction, which was echoed by the noble Mover and Seconder, that there is a continued improvement in the state of that country. Now the same sort of declaration was made last year, and was affirmed by a vote of the House of Commons. Last year I ventured to quote the words of a distinguished Member of the House of Commons—not using my own words, not using the words of any Irish or English Home Rulers, but using the words of one of the most distinguished Members of the House of Commons, and a very strong anti-Home Ruler, Mr. Leonard Courtney, who put three or four questions on the subject. I am speaking from memory, but I think I am accurate—he asked whether it was satisfactory to the Government that something like civil war should prevail in parts of Ireland, that the Government should be constantly flouted, that trial by jury should be suspended, that peasants here and policemen there should be killed, that priests and Members of Parliament should be imprisoned by the dozen. I repeated the same questions and made an appeal to the noble Marquess to answer them, but I did not get any answer. Well, I have no doubt there is improvement in the state of Ireland of a certain sort; but when Her Majesty's Government attribute that improvement to the system of repression which they have adopted, I am not at all convinced, and there are several reasons why I do not agree with them. In the first place, it is rather a curious fact that beyond the diminution of a certain class of crime—agrarian crime—there has been especially a diminution of boycotting offences. I am quite certain that the officials who supply those statistics do so perfectly honestly, but there is no doubt that with regard to the statistics of boycotting there is such a marked distinction between offences of that kind and other crimes. In regard to boycotting you cannot depend upon those Returns as you can upon those relating to murder and crimes of that sort. Another point is that crime in general has not diminished at all. The statistics with regard to non-indictable offences over the whole country do not support the boast of the Government. In 1878 there were 275,000 cases; in 1879 there were 263,000 cases. The Liberal Government came into office in 1880, and when Lord Salisbury came into power in 1886 he found the number reduced to 223,000 cases. But what has happened since? Under the noble Marquess's Government these figures have risen again to 236,000 in 1888, an increase of 13,000 cases of crime in two years, and this with a regrettably diminishing population. I do not think that these figures prove that contentment and good order are extending in Ireland. I am always very glad to acknowledge anything I can in fairness to opponents. The operation of the Land Act, in promoting settlements as between landlord and tenant, and the Plan of Campaign, however objectionable in other respects it may be, certainly removes from the peasants that stimulus to outrage which otherwise would exist, and after all, it is impossible to deny that the enormous masses of the English, Scotch, and Welsh people have shown a sympathy which is perfectly new towards the Irish people, and (whether reasonable or unreasonable, I will not inquire into at this moment) the very fact of that sympathy has a very great effect on a warm-hearted people like the Irish. Therefore I do not think it is logical to attribute whatever improvement there is in the condition of Ireland in regard to the decrease of crime, to the action of the Administration and their system of repression, further aided as it has been by the great increase of prices in some of the staple products of the country. While these things continue, while you have the state of things

mentioned by Mr. Leonard Courtney, while there is permanent exceptional legislation for Ireland, while you are imprisoning priests and Members of Parliament, while you have suspended trial by jury to a great extent, and while you are obliged to deprive a great city of one form of local government—while all these irritating things continue, do not flatter yourselves that you will solve the very difficult problem of the state of Ireland.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, in the first place I must express my hearty concurrence, in words of no common sincerity, in the congratulations which the noble Earl opposite has addressed to my two noble Friends the Mover and Seconder of the Address. I do earnestly hope that my noble Friend who moved the Address in a speech of so much vigour and so much clearness, and, if I may add—a circumstance not indifferent to this House—in a voice so satisfactory in this Chamber—I do hope we shall hear him often in the discussions of public business that we have. It is the defence of the existence of this formality, which the noble Lord has expressed as carrying with it more difficulty than any other oratorical exercise, that it introduces new gladiators to our arena, new collaborateurs in the work of carrying on the legislation of the country, and of enlightening as far as in our power the public opinion of this country in regard to the principles upon which we act. My Lords, I must further express my very warm thanks to the noble Earl for the extremely kind and graceful manner in which he alluded to my health. May I express a regret that he deemed it necessary to found upon that text a renewal of his ancient thesis that the present condition of the offices I hold is one which it is impossible to sustain? I venture to differ from him. After four years' experience of this arrangement, and after some experience as a spectator and actor of the other arrangement of a Foreign Minister working with Prime Minister, I am bound to record my opinion that it is an absolute delusion to think that any real efficient check upon the action of the Foreign Minister is produced by the separation of the Foreign Minister from the Prime Minister. Business like that of the Foreign Office must be conducted by those who are attending to it constantly; and if an outside power strikes in with suggestions which he insists shall be adopted, it is much more likely to produce confusion than to exercise control. On the other hand, as I explained to the House on a previous occasion, the large use of telegrams and the extensive employment of printing, really enable the Cabinet to supervise and control the conduct of the Foreign Office in a way which 20 or 30 years ago would have been absolutely impossible. My Lords, the noble Earl proceeded to repeat a criticism which he has made elsewhere, that our Cabinets were terribly rare and were terribly short. Well, that may be due, not to the paucity of business, but to other causes. I see that outside among labouring men there is a great objection to being employed by the piece; they all desire to be employed by time. Now I claim for Cabinet Ministers exactly the opposite treatment. Let us be employed and judged by the piece; let us not be judged by the amount of time that we sit at the table doing it. The time that any deliberative body spends over any business that is assigned to it depends upon the volubility of the persons who compose that deliberative body. If they are very free in the delivery of their opinions, it is likely that that deliberative body will sit for a long time, and will have to meet again. If they are able to practise conciseness, and to express their opinions in short and less diffuse language, then the work may be done more quickly. I am bound to say that the fault with which the noble Earl charges our Cabinet is largely due to myself. Other Prime Ministers have possessed that wealth of language, that diffuseness, that abundance, that power of carrying every subject into the furthest possible detail, and adorning it with all the verbal decorations of a fervid imagination and an unlimited vocabulary; and, of course, if the Prime Minister possesses those qualifications, his adoring and listening Cabinet will enjoy the advantage of a succession of brilliant speeches of which the world knows nothing, but necessarily the Cabinet must sit for a long time and must meet very often. But my poor hard-bound brains cannot produce these tremendous speeches, I am sorry to say, and

the result is that we can get over our work in half an hour, an hour, or two hours. But if the noble Earl really thinks a larger exhibition of eloquence is absolutely necessary to the proper performance of our duty, I will try to find some person among our colleagues of authority who will entertain us for half an hour or three quarters of an hour with a speech at every Cabinet meeting. I would wish, however, to urge upon the noble Earl that he has omitted to consider a most important Constitutional doctrine. He seems to think that it is the duty of the Prime Minister alone to summon a Cabinet Council. That is not so. Any Member of the Cabinet can summon it whenever he pleases. I have never heard one word of complaint from any one of my sixteen colleagues that the meetings of the Cabinet have not been sufficiently frequent or that we sat too short a time; but I promise the noble Earl that, if there ever is an insurgent action in the Cabinet in that regard we will correct the evil to which he has pointed. My Lords, there is much in the speech of the noble Earl to which I am happy to say it is not necessary for me to reply. I take it as a great compliment to Her Majesty's Government that he finds nothing in our present conduct to criticise, and so goes back to the ample volumes of ancient history. He goes back to the bombardment of Alexandria, Majuba Hill, the war scare, and other matters which I shall be willing to discuss with him if he will give me sufficient notice; but I frankly confess that I am now unable to deal with them with the fulness which I should desire. I cannot now discuss with him the battle and the peace of Majuba Hill, or whether peace was concluded because the Boers gave us all that we desired. That is not my recollection. I cannot now discuss with him whether Alexandria went entirely uninjured in consequence of the bombardment. I have a vague recollection of fires and of a sum of four millions in damages being paid by the Khedive; but those are matters which we may more profitably discuss on another occasion. I will only say that I think the noble Lord did not, when he intended to criticise me, pay me the compliment to read the observations I made at Nottingham. As far as my recollection goes, I only referred to the foreign policy of the noble Earl for one particular purpose. I pointed out to our fellow-workers the injustice of the charge that was made against the last Conservative Government of which I was Foreign Minister—a charge constantly made against us—that we pursued an adventurous policy. I said—

> "I ask you to judge the past by the present; I ask you to look at the last four years of our foreign policy and compare it with the policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government, and tell us whether peace and quiet, tranquillity and the absence of adventure were characteristics of the first or the second of those two stretches of foreign policy."

But at the same time I did not enter into a discussion of the merits of the noble Earl's policy; on the contrary, I frankly acknowledged the difficulties with which he had to contend. Now, my Lords, it is not only the ancient history of Penjdeh and Majuba Hill that the noble Lord has raised again, but he has again brought up before us the question whether a Bill which we passed two years ago, which is not mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and which is not before us in any document, is a Bill that we ought to have passed or not; and he proposes, finally, as I understand as a kind of exercise which it might be useful for me to perform, that I should now proceed to answer the speech of Lord Herschell made on that occasion. I can only accept these references to matters which have entirely passed by as proof that there is not much to comment upon or to condemn in our present policy. My Lords, may I say one word more in correction of the noble Earl's impression as to what I said at Nottingham? He assumes, as I understand him, that I promised that a certain proportion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's resources should be devoted to assist education. I am afraid that shows that the noble Earl gave a very unflattering study to my observations. I said exactly the reverse, and quoted what I had said at Newport. I said then, as I said at Nottingham, and as I say now, that, within limits, up to a certain point, there is in principle a strong case to be made out for assisted education; that the question was one of finance more than of principle and that the application of the principle depended entirely upon the resources which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have at his disposal, and the objects to which it might be his duty to

devote them. That is the statement which I made at Nottingham, and the statement which I repeat to-day. The noble Earl asks me whether we are satisfied that sending Sir John Simmons to the Vatican was a legal proceeding. I looked into the matter, not for that purpose, but when we sent the Duke of Norfolk to congratulate the Pope two years ago, or rather to return the congratulations of the Pope about the Jubilee. We examined into the matter, and took the advice that was at our disposal, and we were quite satisfied that there was no legal obstacle in the way of the measure we have taken. The policy in question I shall be happy to discuss with the noble Earl whenever he wishes. The mission is one purely concerning the affairs of Malta, and the noble Earl is aware that we are bound to maintain the Roman Catholic religion as established in that country; and if questions arise they have to be settled with the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Now, my Lords, I will say a few words with respect to Portugal. I entirely concur with all that has been said with regard to the pain which it has necessarily caused to Her Majesty's Government to have a strong difference of opinion with an ancient ally, and I think that when all the Papers which have been laid upon the Table, which will be distributed immediately, come into the hands of noble Lords, they will see that Portugal was warned again and again during the last two years that it was impossible for us to accept the claims which she made either to territory occupied by tribes that were under Her Majesty's protection, or to the territory occupied by British settlers along the course of the Shiré and the banks of the Lake Nyassa. The claims and intentions of this country in respect to those territories were again and again impressed upon the Portuguese Government. We had no wish to bring matters to an issue. If they had not sent Major Serpa Pinto with 4,000 armed men and a number of Gatling guns, if they had not taken steps which led to sanguinary collisions and violently hauled down the British flag, we should have been very pleased to leave the matter to a more leisurely settlement. But I think it is the general opinion of this country and the universal opinion of this House that it was absolutely impossible for us to allow the natives of Africa to believe that we were incapable of defending those whom we had taken under our protection, or those missionaries and traders who had formed centres of civilisation and colonisation in that country which they had occupied so long. I did not understand the noble Earl to question the policy in general, but he seemed to think that when we had resolved that the Portuguese Government were not really complying with our request and that it was necessary to speak to them in tones of greater pressure, we might by doing it more slowly have made the operation more palatable to the Portuguese Government and have caused less annoyance among the population. But other considerations pressed themselves very strongly upon my mind. The danger was that if there was any great length of time given for the purpose of considering our demands the decision would pass from the councils of statesmen to the councils of the populace in the streets. The feeling among the populace was so inflammable, there were such elements of disorder, that it was doubtful whether the Government would be able to hold them in hand. We felt there was great danger if the matter was delayed that it would fall into the hands of public meetings to decide, and that the decision would be given in favour of resistance, and resistance must have brought with it probably bloodshed, and certainly considerable danger to the integrity of the Portuguese Monarchy. We were of opinion that to avoid those complications, and to avoid other complications into which I need not enter, it was necessary, when once we had resolved to indicate that greater pressure would be applied, that as little time should pass as possible before the ultimate decision was arrived at, and we came to that decision in the interests of Portugal and in the interests of humanity. The noble Earl asks me with respect to Mr. Consul Johnston's so-called negotiations. A most excellent and admirable Consul was Mr. Consul Johnston. He was going out to Zanzibar, and I requested him to go by way of Lisbon, as he was acquainted with the Portuguese, and had acquaintances in the town. I stated that we should be glad to know what his private impressions were with respect to the views taken in that city. Unofficial proposals were

made to him, which he transmitted, naturally not in a despatch, but in a private letter to one of the Under Secretaries. The proposals were necessarily unpalatable to the Foreign Office, because they involved a sacrifice of those very settlements on the Shiré and the Nyassa which are a part of the main subjects of our controversy. Therefore it was quite impossible for us to go further with that discussion. When the noble Lord asks me whether there are to be any manœuvres at Gibraltar I am bound to confess that I do not know. It is rather early to decide. I should doubt very much whether Lord George Hamilton knows where the manœuvres in August are to take place. I should think that the dangers which the noble Lord indicates with respect to the use of Gibraltar are somewhat exaggerated but I have no knowledge whatever of any intention to conduct manœuvres there. However, I have no doubt the considerations to which the noble Lord has referred will be carefully considered by the Admiralty. With respect to the state of Ireland, I may say that the noble Lord has expressed some considerable discontent because the Speech from the Throne is not a long one, and because our list of measures is not more voluminous. I can only say that if we pass all those measures I shall be exceedingly glad, although somewhat surprised; and I do not think any good object is attained by piling up promises year after year which our experience of the slow working of the Parliamentary machine must have convinced us by this time it is unable adequately to fulfil. The noble Lord demurred very much to our self-congratulations on the improved state of Ireland, and he produced a set of figures.

EARL GRANVILLE: There is one question, before the noble Marquess deals with Ireland, with regard to the sugar bounties.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I think the ratification of the sugar bounties is not due until the end of next year, and we have always expressed our opinion that the ratification of that instrument must depend upon the amount of co-operation which we receive from the principal producers of sugar. I am bound to say that matters are not as favourable as they were at this time last year. The French Government have expressed themselves in very distinct language, which a year ago they had not done. The spirit of protection is stronger in the Government of the United States than it was then, and we have had from what was the Empire of Brazil an indication that Brazil is not disposed to take the view we take on the subject. I should be sorry to speak precipitately, because things change, and even in Brazil Governments are not absolutely perfect. I am not therefore able to promise the noble Lord an early introduction of the Bill. With respect to Ireland, the noble Lord showed by certain statistics which he had, and which I must say seem to me to be peculiarly his own, that crime had very much risen from the year 1879 to 1889. But the noble Lord was lost in hundreds of thousands, and I am not quite sure what particular calculation will come out to-morrow morning as the result of the noble Lord's arithmetical efforts. But if I may be permitted to do so, I should like to read some figures handed to me by my noble and learned Friend (Lord Ashbourne) showing what, from our point of view, is the real condition of persons boycotted wholly or partially in Ireland during the last three years. On the 30th of June, 1887, the number of persons boycotted wholly and partially was 4,901; on the 30th of June, 1888, the number had fallen to 1,324; on the 30th of June, 1889, the number had fallen to 317. On the 31st of December, 1889, the number had fallen to 152. Now, those figures seem to me to show very clearly that, whatever else has happened, or whatever the cause may be, boycotting has received a severe and exemplary blow in Ireland. I may state, perhaps, as also interesting with respect to agrarian crime, that in the quarter ending the 30th of June, 1887, the total was 231; in the quarter ending the 30th June, 1889, the number was 181; and in the quarter just ended, the 31st of December, 1889, the number had sunk to 95. We have, therefore, every ground for believing that the system of government that has been pursued in Ireland has tended to restore respect for law and for property and to diminish the prevalence of crime. That we can produce an absolute and immediate content, absolute peace, absolute harmony among the various parts of the population by any system that we can devise, we do not for

a moment pretend. Has anybody in the past been able to do such a thing in Ireland? Does the noble Lord for a moment believe that when Mr. Davitt and Mr. Parnell are installed at Dublin, and are governing Ulster at their will, there will be perfect harmony and goodwill among all portions of the Irish population? It is impossible in a few years—it is impossible, I fear, in many years—to undo the evil work which centuries of hesitating government have caused. It is impossible to produce an agreement among men of different and hostile creeds, of different races, of antagonistic traditions, to restore a harmony which has never existed there, and, I may almost say, has hardly existed in any other part of the world where similar conditions obtain. But we can do our best to enable that plant of harmony to grow, and we believe that all history points to this lesson—that it is only under the shadow of a just, discriminating, and firm government that the plant of harmony, of love, and goodwill among the various sections of the population can, even after the lapse of many generations, be expected to grow.

Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*, and ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Earl of MORLEY appointed, *nemine dissentiente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session.

COMMITTEE FOR PRIVILEGES—Appointed.

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE JOURNALS—Appointed.

STOPPAGES IN THE STREETS—Order to prevent, renewed.

APPEAL COMMITTEE—Appointed.

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS BILL.

A Bill to ascertain and limit the duration of speeches in the House of Lord—Was presented by the Lord Denman; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 4.)

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

A Bill to amend the law as to the endowment of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall—Was presented by the Lord Steward; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 5.)

HARES PRESERVATION BILL.

A Bill to provide a close time for hares in England, Scotland, and Wales—Was presented by the Lord Stanley of Alderley; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 6.

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 11th February, 1890.

The House met at half after One of the clock.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

NEW WRITS DURING THE RECESS.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House,—That he had issued, during the Recess, Warrants for New Writs,—for Dundee Burgh, *v.* Joseph Firth Bottomley Firth, esquire, deceased; for Lincoln County (North Kesteven or Sleaford Division), *v.* Right Honble Henry Chaplin, President of the Board of Agriculture for Great Britain; for Peterborough, *v.* Honble William John Wentworth Fitz-William, deceased; for Counties of Elgin and Nairn, *v.* Charles Henry Anderson, esquire, deceased; for Buckingham County (Northern or Buckingham Division), *v.* Honble Egerton Hubbard (now Lord Addington); for Brighton, *v.* Sir William Tindal Robertson, knight, deceased; for Lanark County (Partick Division), *v.* Alexander Craig Sellar, esquire, deceased.

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the return for that place; and if any thing shall come in question touching the return or election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double returns do withdraw till their returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time

being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a Candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any Witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime and misdemeanor; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

"Bill for the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Captain Edmund Hope Verney, for Buckingham County (Northern or Buckingham Division); John Leng, esquire, for Dundee Burgh; The Right honourable Henry Chaplin, for Lincoln County (North Kesteven or Sleaford Division); John Seymour Keay, esquire, for Counties of Elgin and Nairn; Alpheus Cleophas Morton, esquire, for Peterborough; Gerald Walter Erskine Loder, esquire, for Brighton.

NEW WRIT.

For Mid-Glamorganshire, *v.* Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot, esquire, deceased.

QUESTIONS.

THE PORTUGUESE IN EAST AFRICA.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): As a matter of urgency, I beg leave to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs the following question, of which I have given him private notice:—Whether his attention has been called to the numerous statements which have appeared in the Press concerning the excited state of public opinion in Portugal, and the hostility displayed towards British subjects resident there; whether he can state that the excitement arises from a belief on the part of the Portuguese that this country has acted towards them with precipitancy and severity; what is the nature of the relations at present existing between this country and Portugal; whether Her Majesty's Government have received any request from the Government of Portugal that the questions in dispute shall be referred to the mediation of a friendly Power or submitted to arbitration; and whether Her Majesty's Government are willing, or have considered the advisability of submitting the differences between this country and our ancient ally to such a friendly and peaceful settlement?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I do not think there are sufficient grounds for not following the usual practice and giving notice of this question. I may, however, mention now that papers in relation to affairs in East Africa will be presented immediately, and when he has these the hon. Member can form his own judgment.

MR. CREMER: I beg to give notice that I shall repeat my question to-morrow.

INDIA—THE CHIN-LUSHAI EXPEDITION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India a question of which I have only been able to give him brief private notice, but which is of special urgency, as affecting the lives of our troops. The question is to ask whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been drawn to the telegrams in the *Times* of yesterday as to the deaths, sickness, and suffering among the troops, English and native, engaged in the Chin-Lushai Expedition; whether the right hon. Gentleman can make any statement to the House on the subject; and whether the Secretary of State will cause full inquiry to be made?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST, Chatham): I only received notice of this question as I was leaving the India Office for the House, and I am afraid I am unable to give the hon. Member a full or satisfactory answer. So far as I am able to speak from a cursory perusal of the Reports that have come from India as to this expedition, mention is made in those Reports of considerable sickness and mortality among the troops engaged, and of certain remedial measures that have been adopted, but I am not in a position at this moment to give any detailed information. As to the statements in the *Times*' telegrams, I will look into the matters referred to, and, if necessary, further inquiry shall be made.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the information he has shows that a large number of deaths were caused by the improper encampment of the troops?

SIR JOHN GORST: I have no information that shows that, but if the hon. Member will repeat his question to-morrow, I will give him more explicit and detailed information.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury what arrangement he proposes to allow of Bills being brought in to-morrow?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I desire as far as possible to consult the convenience of hon. Members, and I think that the more convenient course will be to adjourn the debate upon which we may be engaged about 4 o'clock, and this will allow of Bills being brought in by hon. Members.

*MR. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields): Is it not doubtful if 4 o'clock would leave sufficient time for the purpose? Would it not be advisable to suspend the 6 o'clock rule?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish to meet the desire of hon. Members as to the adjournment of the debate, but I think it is undesirable to commence so early in the Session with a suspension of the Standing Order. We shall be guided very much by the number of notices which may be given to-day, and I will place myself in communication with hon. Members able to give me information as to the course desired.

THE LLANERCH COLLIERY ACCIDENT.

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I beg to ask the Home Secretary a question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether he is able to state what steps have been taken to ensure a complete inquiry into the terrible explosion which has recently taken place in Monmouthshire?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have appointed distinguished counsel to attend the inquest on behalf of the Home Office, and also two Chief Inspectors to attend and give any assistance they can to the Coroner; and I have no doubt there will be a full investigation into all the circumstances attending this calamity.

PRIVILEGE.

THE *TIMES* NEWSPAPER AND MR. PARNELL.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask leave to submit to the House a Motion in the character of privilege. Those who are familiar with the practice of this House are aware that this is the proper time at which a Motion of Privilege should be submitted to the House. The subject-matter of this Motion is, unfortunately, only too familiar to this House, and therefore I shall not find it necessary to trespass at any length upon your attention. It is, indeed, necessary for me to say extremely little about it. The Motion refers to what is known here and throughout the world as the forged letter published in the *Times* newspaper on April 18, 1887. I must say a word upon the reason why for so long a period the bringing forward of this Motion has been delayed. It was my duty, Sir, to consult you in reference to this Motion; and you, with your usual kindness and courtesy, pointed out to me that it was necessary and proper that some account should be given of why this Motion is brought forward now, and was not brought forward before. I do not desire to go into any of the past controversies with reference to the subject. The matter of delay, as a matter of principle in respect of questions of privilege, is not *primâ facie* a material one. In the book of authority which we consult on this subject it is said that the House will punish in one Session offences which have been committed in another; it also appears that a breach of privilege committed against one Parliament can be punished by another, and libels against former Parliaments have often been punished. Selden says it is clear a breach of privilege in one Parliament may be punished in another succeeding Parliament. I do not wish to weary the House with the precedents; they will be found collected in the second volume of *Hatsell*, at page 335, where breaches of privilege have been dealt with in different Sessions and even in different Parliaments. The circumstances which have delayed this Motion are familiar to the House, and I will endeavour not to raise any of the ill-feeling which attached to the former controversies. It is quite plain that if a question is raised of this character—a charge or calumny or libel of a character which would be a breach of privilege—if it is denied by the party inculpated, there must be some method of investigating the facts upon either side. Well, we on this of the House desired at the time that the House should have taken this matter into its own hands, and should have investigated the matter itself at the time. I am not going to re-open that argument further than to say I think that everything that has occurred confirms my opinion of the injustice of that omission, and our regret at the departure from the regular and Constitutional methods of dealing with those matters. However, the majority of the House decided otherwise, and it was impossible therefore to arrive at any judicial decision upon this matter until the verdict was given in a Court of Law the other day, about 10 days ago, I think it was on February 4. Of course, if the Commission appointed to inquire into these matters had made, in reference to these letters, an interim report, which it had power to do and might have done, we might then have proceeded upon the withdrawal of the letters, and we could have come to this House and said the matter was *res judicata*, and therefore it is ripe for you to deal with it. That was not the case. It was not until the decision in the case of "Parnell *v.* Walter" that we were placed in the position in which we are to-day, to say to the House of Commons, "There is no longer any dispute about the facts; it has been judicially determined in a Court of Law, and therefore there is nothing further in this matter to inquire into." That, Sir, is the ground upon which I have to submit to you that I have given a sufficient account of the delay which has taken place in this matter, and which will relieve it from the difficulties which might otherwise attach to the principle which certainly ought to be observed in privilege—and which I know, Sir, from what you have been kind enough to say to me, is a thing to which you attach very high importance—that a question of privilege should be brought on as soon as it possibly can be. What is the position of this matter? On April 18, 1887, was published in the *Times* what is known as

the forged letter. I do not think, Sir, it is necessary I should read to the House that foul and felonious document. It is branded in the memory of every man, I should think, who sits in this House. It will have to be read at the Table, and I need not read it now. But, Sir, it is of the essence of breach of privilege that you should show that the incriminated document affected the action of this House—that it was intended to affect the action of this House. It is not every libel upon a Member of the House of Commons which forms a breach of privilege—it is a libel which, in its intent, in its character, and its consequences, is intended to affect the conduct and pervert the judgment of the House of Commons. Well now, for that purpose, I will read—I will ask the clerk formally at the Table to read—the comment in the leading article of the *Times* newspaper, with which that letter was introduced. We might have inferred from the character of the letter itself and the time at which it was introduced what were its object and intent. April 18, 1887, was a marked day, a day which will be long remembered, especially in Ireland, for it was the day which was fixed for the Second Reading of the Crimes Act. That was an issue gravely affecting the Members for Ireland, and gravely affecting the character of the House of Commons in its dealings with Ireland. You might have inferred what was the meaning of this publication then without any avowal of it, but the *Times* newspaper wrote this :-

"We place before our readers to-day a document the grave importance of which it would be difficult to over-estimate. It is a facsimile of a letter from Mr. Parnell, written a week after the Phœnix Park murders, excusing his public condemnation of the crime, and distinctly condoning, if not approving, the murder of Mr. Burke. It needs no further words to recommend this document to the serious consideration of the public, and especially of Members of the House of Commons. At the close of to-night's sitting, if the arrangements made by the Whips hold good, the division will be taken in the House on the second reading of the Crimes Bill. That the Amendment moved at Mr. Gladstone's instance, and in the interest of his Parnellite allies, will be defeated by a great majority is beyond doubt. There is, however, a preliminary question of great significance to be settled. No graver danger has ever threatened public life in England than 'the demoralization in politics' against which Mr. Goschen, in his speech on Saturday at Edinburgh, adjured all honest men to make a stand."

When I sit down I shall have to ask the House of Commons—I will say both sides of the House of Commons—to make a stand as honest men against the greatest example, as I think, of demoralization in politics of which modern times has any example. It is not, perhaps, necessary after that quotation to add anything, but, as if to leave no doubt in the matter, the responsible manager of the *Times* admitted in the witness-box what his object was in publishing that letter. These were some of the questions put to the manager of the *Times*—

"Why did you select April 18, 1887, for the publication of the letter?—Because I thought it was a proper occasion to produce it. Why did you think it was a proper occasion to produce it?—I thought it was a suitable time at which to make the public acquainted with the character of the men who were then prominent in public affairs. Why did you select April 18 as a suitable time?—There were discussions then going on in Parliament which made that a proper moment. Discussions about what?—Discussions going on in Parliament upon Irish affairs which made that a proper time—a suitable time for publishing the letter. Every journalist chooses his own moment. You selected the moment of the second reading of Mr. Balfour's Crimes Bill?—I did."

So that we are not left to inference as to what was the intention and object with which this forgery was uttered. It was intended to have a direct and immediate effect on the conduct of Parliament. There is now, therefore, no issue of fact in dispute. The publication is undisputed. The object is not disputed. It is not disputed by the *Times* newspaper itself that this letter was a forgery. It was forged for the express purpose, and it was procured for the express purpose, of destroying the character of the Member in question; and it was intended to destroy the political party and the political objects with which that Member was connected. In the action of "Parnell against Walter" Mr. Walter has not affected to palliate or to allege anything in mitigation of this publication. He has been called upon to pay what I think I will call exemplary—I cannot call them vindictive—damages. So far the law has vindicated Mr. Parnell from what I can only call, as I have called it before, this foul and felonious assault. It has visited, as far as the law can go, condign punishment on the utterer of this forgery. It has inflicted a still graver and still more righteous penalty

than any pecuniary fine—the perpetual ignominy which attends the memory of that transaction. So far, then, the judicial tribunals have made amends to the Member for Cork. But behind and beyond the offence against the Member himself lies what I conceive to be a far more important issue—the gross, palpable, flagrant outrage which has been attempted, and in a great part accomplished, on the House of Commons. The object of this atrocious calumny is avowed. It was thought, perhaps, that there were some weak-kneed Members of this House who might have a hesitation as to the vote they were going to give upon the Crimes Bill. It was thought that there might be men who might have scruples as to the pledges they had given to their constituents upon the subject of coercion. It was thought necessary to inflame public prejudice, to poison the public mind, to strengthen Members into giving this vote—to supply them with a justification for the vote they were to give or had given. That was the object of this publication. It was for this object, Sir, that this letter was procured, was kept lying by, was treasured up until a propitious moment came, and then was produced and launched upon the world on the morning of the second reading of this Bill. It would be a waste of time—I should be abusing the patience of the House—if I were to argue at any length that this was a breach of the privileges of this House. Any man who knows anything of Parliamentary law knows very well that a grosser, more palpable, breach of the privileges of this House cannot possibly be conceived. I am not going to weary you by a recital of many musty precedents on this matter. I will just for a moment call your attention to recent action in matters of this kind by leaders of this House whose memories are respected. I would call attention just for one moment to the case in February, 1875, when Mr. Disraeli was leader of the House, and a Member of the House was charged with a breach of privilege by the Irish Members. It was the present Lord Justice Lopes, whose language was complained of. He was charged with having said that the Liberals were allied with a disreputable Irish band whose watchword was Home Rule, but who really meant repeal of the Union. What did Mr. Disraeli say to that? Did he say it was not a breach of the privileges of this House? He said:—

> "I am not here to deny that it is a breach of privilege to speak of any Members of this House in their capacity as such in terms which imply disgrace, or, as the hon. Gentleman has said, obloquy."

He called upon the hon. Member responsible to express regret for what he had said, and the call was immediately responded to, and thus the House was relieved from the painful necessity of making it a question of privilege. Nothing can show more clearly that that was a question of privilege in the opinion of Mr. Disraeli, and that nothing but the retractation of the words would suffice. I need only refer to the case of Mr. Plimsoll. It was admitted by everybody that the publication of the placard was a breach of privilege. It was admitted that Mr. Plimsoll made his apology in the matter, and I remember I then urged upon the Government of the day that they should treat it as the case of Mr. Lopes had been treated, and that, it having been apologised for, no further proceedings should be taken. Sir Stafford Northcote, however, thought so strongly of the matter of privilege that, while agreeing that no further steps should be taken, he required that the Journals of the House should record the fact that what had taken place was a breach of privilege. Sir Stafford Northcote, on the 18th of June, 1883, brought a charge of breach of privilege against the late Mr. John Bright in this House, and the words complained of were—

> "That they (the Conservative Party as a whole) were found in alliance with an Irish rebel party, the main portion of whose funds for the purposes of agitation came directly from the avowed enemies of England, and whose oath of allegiance is broken by association with its enemies."

I will say no more on the question of precedent except to point out what Hallam says as to the power of the House to vindicate its own character and honour.

> "The majority are bound to respect," says Hallam, "and indeed have respected, the right of every Member, however obnoxious to them, on all questions of privilege, even in a case most unlikely to occur—that of libel. It would be unjust if a patriotic legislator, exposed to calumny for his zeal in the public interest, should necessarily be driven to the troublesome and uncertain process of law when

the offence so manifestly affects the real interests of Parliament and of the nation."

It is impossible more accurately to express the real principle, and justification of the principle, of privilege than in those words. I do not know whether it will be objected that a case which has been the subject of an action at law ought not to be made also a question of breach of privilege. But obviously that is not the case. The decision of a Court of Law cannot oust the action of this House, just as the action of this House cannot oust an action for damages. The two charges are current and not alternative in respect of jurisdiction. In point of fact, I do not know that any question can here be raised. The language of Lord Ellenborough is quite clear on that point. He said:—

"Whether it was consistent with the dignity of such bodies as the House of Commons, and, what was more, with the immediate and effectual exercise of their important functions, that they should wait for the comparatively late result of a prosecution in the ordinary Courts of Law for the vindication of their privileges from wrong and insult. . . Therefore, by the necessity of the case, the principles of human reason seemed to require that such bodies, constituted for such purposes and exercising such functions as they did, should possess the powers which the history of the earliest time showed them, in fact, to possess and use."

That authority meets any argument that, because there has been an action at law, the authority of this House is to be ousted. It is perfectly obvious that that must be so, because the object of the two proceedings is utterly different. The object of an action at law is to vindicate the character and reputation of the individual, whilst the object of such a Motion as this is to assert the privileges of this House and the dignity of Parliament. There is nobody who will be more disposed than I am to assert that questions of privilege ought not to be lightly raised, and ought not to be lightly authorised. It is necessary, however, in my opinion—and, I believe, in the opinion of everyone who has had any experience of Parliament—that the power should remain and abide in the House of vindicating its dignity and authority, to be exercised upon adequate and necessary occasions. Therefore, if it be true that there is no dispute as to the fact of publication, as to the object of the publication, and as to the fact that that publication constitutes a breach of the privileges of this House, there remains only one single question—and that is, Is this an adequate and necessary occasion for this House to exercise its power? How does the matter stand? This is no case of hasty and inconsiderate action on the part of some obscure libeller. It is avowed to have been a deliberate attempt to influence and to pervert the judgment of Parliament by making an accusation calculated to destroy the character of the leader of the Irish Party, for the purpose of destroying that Party, and with it the hopes of the nation which that Party represents. Does it comport with the dignity and the honour of the House of Commons to pass over such a transaction as this forgery in silence as though it were a matter of indifference to it? Neither is this the hasty action of some inexperienced persons which might be passed over by this House and be forgotten. In the cases to which I have referred where the breach of privilege was not insisted upon, apologies were made in this House by the persons who had committed the offences. In this case no apology has been made by the *Times* newspaper to the House of Commons. There has doubtless been made what is called an apology, but that was to the hon. Member for Cork. Are we, I ask again, to pass over this thing in silence? It is not a thing done in a corner; it is a thing that is known and that will be remembered in every part of the civilised world It cannot be passed over or forgotten—it will never be forgotten. I should think that it would be quite unworthy of the dignity of this House to have regard, as is sometimes done in the case of newspapers, to the insignificant subordinates in this foul transaction. I am not pointing here to the action of the Houstons, the Pigotts, or the MacDonalds. We know that the defendant who has been condemned in the Courts of Law, who is the principal registered proprietor of the *Times*, and is responsible for its conduct and its action, is a gentleman of high position, of great political experience, who was for a long period a Member of this House, and who knew very well and who intended very deliberately the consequences of this publication and its effect upon the House of Commons. No, this is not one of those petty personal libels

which the House of Commons can afford to dismiss as beneath its notice. In my opinion, this is a case in which the judgment of the world will be formed as to the justice of the House of Commons. I have spoken of the honour and the dignity of the House of Commons, but its honour, its dignity, is based upon its justice. I have said that this is not solely, it is not even mainly, a personal question merely affecting the hon. Member for Cork, although I feel myself, and I cannot help thinking that there are many Gentlemen on both sides of this House who also feel, that not elsewhere but in this place there ought to be some reparation made to him for this libel. But that is not the principal matter. Our political strifes, both in and out of this House are, God knows, bitter enough; but whatever may be our political differences, there is one thing in which all will concur in an assembly of English gentlemen, and that is in the denunciation of the use of poisoned weapons. I think that there is one thing that we may do to-night. We may brand with the stigma of Parliamentary reprobation the art of political forgery. In that denunciation we invite the assistance of all Members of all parties on both sides of the House; we invite the assistance and co-operation of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, not only as Members of this House, but as representing the great interests with which they are charged. I am only sorry that the duty I have taken upon myself in this matter was not undertaken by the natural leader of this House. I am sure that he is as zealous for the honour and dignity of this House as I am, and certainly this is an occasion in which it is necessary that the honour and dignity of this House should be vindicated. Before I sit down I have only one other thing to say. I desire to point out that on the decision of the House to-night upon this question there are dependent issues even larger than those to which I have referred, issues which I may justly term national issues. What is the theory of the Union between England and Ireland? When you took away from Ireland her independent Parliament, and when you invited her representatives to come here and sit among you, as a weak and defenceless minority amongst you, you pledged yourselves to treat them as your equals. Every one remembers the eloquent sentences in which that pledge was given in the great speech of Mr. Pitt, and it was that her Representatives should be treated as English and Scotch Members were treated. Now, I will ask any candid man whether, supposing there had been pending in this House some critical question vitally affecting Her Majesty's Government, say a Vote of Want of Confidence, and that on the morning when the Division was to take place there had appeared in the *Times* newspaper a forged letter, attributing to the leader of the Government conduct which, if the charge were true, would have covered him with infamy; say, for instance, there had appeared in the *Times* a charge against the Chancellor of the Exchequer of malversation of the public funds, can any man in this House honestly say that the House would have been justified in taking no notice of such a matter? If it be the case, as it is, that the reprobation of Parliament would have been expressed upon such a transaction, what measure are you going to deal out on the present occasion to the Irish Members who sit among you? I have spoken of what the professions of those who brought about the Union were; we shall see to-night how you carry out those professions. No doubt, the Irish Members form a weak minority among you; they number only about one-sixth of the whole House; and you, the majority, have the power, if you choose to use it, to overcome and to overbear them. I do not, however, think that that is the course that the House of Commons will take upon this occasion; if they do so it will, indeed, be a commentary upon the spirit by which those who support the Union are dominated. For these reasons I submit to the House that this is a case in which the House of Commons not only has the right, but that there is imposed upon it the duty, of vindicating its own honour in this transaction. Therefore it is that I ask leave to move this Resolution—

"That the publication in the *Times* newspaper of April 18, 1887, of a letter falsely alleged to have been written by Mr. Parnell, a Member of this House, and the comments thereon in the said newspaper, is a false and scandalous libel and a breach of the privileges of this House."

Complaint being made to the House by the Right honourable Sir William Har

Sir William Harcourt

court, of the publication in the *Times* newspaper of April 18th, 1887, of a Letter falsely alleged to have been written by Mr. Parnell, a Member of this House, and of the comments thereupon in the said newspaper,

The said newspaper was delivered in, and the Letter and the comments thereon complained of were read as followeth:—

"15 | 5 | 82.

"Dear Sir,

"I am not surprised at your friend's anger, but he and you should know that to denounce the murders was the only course open to us. To do that promptly was plainly our best policy.

"But you can tell him and all others concerned, that, though I regret the accident of Lord F. Cavendish's death, I cannot refuse to admit that Burke got no more than his deserts.

"You are at liberty to show him this, and others whom you can trust also, but let not my address be known. He can write to House of Commons.

"Yours very truly,

"CHAS. S. PARNELL."

"We place before our readers to-day a document the grave importance of which it would be difficult to over-estimate. It is a *fac simile* of a letter from Mr. Parnell, written a week after the Phœnix Park murders, excusing his public condemnation of the crime, and distinctly condoning, if not approving, the murder of Mr. Burke. It needs no further words to recommend this document to the serious consideration of the public, and especially of Members of the House of Commons. At the close of to-night's sitting, if the arrangements made by the whips hold good, the division will be taken in the House on the second reading of the Crimes Bill. That the Amendment moved at Mr. Gladstone's instance, and in the interests of his Parnellite allies, will be defeated by a great majority is beyond doubt. There is, however, a preliminary question of great significance to be settled. No graver danger has ever threatened public life in England than the 'demoralization in politics' against which Mr. Goschen, in his speech on Saturday at Edinburgh, adjured all honest men to make a stand."

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the publication in the *Times* newspaper of April 18th, 1887, of a Letter falsely alleged to be written by Mr. Parnell, a Member of this House, and the comments thereupon in the said newspaper, is a false and scandalous libel, and a breach of the Privileges of this House."—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman has solemnly assured the House that in submitting this Motion he is animated solely by zeal for the honour and dignity of the House of Commons. I accept that statement without the slightest reserve, and if hon. Members who may hereafter address the House are also animated solely by desire for its honour and dignity, I think it is possible that we may carry to a conclusion a debate upon this vexed question without those scenes of heat and irritation which are so detrimental to the honour and dignity of the House. The right hon. Gentleman, when he addresses the House, is generally rich in precedents, and I confess I listened to him with an earnest desire to gather from him some precedent for the very unusual course he has invited the House to pursue. But the right hon. Gentleman did not give the House one single precedent for the peculiar course he has chosen to pursue. He most unnecessarily cited one or two precedents to prove that language of this kind constituted a breach of the privileges of the House. I am afraid these exhibitions of the research of the right hon. Gentleman were quite unnecessary. The question we have to debate now is not whether this is a breach of the privileges of the House, but it is whether it is for the honour and dignity of the House to put in force now, nearly three years after the offence ["Oh, oh!"] complained of was committed, the very invidious and dangerous procedure by privilege which ought to be most jealously watched and most carefully guarded. I think, notwithstanding the derisive cheers of hon. Members opposite, that this proposition is worthy of some examination on the part of the House, and, notwithstanding these scornful interjections, I will do my best to examine it in the same temperate spirit as that which has characterised the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The question is what course ought the House to pursue at the present time; and I think I can give the House three distinct reasons, which I think will convince those who are candid enough to weigh and consider them, that it is not for the dignity or the honour of the House to embark on the procedure which the right hon. Gentleman has suggested. The first reason I give—I know it will be received by some hon. Members with derisive cheers—is the reason of time. The right hon. Gentleman has not adduced one single precedent to show that this House has ever, in such cases as the present one, after so long a lapse of time, proceeded with a Motion of Privilege.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I did not read them all; but I referred to a long list of cases in the second volume of *Hatsell's Precedents*, and in some of them action was taken, not only in distant Sessions, but even in successive Parliaments. If the right hon. Gentleman will look at the book he will find a long list of precedents which I referred to in my argument.

*SIR J. GORST: The right hon. Gentleman must have known that the question of time was a very important one, when he was warned by the Speaker that that was the difficulty he had to surmount, and he should not only have referred to that list, but he ought to have cited one or two examples in support of his position. It is quite true that breaches of privilege in one Parliament have been punished in successive Parliaments, but these have been cases in which there has been no earlier opportunity for the punishment of the breaches of privilege. Will the right hon. Gentleman, or any of his learned friends, cite a single precedent in which Parliament has waited for nearly three years, and then entertained a Motion such as that of the right hon. Gentleman? Let them quote one such precedent on this point, and then I shall be happy to examine it. Let me remind the House of what has happened. The libel which is the subject of the Motion was published on the 18th of April, 1887. It was referred to in debate on the same day by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). It was then denounced by him as a falsehood and forgery. There is no Parliamentary principle more firmly settled—and I believe the right hon. Gentleman will not contradict it—than that procedure for breach of privilege should be prompt and immediate. If the hon. Member for Cork, or if the right hon. Gentleman himself, in his zeal for the honour and dignity of the House, had thought that this language was a breach of privilege, the 18th of April, 1887, was the proper day upon which notice should have been taken. Three days later, on the 21st of April, there was another breach of privilege committed by the *Times* newspaper in denouncing a statement made in this House by the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), as demonstrably and flagrantly false. There was technically about as clear a breach of privilege as possibly could be committed, and it was taken notice of on the 3rd of May by the hon. Baronet the hon. Member for Antrim (Sir C. Lewis). In the debate the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) made a speech in which, taking notice of the appearance in the *Times* of the letter then alleged to be forged, he did not ask for any procedure against the *Times*, but he said a telegram had been received from Mr. Parnell, consenting to an inquiry, not only into the charges against the party, but also as to the forged letters. In the same debate the right hon. Gentleman

"repeated Mr. Dillon's offer to submit the whole question of the authenticity of the forged letters and the other charges which had been published under the heading of *Parnellism and Crime* to a Select Committee of the House of Commons,"

and Mr. Morley, who spoke on behalf of Mr. Gladstone,

"accepted the extension of the scope of the inquiry definitely, including the letter imputed to the hon. Member for Cork, and any other specific charges which could be extracted from *Parnellism and Crime*."

[*Opposition Cheers.*] Hon. Members cheer that statement, showing that at the outset these charges were denied, and investigation challenged, but not by way of breach of privilege. If it were intended, if it were desired by any Members of the House, that this should be treated as a breach of the privileges of the House, then was the time that that course ought to have been taken; but it is wholly against the whole course of the custom of the House for Members first to suggest inquiry by a Select Committee, and then years after to turn round and endeavour to induce the House to put in force procedure on privilege in relation to this very same offence. On the 6th of July in the same year the hon. Member for Cork made a statement to the House in which he denied the authenticity of the letters, and, referring to the alleged *fac simile* letter published on the 18th of April, he went on to say that the signature attached to it was one he had not used since 1879. The next day, on the 7th of July, the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) asked the Government not to proceed by way of privilege—it was, indeed, then too late—but he asked for a Select Committee to inquire into the charges, and the hon. Member for Cork stated that he himself was about to put the same question the

hon. Baronet had put. I have quoted these facts because I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his friends if they can give one single precedent in which the House of Commons has, after a Motion has been made for the appointment of a Select Committee, acted, in reference to the very same transaction, by way of this procedure of privilege, especially years afterwards? It seems to me that I have stated the case fairly. It is contrary to the received maxims of the House of Commons that procedure of privilege should take place unless it takes place promptly. In this matter there were abortive and unsuccessful proceedings taken, and then the question was laid aside for three years. The right hon. Gentleman has been invited not only by me, but by Mr. Speaker, to meet this objection, and he has not done so by anything which he has stated in his speech. And unless some argument or precedent should be adduced by some other speaker, I ask the House to say that it is not for the honour and dignity of the House that, after this long lapse of time, it should have recourse to this peculiar Motion. My next reason for saying it is not for the honour and dignity of the House that the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman should be accepted is that this libel has been the subject of legal proceedings elsewhere, and is, to a certain extent, at the present moment *sub judice*. It is now nearly 12 months since it was proved before the Commission that this letter was a forgery. The Commission might at once have reported upon that part of the case. That they did not do so is *primâ facie* evidence that the Commission had some good reason for not separating the part of the case constituted by this letter from the other charges and allegations which were made by the *Times*. ["Oh!"] One would suppose that after a Royal Commission had been appointed and had sat to hear evidence it would be at least discreet of Members of the House of Commons to await the Report of that Commission. The Commission was appointed by the authority of Parliament, and in this case it would be most consistent with the honour and dignity of Parliament to wait for the Report of that Commission before taking any rash action upon one of the charges and allegations. But if there is an excuse for the Motion of Privilege, surely it ought to have been made when the forgery was exposed. My argument shows that even then it would have been too late. But if there is any force in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, surely there was the opportunity 12 months ago to make the Motion which has been made to-night; and if the right hon. Gentleman had made the Motion 12 months ago, he would have supported it with just the same arguments. For the facts were just as notorious then as they are now. I know that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby will object to this statement, that 12 months ago no Judgment of the Civil Court had been delivered. But does this House proceed upon the Judgment of a Civil Court? It has never done so, because it is itself superior to all Courts. It proceeds on notorious and well-established facts, and for Parliamentary purposes and procedure in this House the fact of the forgery of this letter was as well established then as it is now. Therefore there is no precedent for adopting the procedure of privilege in a case which has been the subject of inquiry before other tribunals, whether those tribunals have pronounced a decision or, as in this case, have not had time to do so. My third reason for objecting to the right hon. Gentleman's Motion is that this is not a case in which it is for the honour and dignity of the House to proceed by way of privilege. This would have been as strong an objection if the right hon. Gentleman had made his Motion in 1887 as it is to-day. I will refer to the case argued in this House for many days in 1887, in which a libel was uttered about the hon. Member for Mayo, of a precisely similar character in itself, though perhaps not so serious in the gravity of the charge made, but as much a breach of privilege, because it attributed deliberate falsehoods to the hon. Member. That question was debated in this House for many nights; all the leading Members of the House took part in the debate, and the House decided, by a very large majority, that it was not expedient to treat what had been done as a breach of privilege. There were speeches made in that debate to which the attention of hon. Members opposite might be directed with advantage. It was pointed out that if the House were to embark on this pro-

cedure in the case of every serious libel which is made upon a Minister or a public man in the age in which we live the time of the House would be taken up with nothing else. The right hon. Gentleman has insisted on the monstrous conduct of the *Times* in attacking in the manner it did the character of the hon. Member for Cork, with a view to influencing the action of this House in its debates and divisions. Why, there is not a single day passes in which charges of the most atrocious description are not brought against my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and with the object, too, of influencing the debates and action of this House. If you are going to have the proprietors of *United Ireland* brought to the Bar of the House every time they bring a criminal charge of murder or falsehood against my right hon. Friend, the House will have little else to do but to hear statements at the Bar, and to mete out punishment to the delinquents. Even the Members of the Government to which the right hon. Gentleman opposite belonged were made the object of the foulest and of quite unnameable charges. I must disagree with the right hon. Gentleman in his definition of the occasions on which the House ought to interfere in these matters. It is not for me to lay down any law on this question. It is not like a matter which is made the subject of discussion in a Court of Law, in which there is appeal to the House of Lords, where general principles and authorities are established. This House has always reserved to itself the right of acting on each particular occasion with regard to the particular circumstances; and the precedents which the right hon. Gentleman abstained from inflicting upon the House would not, I think, have been of much value. Let us consider when the interference of this House ought to be invoked. It cannot be for every libel of a public man. No one denies that it must be a libel with reference to his conduct in this House. But even such libels are not always to be taken in hand by the House. Members of the Government have, like every other subject, the protection of the Criminal and the Civil Law, and every Minister of the Crown, and every private Member of Parliament who considers himself to be injured in his reputation or in his person by anything said in a newspaper, has the same recourse as any other subject to the Criminal Courts for punishment, or to the Civil Courts for damages; and he has exactly the same hope of redress. It is only in the interests of the House, it is only in the vindication of the honour and dignity of the House, that procedure in privilege should ever be taken. It is only when it is likely that unless such procedure is taken the House's own liberty of action might be interfered with, or its own course of conduct improperly influenced, that the House should move. The question is what is the position of the House at the time the Motion is made. Does any person on either side of the House believe that this Motion is necessary for the dignity or independence of the House? These forged letters are an old story. Hon. Members may make political capital out of them. It may be very useful for purposes of party to keep up a case of this kind. It may be very convenient from time to time to interrupt business. Hon. Gentlemen may think it possible to derive advantage from this case, and thereby to cast a slur upon Her Majesty's Government. But is it for the interest of the House to enter upon a discussion of this question of breach of privilege and to have, perhaps, the proprietor of the *Times* at the Bar of the House? He might ask to be heard by counsel—[Mr. LABOUCHERE: By the Attorney General]—and if he asked I do not think the House would refuse him that advantage. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman I am not making a joke of this Motion. I might have met his speech by party chaff attributing to him all sorts of motives in raising this question. I might have said that it was to gain a small party advantage at the opening of the Session at the cost of Her Majesty's Government. I might have said that it was intended to obstruct the proceedings upon the Queen's Speech. But I have not. I have treated this matter quietly and calmly, and although the right hon. Gentleman may laugh, although those who are so zealous for the honour and dignity of the House may receive what I have said with jeers and derision, I am perfectly frank in what I say. I appeal to Members of the House who are common-sense men of business whether, when we are met for the discharge of important duties, when our time is so valuable, and

there is not a moment too much for the legislation and discussion to which we are to be invited, it will conduce to the honour and dignity of the House three years after the offence has been committed to call the proprietor of the *Times* to the Bar of the House, and to embark upon one of those endless and, I think, derogatory discussions upon the privileges of Parliament which, as far as my experience has gone, have rarely if ever conduced to the dignity and honour of the House. I beg, therefore, to move, as an Amendment to the right hon. Gentleman's Motion,—

"That this House declines to treat the publication in the *Times* newspaper of the 18th April, 1887, of a Letter purporting to have been written by Mr. Parnell, and of the comments thereon, as a breach of the Privileges of this House."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to treat the publication in the *Times* newspaper of the 18th April, 1887, of a Letter purporting to have been written by Mr. Parnell, and of the comments thereon, as a breach of the Privileges of this House."—*(Sir John Gorst.)*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, notwithstanding his ingenious speech, must be in some degree affected by the manner in which that speech has been received even on his own side of the House. Those of us who are accustomed to hear not only the admirable speeches of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but also the loud cheers with which Ministers in general are greeted from that side of the House, must have felt that something was wanting, and that something wanting—I appeal to every Gentleman sitting on the other side—is this, that hon. Members feel that they have not been treating with fair-play a brother Member of this House. This is essentially a question of fair-play. I think if we are going to strain our proceedings in one direction or another it should be in favour of an Irish Member, and especially at the present time and under the peculiar circumstances that have been existing for the last three or four years. The right hon. Gentleman asks why the right hon. Member for Derby has not brought forward precedents, but he shortly afterwards answered his own objection by saying that musty precedents were of no use. It is undeniable that this is a breach of the privileges of the House, and also that the House has kept in its own hands the mode in which it would deal with such questions, applying the rules of privilege or not according to the special circumstances of each case. This is a breach of privilege, and why is it not to be treated as such? The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the time as a reason, and time has been used on every single occasion when this question has been brought forward. When the libel was first complained of it was said, "You have not moved that it is false," and there were many who suggested that it was true. When the matter was brought forward again, it was said the House of Commons was not the right tribunal to deal with it, that it was matter for a Special Commission. And now, after an action has been brought, and heavy damages awarded, it is said we are too late. Now this answer is not hastily made, but it is not the real answer. The real reason why this Motion is refused is that on each successive occasion it has been found inconvenient to visit the powerful proprietor of the *Times* with the consequences that would fall on the shoulders of a weaker offender. It has been said that we ought to wait until the Special Commission has reported. But what greater weight or authority has the Special Commission with respect to these forged letters than the judgment of a Court of Law? The Special Commission is, in my opinion, an unconstitutional body, and has no greater weight in matters of this kind than any three gentlemen of high character to whom such a matter might be referred. I say in this case so far from shrinking from applying the law of privilege there is every reason for applying it. In the first place, it is one of the most cruel forgeries ever invented. Never was a forgery more deliberate, more spiteful, more recklessly published, or more cruelly pressed to the prejudice of any gentleman's honour. It was aggravated by the circumstance that the forgery was undoubtedly aimed, as it was undoubtedly concocted, for the express purpose of

influencing the vote of Parliament. It is also aggravated by the circumstance that the *Times* newspaper is, or was, the most influential organ of public opinion in this country. If ever there is to be any use made of the privilege of Parliament it ought to be on this occasion. I am not in favour of continually using the privilege of Parliament; I think it ought to be very jealously considered before being put in force; but if we are ever to put it in force it should be on an occasion when a Member has been assailed in the midst of a heated political discussion by weapons every gentleman must think beneath contempt, and for an avowed political purpose, which it may suit the right hon. Gentleman to ignore but which has been recognised by the *Times* itself. I hope, for the honour of the House, hon. Gentlemen opposite will not allow us to go into the lobby alone. If I were to regard this as merely a question of party interest I should say nothing could please me better than to see hon. Gentlemen opposite persist in refusing fair-play and justice to an Irish Member. But although I do not desire well for hon. Members opposite—politically I mean—and know they could make no greater political mistake, I would not have that mistake made at the expense of the honour and public estimation of this Assembly. I trust for the honour of this House that hon. Members opposite will not hesitate to give a vote as they would give it had this been an attack by a Radical newspaper on the character of a Minister, and will support the Motion of my right hon. Friend.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Sir, it has just been made known to us by the course taken on the Treasury Bench when my hon. and learned Friend sat down that the Government have said all that they have to say. Their case is completely before us, and we are called upon to act on the statement which they have made. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State gave three reasons for the Amendment which he proposed on behalf of the Government. I will take first the last of those reasons. He said—"Do not interfere, because public men are continually the objects of painful and shameful charges; and if you interfere when charges of that kind are made you will have nothing to do but to pursue a course of such interference." But surely, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman must have been conscious at the time of the utter weakness of the ground on which he stood. No doubt charges of all kinds are made. One, a Minister is an enemy to liberty; another, a Member of the Opposition is an enemy to order; men are engaged in a conspiracy to break up the Empire; men are breaking faith with the people, denying their pledges, doing in public life that which in private life it would not be honourable to do—these things are said and these charges are bandied backwards and forwards. But when these charges are made they are in almost every case constructive charges, the whole force of which depends upon the interpretation of acts and language. They are not charges founded upon definite facts—facts so definite that they might at any time be made the subject of trial in a Court of Justice, for no issue more positive or more clear could be raised. Then the right hon. Gentleman says we ought not to have every breach of privilege made the subject of discussion in this House. Certainly not. The great majority of the House, I may say the House unanimously, has always been desirous to find a reasonable road, if it could be found, out of the necessity of taking notice of these breaches of privilege. The House has been too glad when the person accused of committing them, if he happened to be a Member of this House, has been ready to purge his offence by apology. Has this offence been purged by apology? I admit that something called an apology was spoken by the Attorney General, but there are apologies which are a gross aggravation of the offence. The Attorney General is a man of honour and distinction, and therefore I can only express my wonder that he should have consented to be made the vehicle of such an apology as was offered. But notwithstanding that we desire to avoid these discussions, yet privilege is a reality, and the defence of privilege in reasonable methods and in cases of sufficient gravity is an absolutely necessary part of the defensive armour of this House. But, then, what says the right hon. Gentleman in his two other arguments? One of them is that this Motion

is made too soon, and the other is that the Motion is made too late. If (he said) the Motion should be made at all, which he did not admit, it ought to be made after the Commission had reported. With regard to its being made too soon, I think I need not detain the House one moment in argument. The real argument of the right hon. Gentleman, if it can be made good, is that this Motion is made too late. Was the right hon. Gentleman satisfied with the reception of his own argument on his own side of the House? The right hon. Gentleman when he rose was received with the cheers of his friends. Those cheers were justified by the known ability of the right hon. Gentleman; but they were the first and last cheers that accompanied the delivery of his speech. [*Cries of* "No!"] I think I am saying what is literally true. The right hon. Gentleman opposite may have an opportunity of advancing his own argument and of seeing what cheers he can evoke. I affirm that there were no cheers during any portion of the argument or at the conclusion of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to mark the satisfaction of his friends. It was not his fault; he made the best argument he could. Now, let us see what this argument is worth. He admits that precedents exist for punishing in one Parliament offences committed during the existence of another Parliament; but, he says, not in cases where the other Parliament had the opportunity of inflicting the punishment. My affirmation is this—that there has been no moment since the time when this offence was committed that we were in a condition justifiably to submit a Motion to this House. Let me proceed to prove that. The right hon. Gentleman has not distinctly indicated when he thinks it should have been done, and I will undertake to show that there was no period when we were in a position to do it. These letters were published; they were immediately denied by the hon. Member for Cork, and declared to be forged letters. On every other occasion that I have known in this House the word of a Member of Parliament, speaking in his place, has been accepted by the House as absolute and final truth. On this occasion, I grieve to say, there was a total departure from that salutary principle. The denial of the hon. Member for Cork was denied, and a no less important Member of this House than my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale said—I may not be giving the correct words, but I quote their absolute purport, and can undertake to produce them—"It is true we have got on the one side the denial of the hon. Member for Cork, but we have got on the other side the assertion of the *Times*." It was not possible to move that an act was a breach of privilege of this House, with respect to which the matter charged was charged out of this House, while the denial of the charge by the Member in this House was not accepted. Obviously, then, there arose a case in which inquiry was necessary. Usually, when the fact charged is denied by the person concerned, what naturally follows is that the House proceeds on the denial as, at least, the *primâ facie* evidence in the case, but allows, of course, to the party to be brought to the Bar the opportunity of making good his accusation. Here the House refused undoubtedly to take that step. The denial of Mr. Parnell for the first time was not accepted by a large number of Members of the House. What was our course? We lost no time, but said it was evident there must be a process of inquiry. The National and Constitutional process is by a Parliamentary Committee. In order that there might be no pretext for refusing to refer the case to that tribunal, the hon. Member most wisely consented to add it along with the question of the forged letters the other wide, vague, and general subject of the imputations against the political tone and speeches of Irish Members at large. The House refused to accept that mode of inquiry by a Parliamentary Committee, and chose to substitute the method of a Commission. The Commission sat for a period approaching 200 days. For some months it has been occupied in preparing its Report. There has not been a day when we have been in a condition to say we have got the evidence on which we can ask the House to proceed. The right hon. Gentleman says it was admitted before the Commission that the letters were forged letters. The Commission gave no finding to that effect. It is impossible for us to refer to anything but the finding of the Commission. Proceedings within its walls were not legitimate matter to be made the basis of a Motion

in this House. We have now taken absolutely the first and only opportunity when we have an absolute judicial finding that the letters were forged, and when we are in a position to show that that cruel, as well as unusual, refusal to admit the denial of the hon. Member for Cork was totally without justification in fact—we ask now, on the first day and in the first hour when the House meets on the very first occasion after the judicial finding, which alone can constitute the basis of our action—we ask the House to vote that this is a breach of privilege. The right hon. Gentleman says that three years have elapsed since the offence. Yes; nearly three years which he and his friends have contrived shall elapse. The right hon. Gentleman dropped a word about our having made all the capital we could out of the forged letters. I should have thought that the very last phrase which the right hon. Gentleman would think proper to introduce into this debate would be the "making of capital" out of the forged letters. His capital was made on April 18, 1887. In the Division on that day the capital was realised and stored. It is true, as my right hon. Friend stated, that there were and must have been Gentlemen on that side of the House who knew that they had promised their constituents to vote against coercion, and whom it was difficult to bring up to the scratch unless with a special justification. Never was there a more timely attempt at such a justification; never was there one more absolutely sufficient, for, without doubt, it is impossible to exaggerate either the guilt or the tremendous consequences of the act in the case of the letters being, as they were asserted to be, genuine productions. My answer to this point as to the three years is that the makers of the delay are Her Majesty's Government. Had they consented to inquire by Committee, as we proposed, instead of years we should have had only weeks to wait; we should have been in a condition then and there and at once to bring the matter to an issue, and the right hon. Gentleman would not have been able to set up this flimsy and fictitious defence, which is all that even his ingenuity has been able to devise. To me this case is indeed of the utmost gravity. I cannot conceive one in which the aggravations could be greater. In the first place, the hon. Member is attacked by a charge which, unless it can be confuted, must result in his absolute political death. In the second place, the nation with which he is connected regards its fortunes as identified with his. By whom was the hon. Member for Cork denominated as the "uncrowned King of Ireland?" I rather think that that phrase came from one not agreeing with him in politics, but acknowledging, as his high intelligence enabled him to acknowledge, the great fact of the solidity and eminence of the position of the hon. Member in Ireland. So far, then, as the hon. Member's position is concerned, it was a mortal blow. He was smitten under the fifth rib, if he was smitten at all. With him it was a question of life and death. This House has often and often consented to interfere even on the ground of the interest of a Member who has been made the subject of an unjust assault. But, as my right hon. Friend has pointed out, it is not a question of the hon. Member for Cork alone. On the contrary, his interest is small in comparison with other interests that are here involved. He is attacked in a manner that utterly disables him from public duty, and through him his country is affected. That country is one towards which you yourselves will admit that you have been pursuing a peculiar course. You have placed it under exceptional disabilities of law, you have regulated your policy in regard to it systematically and persistently by principles and rules protested against by five-sixths or six-sevenths of the Representatives of that country. All these are reasons why you should give, and specially give, to the hon. Member for Cork, at least as a measure not of indulgence, but of justice, that consideration which you have uniformly and ordinarily given to Members seriously aggrieved. But here the House is in question. The action of the House was aimed at on April 18, 1887. There is no man in this House who can stand up and say that the action of the House was not affected as well as aimed at. It was impossible that it should not be affected as well as aimed at by a statement of so extraordinary a character. Is it possible to conceive that there ever could arise a case calling for the notice of the House if the House should decline to interfere in circumstances such as these, when

positively there has been no opportunity when it was possible to make a Motion of this character until to-night, when the question as it affects the hon. Member is a question of life and death, when the offence is one which was deliberately intended to act not on the general conduct, but on a specific judgment of the House, and when we have every reason to believe that it must have acted and did so act? No, Sir, the question is a serious one. The whole question is not one to be brought before us to-night. I do not wish to enter into that most painful and almost loathsome discussion of the character of this proceeding. But I must point out one circumstance, that this falsehood came within one degree of absolute and wilful falsehood. Those responsible for the *Times* have told us that they did not seek to ascertain the origin of these letters. They confined themselves to that comparatively frivolous and slippery and uncertain question of experts in handwriting. They used no rational or probable means to ascertain whether the letters were forged or genuine. It was under these circumstances that, actuated I do not deny by motives which to them seemed public and patriotic, they constructed this engine for the purpose of driving the House of Commons to a particular conclusion. In my opinion it is not necessary to go further. I think the whole pith of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, so far as there was any pith in it at all, depends upon this fiction, that we are three years after the time. I think I have shewn that these three years have been interposed not by us, for by our Motion for a Committee we endeavoured to bring the matter to the sharpest issue. The delay has been interposed by the action of the Government itself, and they have no right to take advantage of their own wrong for the purpose of denying justice. There is here a great debt which is unpaid, a great debt to the hon. Member for Cork, a great debt to the Irish nation, and a greater debt still to the honour and dignity of this House—a great debt also to the people of this country, who have the right to expect that this House will maintain its honour and its dignity, and that the majority will not suffer its power as a majority to be used for the purpose of contravening against a minority principles which have ever been held sacred irrespective of party and politics. The nation has the deepest interest in this matter. We and you stand at its Bar, and it will not hesitate to pronounce its judgment.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has told the House that, in his opinion, the arguments of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India are flimsy and fictitious. On which side are the flimsiness and the fiction I hope to be able to show by a very short survey of the history which the right hon. Gentleman has been pleased to give the House of this transaction. The right hon. Gentleman actually asks the House to believe that this is the first opportunity for three years on which it has been possible to raise this question. In support of that amazing statement he seems to suggest that every step was spontaneously taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite with a view to bringing this matter before the attention of the House from the very moment that the calumnies were first uttered. That is not the case. It is true that the hon. Member for Cork came down on the day the letter appeared in the *Times* and contradicted it. It was not true that he asked for a Committee, as the right hon. Gentleman would have us believe. The letter appeared on the 18th of April; the Committee was not asked for until the first week in May. Well, does it take three weeks to consider whether you will ask for a Committee or not? And when it was asked for, on the 6th of May, was it asked for either on the initiative of the hon. Member for Cork or on the initiative of the right hon. Gentleman opposite? [Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes.] The right hon. Gentleman is, I believe, mistaken. The first intimation that this House received of the views of right hon. Gentlemen was not on any specific or substantive Motion brought forward by him, but merely as an Amendment to the motion of my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General. And that Committee not asked for spontaneously, not asked for when the forgeries first appeared in the *Times*, had in its inception no connection with the forged letters, but was asked for with regard to some accusations made against the hon.

Member for Mayo, and it was only by accident, as it were, that the forged letters were introduced into the matter. And in the face of these facts hon. and right hon. Gentlemen would have us believe that they exhausted every Parliamentary resource to get this question investigated as one of privilege before a Parliamentary Committee. So much for the history of what occurred before the Special Commission began its investigations. How does the right hon. Gentleman deal with that period of history which succeeded the time when the whole country was seized of the fact that the letters were forged and that Pigott was a forger? He tells us that as this was a matter that had happened within the Special Commission, the House of Commons could not take any account of it, and they were obliged to wait, forsooth, all these ten months until another tribunal decided upon it. The right hon. Gentleman has been ill-coached up in the details of this matter. Let us grant his proposition—namely, that this House could not consider what happened before the Commission on this particular subject. But something happened outside the Commission. The *Times* paid 40s. into Court, thereby admitting in the most public, specific and recognised manner that the letters were forgeries, and that they were guilty of libel against the hon. Member for Cork. The right hon. Gentleman knew that ten months ago. Why did he wait till the first day of a new Session in order to vindicate the honour of the House and do something for the benefit of the hon. Member for Cork? I must make one passing allusion to an assumption which I think has most illegitimately and unfairly run through the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the debate. We are here discussing the wickedness of calumnious charges, and I, for my own part, am ready to use words of any strength you like in condemnation of the infamous procedure by which those forged letters were produced. But, Sir, to imply that the *Times* knowingly used as a political weapon letters which they had good grounds for thinking were forged is, after all, as outrageous a calumny as any I have heard alluded to in this debate. I acquit the right hon. Gentleman who last spoke, but I do not acquit the Member for Derby of having allowed that imputation to colour the whole tenour of his speech, which was obviously in this particular not intended for the House of Commons but for the country. Both the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and the Member for Derby have made a great point of the fact that these accusations were made by the *Times* with the view of influencing debate. Now, Sir, I have already expressed, as well as I can, my strong sense of the iniquitous procedure by which these letters were forged and produced. [An hon. MEMBER: And used.] I put that part of the case aside, as I have a right to do, in considering this argument, and I point out to the House that half the leading articles in every newspaper ever written has been intended to influence on current questions the votes of hon. Members of this House. I admit that the particular course the *Times* took was unjustifiable. But supposing the *Times* had written an article not containing a forged letter but one repeating the statements made about the hon. Member for Cork, about his allies, and about the Land League by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby himself, and had said these are the opinions deliberately formed and expressed in public and with a due sense of their responsibility by Members of the Government who had ample access to information, who we cannot suppose were misled by party feelings, and who, with all deliberation and with a full consciousness of the responsibility resting upon them, gave to their countrymen a view of the action of the hon. Member for Cork and his allies, not different from that contained in *Parnellism and Crime*. I think an article of that kind would have been more effective than the forged letters. And I am sure it would have been as open to the charge of being a breach of the privileges of this House, on the ground that it was intended to influence the votes of this House, as the particular article written by the *Times*, and undoubtedly written by the *Times* for that specific purpose. I daresay the general view we are to take of the action in past years of the Irish Parliamentary Party will come up again before this House for discussion. I gathered from what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said that that will be so, and hon. Gentlemen opposite have not hesitated to say that when the Report of the Commission comes

out it will be made the subject of prolonged debate. I reserve until I see that Report any comments of any kind upon that broad question, but I must traverse the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that while this is a specific accusation against a Member of Parliament, and therefore a breach of the privileges of this House of a kind which requires the action of this House, the other kind of charges to which the Under Secretary for India alluded are of the vague and general character which the right hon. Gentleman would lead us to suppose. If the right hon. Gentleman followed the course of Press criticism in Ireland and England for the last eight years, he would know that in the matter of bringing specific charges against individual Members of Parliament the *Times* ranks not first, nor second, nor third, and that there would not be the slightest difficulty in multiplying examples of specific charges brought against Members of this House, and therefore to the full as open to the criticism which the right hon. Gentleman has levelled against this charge as are the forged letters which were published by the *Times*. Well, Sir, I do not wish to rake in the dirt of these forgotten controversies, but I recollect a speech delivered by Lord Spencer in the year 1885, I think, and I will read an extract from it, very short, but not uninteresting. He said—

"During the three years that we held office in Ireland we were subjected to much vindictive attack in the Press and by Members who spoke at meetings in Ireland. We were accused of all kinds of crimes and misdemeanours—crimes so great, particularly those that were imputed to me, that nothing short"

—let hon. Gentlemen mark these words—

"Of public arraignment ought to have followed the charges. We were charged with crime and with shielding crime of which we hardly dared to speak—charges which were made by the ungenerous action of our opponents."

It is these opponents—the very men—who made these specific charges of which Lord Spencer said that if they were true should have been followed by arraignment—charges not vague but as precise and as specific as any that have been made against the hon. Member for Cork, who now appeal to the House in the character of calumniated victims. That part of the Irish Press and of the English Press for which Members below the gangway are responsible—and from responsibility for which they cannot absolve themselves—has committed more crimes of the kind attributed to the *Times*——

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland Division): We never published forged letters.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They have committed more sins of the kind attributed to the *Times*, and more deserving the action of this House which the right hon. Gentleman now invokes than the *Times* itself. But, Sir, what we have to consider is not merely the character, or principally the character, of the attack made upon Members of this House. We have to consider the dignity of our procedure, and if, every time a specific accusation of the kind I refer to were made by the editor of an Irish or an English newspaper, we were to bring him to the bar of this House to cross-examine him, and to have a Committee upon him, every work of utility in which this House is or may be engaged would undoubtedly come to an end. It is on that broad, practical ground—not, in my mind at all events, principally with reference to the particular character of this case, but rather from my general view of the policy which should guide this House in its use of the ancient and often misused and necessarily cumbrous procedure of privilege—it is because I feel certain that this House in extending the use of that procedure as an instrument for dealing with libellous attacks—would be doing much to destroy its utility, its value and its dignity — that I shall vote for the Amendment which my right hon. Friend has proposed for the acceptance of the House.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I have always thought that the Under Secretary of State for India and the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant were the two best debaters that sat upon that bench. We have had these two best debaters of the Government giving arguments in favour of the course the Government intend to pursue, and I think the House, and still more the country, will be considerably surprised at the small, petty, and paltry nature of the arguments they have used. We have heard a great deal about this not being the proper time to bring such a

Motion forward, but it should be remembered that both the Under Secretary for India and the Chief Secretary said that no matter what time it had been brought forward the Government would not have accepted it. What is the use then of telling us we have chosen the wrong time? But, Sir, I would like to call the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite to their attitude when these letters were published. Do they remember how scornfully they received the denials of the Member for Cork? Do they mean to say that if the hon. Member for Cork had brought forward a Motion such as this they would not have said, "We do not believe him; it is only oath against oath, word against word; on the one side we have the statement of the *Times*, on the other the statement of the hon. Gentleman, and we absolutely refuse without some preliminary examination to consent to such a Resolution"? It is therefore, I think, somewhat, well I was going to say mean, but we do nothing mean in this House—it is, however, something of the sort, when right hon. Gentlemen come forward and refuse the proposal of my right hon. Friend on arguments such as have been advanced by the Government. The Chief Secretary has accused the right hon. Member for Derby of having implied or insinuated that the *Times* knew at the time these letters were published that they were forged. I say that the *Times* ought to have known it; that they were criminally credulous, and as for the specious defence now put forward that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, Lord Spencer and the Member for Derby have been guilty of as gross a contempt, of as gross attacks upon the Irish Leader, as the *Times* was in this case, we ought to look a little into what these libels really were. There are libels the circumstances of which aggravate them, while there are libels in which there are extenuating circumstances. Were there any extenuating circumstances in this case? Was there any reasonable evidence in the possession of the *Times* which tended to show that the forged letters had really been written by the Member for Cork? There was absolutely none. We know now, through the Commission, what happened. We know that those letters came from Mr. Houston, a most doubtful and questionable person, and that he had obtained them from a man admittedly one of the greatest scoundrels that ever lived—one Pigott. We know that the *Times* had made not the slightest investigation into the matter. Did they ask, "Who is Houston?" Not a bit of it. Those letters were first submitted to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, but they very properly refused them. They were then submitted to the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington). He also refused them. With regard to Pigott, from whom those letters were admittedly obtained, Houston was provided with money by the Conservatives and Unionists in Ireland for the purpose of enabling him to get up something against my Friend the hon. Member for Cork; and in getting hold of those letters he was very much in the position of a man who receives a watch from a suspicious-looking person in the street who tells him that it really is his own property, and who tries to sell it to some receiver of stolen goods. Who was the receiver of stolen goods? Why, the *Times*. The *Times* ought to have made inquiry; and, considering the course they really took, I look upon them in the same light as I should regard a receiver of stolen goods who had bought a valuable watch worth 100 guineas from some beggar who affirmed that he had inherited it from his father. I desire to show the House that this libel was really aggravated by the *Times*. They insisted that they had absolute evidence to prove it; and, after all, what was their evidence? Why, they had the word of the man Pigott against that of my hon. Friend. Had the *Times* come forward at first and said, "We have only the word of Pigott—a tainted man, a man lost to all claim to position in his own country—we only have his word against that of the hon. Member for Cork," the case would have been different. But what was really the plan adopted by the *Times*? It was a most nefarious plan, as is very evident when we look at the facts. Mr. Mac Donald was to have been put in the box. He was to have said, "I have received these letters from a most important and respectable person, as could be shown if I were to state who it was." Then the experts were to be brought to prove the handwriting. But, by a happy accident, the handwriting was shown to be a

forgery. The plan adopted by the *Times* would have succeeded had it not been that an accident revealed the fact that Mr. Houston was in possession of the letters, and that, not only was it possible to subpœna him, but it was ascertained that letters of a precisely similar character had been written by Pigott to Mr. Egan in America. It was this happy accident which led to the exposure of what I do not hesitate to call a vile and base conspiracy on the part of the *Times*. Well, what happened? Mr. Pigott did not want to go into the box. He thought it might lead to serious consequences, and the *Times* thought so too. We all know what is generally the case when a witness does not want to go into the box; it usually means that he does not like to perjure himself. What did the *Times* do? There sits the Counsel to the *Times*, and I dare him to deny it. It was conveyed to Pigott that if he would only go into the box and tell the truth, as they called it, they would provide for him afterwards. Then came the disastrous cross-examination of Pigott, and after that disastrous cross-examination Pigott confessed. A very remarkable thing then occurred. The day after his confession Pigott withdrew a portion of that confession, and moreover sent a telegram to his servant in Ireland telling the servant to destroy certain papers, among which he stated were the letters of Houston to himself. We have never yet got at the bottom of that matter, but I will tell the House what occurred. Pigott sent over certain notes to his family in Ireland—bank notes which were an addition to the money which enabled him to go to Spain. The police took it into their heads that I had given Pigott those notes. The police made investigations; and what does the House think happened? They discovered that those notes had been given to Pigott, and had come direct from the *Times* within ten days of his flying from this country. We should like a little explanation with regard to that matter. The numbers of the notes were obtained, and they were traced to the *Times*—I cannot say whether in Houston's name or that of Mr. Soames—but they were traced to the *Times*. We have it in evidence that Mr. Soames distinctly stated he had not given any money to Pigott—hardly sufficient to pay his hotel bill during the time he was here as a witness. Coupling this with what we know from Pigott, and the telegram he sent from Madrid wanting to be provided for, I believe the *Times* was directly or indirectly concerned in getting Pigott out of the country; that this money was directly or indirectly conveyed to Pigott to put him in funds so that he might leave the country; and that there was some promise by implication made to Pigott that when he did go out he should be provided for at Madrid or elsewhere. Well, at last the *Times* was obliged to give in. What took place? Was it an ample, was it a full or a generous apology that was made by the *Times*, or rather by the learned Gentleman opposite, who was acting as Counsel for the *Times*? No, Sir, it was not. I can fully understand the difficulty in which the hon. and learned Gentleman was placed, and I am not blaming him. He was the mere mouthpiece of his client; but I say it was one of the most paltry, the meanest, and most contemptible apologies ever put forward. Sir, we are told that the *Times* really has done nothing very wrong—that there is no very great difference between this libel and any other libel. Well, I will give you an instance of a libel that occurred the other day: A gentleman of the name of Parke published a libel which was certainly an atrocious one. He justified the libel by saying that he did it on certain evidence. That evidence was tainted evidence, very much like that of Pigott, and Parke was sent to prison for a year. Hon. Members will hardly say that the *Times'* libel on my hon. Friend was not of fully as atrocious and ruinous a character as that of Parke against Lord Euston. Well, if a Court of Justice says a man is liable to a year's imprisonment for doing what Parke did, surely we have a right to say that what Mr. Walter did was at least a breach of privilege. The reasons why the Government do not like to accept the Motion of my right hon. Friend are clear, and I would recommend them to give themselves the trouble of putting forward some other reason. The real fact of the matter is that they are the allies and confederates of the *Times*. The charges made by the *Times* were adopted by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on every political platform through-

out the country, and they know that they themselves are almost as guilty in this matter as the *Times*. That, Sir, is, in my opinion, a very reasonable reason why the Government should make use of their mechanical majority to vote down the Motion of my right hon. Friend. Sir, there was a cry that the First Lord of the Treasury should come forward in this debate. I do not share in that request. I respect friendship, and should as soon have expected Jonathan to come forward and attack his friend David as to see the right hon. Gentleman get up and move a Resolution directed against his old friend Mr. Walter. But while I respect friendship, and am able perfectly to understand the silence of the right hon. Gentleman, I do think he ought to remember that he is the leader of this House —"our guide, philosopher, and friend" —and at some time during this debate he ought, in that character, to get up, and putting aside for the moment the question of friendship, explain on what legitimate grounds—sweeping away all the cobwebs invented by the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Under Secretary for India—he can refuse to do what I am perfectly certain the Government and hon. Members opposite would have done again and again if necessary, and the situations had been reversed, and libels such as the *Times* libel been directed against some hon. Members opposite. What is the use of appealing to a Division on this question? We shall go to a Division at some time or other, but I have long ceased to trouble myself as to whether we get 20 or 30 more or less in a Division in this House. I consider that this House has lost its mandate from the nation. It is to the country that we wish to appeal, and it is because we are anxious that the country should understand this matter that we have brought it forward in this House. The country will understand, as the Irish Secretary knows, that at the present moment if anybody hisses him in Ireland that person is clapped into prison. If any little boy dares to whistle when a policeman is by, into gaol he goes, and we are told that this is dealing out strict justice to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman is never tired of boasting how he regards justice and how he administers it in Ireland. We have some difficulty in meeting these declamatory laudations of himself on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. Doubts have been suggested as to whether there is not some exaggeration on our part when we deal with the question of Irish justice, but after this debate I trust no one will be found to say that we have exaggerated matters in Ireland. The people will see from what happens in this House how justice is really administered; they will see how Her Majesty's Government refuse to accept any precedent. They will learn how the Government argue when we have proved that there has been a contempt of this House, and that all our rights and privileges are regarded by the Government as absurdities which ought to be swept away. I am glad of this debate, and I am sorry for the action of the right hon. Gentleman opposite That action does not at all surprise me, and I think the country will take notice of the degradation we are dragged through in this House by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, as well as the absolutely abject subserviency with which the followers of those right hon. Gentlemen vote for any species of injustice they may happen to command.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne): A very few minutes ago I had not intended to take any part in this discussion, and if I do so now it is only to offer a word or two on the most interesting and able and amusing speech we have heard from the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He, as usual, was extremely witty, and he brought up a great many questions which had very little to do with the point before the House. He carefully avoided the only question before us—the point so clearly raised by my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir J. Gorst). My right hon. Friend gave three reasons why this matter is not one for the interference of the House, first in regard to time, then in regard to the effect of passing the Motion upon the House itself, and thirdly, having regard to the subject matter with which we are dealing. All this involves the one question to which the hon. Member refused altogether to direct his mind, namely, what really is privilege and what are the principles upon which we ought to entertain the question. Without going into precedents I submit that there are precedents

which show that this matter of privilege has frequently been abused. The House, however, has exercised its power in this matter, mostly with the object of dealing with a present interference with the procedure of the House and with the conduct of business, and, therefore, an attack upon its dignity and freedom. In the old times we know it was invoked to prevent Members being forcibly attacked and waylaid and prevented from performing their duty; and so clearly was it understood that questions of privilege arose only upon present matters, that questions of the kind could be raised at any moment by a Member coming in and interrupting the business by a cry of "Privilege." But nothing can be found to show that privilege was intended to punish offences of any kind whether against Members of Parliament, or any body of Members of Parliament, or even whether they were in the form of criticisms and attack, in that sense of the word, upon the House itself. I admit that some of the instances to be found in the musty records that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) has alluded to cannot be brought within these broad and sound principles; but that is because the proceedings of this House, like the proceedings of every other body in the world, have at different times been liable to be abused, and foolishly abused. "If," says the honourable Member for Northampton, "attacks of this kind on personal conduct and the characters of Members of this House are not to be prevented, privilege had better be abolished." But I have been taught exactly the other way of looking at it, and I say that if attacks on personal conduct, or even on the characters of Members of this House, are to be made questions of privilege, privilege had better be abolished, for it becomes most useless and pernicious. In all the long records of privilege in the House, you will hardly find a single case in which the assertion of privilege has led to any good result or any useful employment of the time of the House. As to its employment for dealings with personal attacks, we are all of us subject to personal attacks; we can all of us defend ourselves not only in the Courts, which are open to us in every way, but in the Press and on the platforms of the country, and in a great many other ways. I cannot help agreeing with what a learned Judge—Mr. Baron Martin—once said when I was a very young practitioner at the Bar, namely, that no honest man was ever any worse for being called a knave. The hon. Member for Northampton takes us away from the consideration of the great question of privilege by a long account of the personal matter between the *Times* newspaper and the hon. Member for Cork, and seems to think the personal injury the *Times* has done the hon. Member is in itself a matter of privilege. I cannot see that there is any principle in that contention. But as a matter of fact the real object of the hon. Member seemed to be rather to make a strong speech against the *Times* than to support the view that this was a matter of privilege. Some of the observations of the hon. Member were obviously overstated, because he seemed to desire to show that the *Times* had entered into a wicked conspiracy to injure the hon. Member for Cork by putting forward letters which they knew to be false. If the hon. Member believes that the managers of the *Times* knew that the letters were forged, and yet put them forward with the view of damaging the hon. Member for Cork, then the hon. Member for Northampton must be at least as credulous as the *Times*, for in the case supposed the *Times* must have known that the forgery would be found out sooner or later, and that instead of doing them good it would do them infinite harm. At least there must have been an honest belief in the minds of those conducting that newspaper that they had a case which they could prove. That disposes of a great part of the speech of the hon. Member. Then the hon. Member says that the *Times*, in order to induce the perpetrator of the forgery to bring the case home to the hon. Member for Cork, told that individual that they would make provision for him afterwards. But that, to my mind, instead of being a point against the *bona fides* of the *Times*, shows that they believed in the honesty of their informant, and were determined—as he professed to stand in fear of certain people—to protect him against them. The contention of this side of the House is that privilege is not intended to protect us from personal attacks, but to protect us in the discharge of our duties, so that we may be able to

perform them freely and without fear. To show that that is so the Chief Secretary quoted from the violent attacks which are being daily made upon him. The obvious inference was that in the opinion of this House they do not amount to anything criminal. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) evidently does not enjoy that argument, as he evades it by employing an illustration that has nothing to do with it. He says that lately there was a libeller—Mr. Parkes—who in a disgraceful way libelled Lord Euston, and he says that libeller has got 12 months' imprisonment, and richly deserved it. Does the hon. Member mean to say it is the business of this House to send a man to 12 months' imprisonment because he has libelled Members of this House? If not, one hardly sees the point of his allusion to Mr. Parkes. If he thinks the *Times* libel was as bad as that upon Lord Euston, the answer is that a similar punishment might have been inflicted at the Old Bailey if that had been proved. If the writers of the libel had been indicted for criminal libel they would have gone to the Old Bailey and got their punishment just as Mr. Parkes did. Then the hon. Member charges us on this side of the House with being allies and confederates of the *Times*. [*Opposition cheers.*] Hon. Members cheer that. Now, I indignantly deny it. I think I am in a position in which I may fairly deny it, because from the very first I took care to guard myself against making any such accusation, and many of my hon. Friends have taken the same course. We have pointed out that the evidence was not known, and have nearly always said that although this charge was made we should be very glad if the hon. Member were able in time to vindicate himself from it. Never in any speech or any conversation of any kind have we attempted to say that there was any body of evidence to contradict the statement so solemnly made in this House by the hon. Member. Nor was I one of those who thought it was the duty of a person to bring an action for libel in any case. That would put us all at the mercy of any person who chose to libel us. I say, then, that hon. Members have no right to say that we were the allies of the *Times*. It was the action of Gentlemen opposite that brought about the inquiry. My right hon. Leader (Mr. W. H. Smith) said it was not a matter for the House at all, but for the Law Courts, and most of us approved of the statement. Members opposite, however, said they desired to have a tribunal, and the constitution of a tribunal was forced on my right hon. Friend from all parts of the House, and was certainly not his own policy. Members opposite say that my right hon. Friend was influenced by friendship for Mr. Walter, the proprietor of the *Times*. I have no doubt Mr. Walter has the advantage of the friendship of a great many Members of this House, and that he deserves it. My right hon. Friend desired, however, that the case should be fought out elsewhere, and, on the part of the Government, he offered to supply funds and counsel, and to give every possible assistance to the hon. Member for Cork if he desired to take proceedings. How could he have better shown his independence and impartiality? When we come to look back upon what took place, we cannot help seeing that there was sound judgment in the conduct then of my right hon. Leader as there is in his conduct on other questions. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) retorted upon my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary the old accusation of an Irish Judge. If, he said, a boy whistled in the street in Ireland he was put into prison there. I daresay he sometimes is, but it is not for whistling, but for at the same time throwing a stone. The hon. Gentleman says that a person is sent to prison for using some opprobrious epithet with regard to the Chief Secretary, but why does not the hon. Gentleman also say that the person who used that epithet was engaged with a crowd in attacking the police? It may be said that in England a man is sent to prison for drinking a glass of beer. So he is if he does it within prohibited hours. It may also be said that a man is sent to prison merely for playing with three cards. So he is when he cheats on a racecourse. A person may be sent to prison for whistling when a policeman turns the corner of a street, if by so doing he gives a signal to his associates who are committing a burglary. But one hardly likes to test seriously a speech which was clearly not made for the purpose of con-

vincing this House. The hon. Member for Northampton refuses to discuss the question of privilege seriously. What, in effect, he says is, "I intend to attack the Chief Secretary, and to address a rousing speech to the country, to be reported in the newspapers." Those persons who have educated themselves in the hon. Member's tactics by reading the debates of the last two Sessions will know how to judge, and I think they will say the Government have taken a wise, a prudent, and a moderate course, and a course especially intended to preserve the liberties of the people of this country, because liberty and the privilege of the Press could not exist if such doctrines as to the power of this House as those suggested by the hon. Member were allowed to prevail. Had such doctrines been propounded from this side of the House, the hon. Member would have been the first to suggest that they were antiquated, high-handed and insolent doctrines, and would have denounced in the strongest terms this attempt to stretch the arbitrary power of this House as inconsistent with all modern ideas.

*MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour Division): The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Addison) opened his observations by stating that shortly before he rose he had no intention of interfering in this debate, and I think those who listened to his speech will agree with that statement, and will be disposed to think that his speech was not prepared for this occasion but for the next time he met his constituents. The hon. and learned Gentleman opened up a field which to us is a very inviting one, and one into which on another occasion we should be very anxious to follow him; but the Motion now before the House is of a somewhat more serious character than he endeavoured to make it, and we cannot afford to have it lightly cast aside. In the latter portion of his observations he has offered a defence for his own conduct in the past, but I fail to find any justification for the vote he intends to give to-night. He stated that he and his friends throughout the country did not join in the accusation against Mr. Parnell, but upon what ground? Because he had no evidence. If the hon. and learned Gentleman were dealing with an English and not with an Irish Member, he would have taken the denial of the Member, on the floor of the House, and would not have cautiously waited for evidence with which to fortify himself. That is the point of view from which you treat all Irish questions, and you assume an air of righteousness and sanctity because you do not condemn us until the evidence is satisfactory. We are dealing now with a question of privilege, and, as the illustrious leader of the Liberal Party pointed out, that question of privilege would never have arisen were it not an Irish Member who was attacked. You say the *Times* did not deliberately enter into a conspiracy to hunt down the leader of the Irish people and to ruin the cause of which he is the representative. We do not care whether the *Times* entered into that conspiracy deliberately or not, but we do say that the *Times* was led by the same false instincts as the hon. and learned Member when he deals with an Irish Member; and the same prejudices which will be at the bottom of the hon. and learned Gentleman's vote this evening are at the bottom of the Amendment, and were at the bottom of the action of the *Times*. Why not face the question honestly? You say that to bring forward a breach of privilege is an inconvenient course. It is: but you know that upon no occasion has privilege been invoked more justifiably than upon the occasion of the fraud and the forgery of the *Times* newspaper. I defy the hon. and learned Member to maintain the argument which he endeavoured to pass off here, namely, that the raising of questions of privilege was reserved only for the protection of the freedom of the House. The precedents are all the other way. It was for the protection of the individual Member in his capacity as Member, and in the discharge of his duties to the

House, that the raising of privilege was allowed. I defy hon. Members opposite to say that they have ever treated this matter from an impartial point of view. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Addison) tells us he would have been very glad if Mr. Parnell had been found guilty [Mr. ADDISON: No, no!]—I beg pardon, innocent.

MR. ADDISON: I never said I did not accept most fully the word of the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell). On the contrary, I have said that after the statement of the hon. Member it would be better if there was an end of the matter.

*MR. T. HARRINGTON: If that was the belief of the hon. and learned Gentleman and of others of his Party, where did they give expression to it? To-night the Under Secretary for India (Sir J. Gorst) said that 12 months ago the fact of the letters having been forged was as patent as it is to-day. Aye, but it is not 12 months since Lord Salisbury said—"I will not pin myself to the statement that the letters are forgeries." After an action for libel had been entered and 40s. lodged in Court by the *Times*, the leader of your Party was not ashamed to stand up and say—"I will not pin myself to the statement that the letters are forgeries." Which of you had the independence to stand up in the country and say—"I differ from the statement of the Prime Minister." A great deal has been said as to the time at which this question of privilege should have been raised. I do not know where the Chief Secretary for Ireland got his legal training, but somebody seems to have instructed him that when 40s. was lodged in Court to meet the damages sustained by Mr. Parnell we were perfectly free to ignore the remainder of the proceedings and to ask the House to exercise its right of privilege. That was a shabby argument for the right hon. Gentleman to use; but I am amazed that intelligent men who sit on the Government Benches can say they are treating Irishmen with fair-play. Even now you have not the courage, the honesty and the candour to characterise the letters as forged letters. You act in the same miserable, grudging spirit in which the Attorney General acted when he stood up in the Commission Court and said—"I can proceed no further with the letters, but have to withdraw them." There was nothing generous, nothing candid; no expression of regret for the position in which he was, for the great assistance he had given to the *Times* in bolstering up its infamous charges; no expression of regret on his own part or on the part of the Government, or on the part of the *Times* which gave him his fee. The same grudging spirit is displayed in the present Amendment, and I assert that the man who votes for the Amendment is a man who in his heart is sorry that Mr. Parnell has been vindicated. Let it go forth to the country that every effort has been made by the Government to bolster up the case of the *Times*, that the Government has lent its first Law Officer to the *Times*, that the Government, by an Amendment proposed by one of the responsible officers of the Crown, declines to declare the letters purporting to be written by Mr. Parnell forged letters. "Forged letters" is a term they will not even now accept, but they still adhere to the policy of Lord Salisbury when he said he would not pin himself to the statement that the letters were forgeries. You cannot get the Irish people to believe that you deal out equal justice to Englishmen and Irishmen. You cannot get a majority of honest Englishmen to believe it. They know that behind your Amendment to-night, as behind your conduct of the last two years, there lies political action, political motives, and they know that whatever you do for Ireland you do it in the most grudging spirit.

* MR. SALT (Stafford): I shall only trouble the House with one or two words, because all I wish to do is to express the grounds on which I shall vote. I shall not make any remarks upon the observations of the hon. Member (Mr. T. Harrington), except that I do not think they are quite worthy of a Member of the House who I presume is attempting to discuss a very difficult question in a calm, and not in a party, spirit. I feel that the argument that this is not the time to bring forward this question because a considerable period has elapsed since the libel complained of was first issued is not quite applicable to the present case. I think it is most unfortunate that any letters professing to have been written by a Member of the House, but which are not genuine—[*Opposition cheers.*]—well, I am only saying what any simple-minded man would say—I say that no such letter should ever have been published unless the authenticity of it was absolutely certain. The knowledge that that letter was not authentic has not been positively and fully proved till a very recent time; and therefore I am bound to say that until a very recent time the opportunity for a Motion like the right hon. Gentleman's did not arise. But I am about to give my vote upon very much broader grounds than that. Obviously the origin and intention of this privilege of Parliament was for the simple and only purpose of securing that Members should be able to do their duty to the House freely and fairly. We meet here to do the business of the country, and we are engaged, or we ought to be engaged, at this moment in discussing the Speech of Her Most Gracious Majesty, and the question then arises in my mind whether such a breach of privilege has been committed as will prevent this House or any of its Members from the discharge of Parliamentary duties? I take it such an offence has not been committed, and that, therefore, there is not a question of privilege that it is desirable for the House to raise at the present time. The question of privilege dates from ancient times—times very different from the present; and Members do not require, and I do not think they ought to require, the same protection as was required many generations ago. We have before us the Motion of the right hon. Member for Derby and the Amendment proposed by the Government. I object to the Motion as an unnecessary interference with the transaction of the ordinary business of the House; and the question of the privilege of any particular Member is not of such importance as to make it necessary to stop the business of the House. Under the circumstances then I shall vote for the Amendment, though I wish it had been couched in different terms. I do not like, so far as I can judge from hearing the terms read from the Chair, the form of the Amendment, because it seems to me to point to the suggestion that this House declines to consider a question of privilege altogether, without giving any reason in reference to the particular circumstances. Now the circumstances in this case are extremely peculiar, and I believe absolutely without precedent. The hon. Member for Cork has had an opportunity of vindicating himself in another place, and I am very glad that he has vindicated himself triumphantly. There is, therefore, no special grievance on his part; and what we have to consider is the question of the business of the House and our duty to the country. On these grounds I am opposed to the Motion of the right hon. Member for Derby; and, though I regret the terms in which the Amendment has been moved, I feel bound to vote for it, for I have no other course to pursue.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I will not follow the line of argument, very much in the nature of *tu quoque*, that has been adopted, but I think we are gradually—I do not know whether it is the intention of the Government, and I do not suggest that it is—but for some time past we have been drifting into a very narrow groove, when I think we ought to keep to broad grounds. This question has been treated by several

speakers on the other side as a matter of procedure, and not as a matter of principle, and it has been said that the great object of privilege is to preserve the dignity of the procedure of this House. Now I deny that entirely. The procedure of this House is a very valuable thing, but certainly the privilege of Members stands on a very different footing to the mere dignity of the procedure of this House. It strikes me—as I venture to think it will everybody who considers the question—that this concerns not so much the dignity and business of this House. It is an attack of the most ferocious character upon the honour of a leading Member of this House, and I do not think the House ought to be satisfied because the matter has been brought before the Common Law or other tribunals of this country. The House has to defend its own character and honour, which have been tainted and besmirched by the attack made upon the hon. Member for Cork. I do not want to use hard words, and would rather treat this matter in the manner of the hon. Member who has just spoken, but when I am told in a narrow spirit that we should not now deal with this matter, because so much time has elapsed, as if there were a statute of limitations barring action in a matter of this kind, as though it were a paltry case of debt, I cannot forget, although so much mildness has been displayed on the other side to-night, how the hon. Member for Cork has been taunted over and over again with not being anxious to commit himself to the mercies of a special jury of Middlesex or London. These abominable and iniquitous forgeries have been made use of for political purposes, for they constitute an attack of a terrible nature upon the character of a man of enormous power and influence, and the leader of a political party. It is admitted by the Amendment that a breach of privilege of an infamous and iniquitous character has been committed, but—lame and impotent conclusion—you decline to treat it as a breach of privilege. Why? If this had been an attack upon a leading Member of the Treasury Bench, I venture to say that the full power of the House would be brought to bear on the offender. The House can defend its dignity in one way only—namely, by calling the offender to its Bar, where alone it can deal with this outrage upon it.

Mr. Waddy

*Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): It might almost be supposed that this Motion has been brought forward in order to enable all the lawyers in the House who have not been engaged in the Parnell Commission to ventilate their views with regard to it. There is a noticeable omission in the speeches that have been made from both sides of the House to-night. We have heard a good deal about the honour and dignity of the House of Commons; but there is one thing which is quite as dear and precious to the people of England as even the honour and dignity of this House, and that is the liberty of the English Press. The right hon. Member for Derby appears to think it a high crime and misdemeanour for a newspaper to attempt to influence the House or to refer to the character of public men. But with what purpose do hundreds of newspapers exist, and with what object do we read them night and morning, except that we may be influenced in our judgment of the character of public men and upon events of the day? If the *Times* had made any shameful or ignoble attack upon the character of the hon. Member for Cork, it would have been right for the House to have interfered in the case of such a grave breach of privilege, but there was nothing petty or ignoble, nothing spiteful or malicious in the attack the *Times* made. That newspaper has always shown a magnanimous disdain for those assaults on private character that form the daily fare of some Radical newspapers. The *Times* simply brought an accusation against the

hon. Member for Cork in his public capacity, that he had condoned a most serious, a most grave, and a most abominable offence, namely, the Phœnix Park murders, and when a newspaper believes that such a charge against the character of a public man is well founded, it is perfectly justified in bringing it forward in an open and an honourable manner. The *Times* may have been in error, nobody denies that it has been; it has paid severely for its faults; it has had to pay heavy damages, but that is no reason why those men who paid it the most obsequious court in the days of its prosperity should now show a vindictive joy in trampling on it in the days of its humiliation. The *Times* has suffered adequate and sufficient punishment for the offence that it has committed in publishing this letter, believing it to be genuine, solely and entirely in the public interest. If the *Times* believed that letter to be genuine, in my opinion it was bound to publish it, in order to show by what means the leaders of the Irish Party were carrying on their warfare against the English Government. Has there been nothing in the career of the leaders of the Irish Party which would lead the *Times* to believe that the letter was likely to be a genuine one? Many hon. Members in this House before the publication of the letter had formed an opinion of the leaders of the Irish Party which was based upon the speeches which the right hon. Member for Derby uttered when he was the Home Secretary of a Liberal Government. Do hon. Members forget how the right hon. Gentleman thundered in those days against John Devoy, and spoke as though the Irish Party and the hon. Member for Cork were identified with the dynamite party on the other side of the Atlantic? The right hon. Gentleman having uttered such speeches in past years ought to be the last to blame those who have merely continued to hold the opinions he has been so careful to inculcate upon the British people. It is quite true that the hon. Member for Cork has triumphantly vindicated his character as far as these forged letters are concerned, and I for one, speaking as a member of the Conservative Party, wish to express my regret for having doubted the word of the hon. Member when he asserted that the letter was a forgery. That, however, is not the question we have to deal with this evening. The House has to consider whether it will give out to the newspaper Press of this country that whenever a newspaper honestly commits an error of judgment in, as it believes, the public interest, its proprietors are to be brought up at the Bar of the House. The letter in question has been published in perfect good faith, and throughout the whole matter the *Times* has acted most honourably, as has been admitted the other day in Scotland by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, while ample justice has been done for any error that it has been guilty of. In these circumstances it is not for this House, on the plea of vindicating its honour and its dignity, to strike a blow at the independence of the public Press of England.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby asks us to declare that a certain publication read at the table by our Clerk is a breach of the privileges of this House, and the answer to that from the Treasury Bench is a most extraordinary one. I can understand that the Government might have thought it right to give the House their concurrence in this declaration that it is a breach of privilege, but adding to that some reasons why in their opinion the House ought to take no action on this undoubted breach of privilege. It might have been they could have justified themselves by these reasons, but what is their line of argument now? They admit that a breach of privilege has been committed, but they urge the House to decline to say anything about it—to express no opinion upon it. The objection on the ground of the lapse of time since the libel was published has already been sufficiently answered by the hon. Member opposite, and the fact that the *Times* has agreed to pay heavy damages is a new feature involving admission by the person charged with the breach. It is no

answer to a Motion of this kind to say that the individual aggrieved has received compensation in a Court of Law, because that does not purge the offence of the individual towards this House. The libel has been published avowedly with the intention of inducing the House to pass one of the most infamous among modern measures. I deny that the House only interferes in cases of breaches of privilege which affect their present deliberation, for they have frequently punished such offences when they merely affected the past. The hon. Member for Oldham claims freedom for the Press of this country to bring charges against the leaders of a political party of having been accessory to murder, without making any inquiry into the truth of the charge; or, if it did make any inquiry, knowing that the proofs in support of the charge came from a tainted source. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland has put forward the still more extraordinary defence that the *Times* is not worse than *United Ireland* in the matter of the publication of libels. If *United Ireland* does publish libels, let that paper be punished for its offences. Looking at the number of journalists sent to gaol, it cannot be pretended that generosity or mercy has hindered action. The allegation that the publication of this letter does not constitute a breach of privilege cannot stand for a moment. The claim that the House should not express an opinion upon this subject is a cowardly claim. I hope that, in face of the evidence we have before us, there may be some hon. Members on the other side of the House who will take the line that a former Conservative leader of this House took in not hesitating to declare a matter a breach of privilege which was in fact so. The question of punishment has not to be considered now: that must be discussed when the Resolution has been carried. But there is not the shadow of a pretence for saying that this case does not come within the scope of precedents which are laid down in the Journals of this House. Here the only excuse put forward is that three years have elapsed since the letters were published, and that, at any rate, the matter might have been dealt with last year, simply as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary points out, because ten months since the proprietors of the *Times* paid a sum of 40s. into Court, and thus admitted their liability. Surely this is a very extraordinary argument. When a person makes a charge against a man of being accessory to murder, and pays 40s. into Court, such action means that there are circumstances which he was ready to bring before the Court in order to show that if technically wrong he was morally justified in making such a charge. If it does mean that, then the payment of 40s. into Court was simply adding insult to injury. If, on the other hand, the action of the *Times* in paying the 40s. into Court meant this, then at once it would have been answered, had a question been raised in the House, that we had no right to raise such a question until the case of the *Times* had been heard. The payment of 40s. into Court was not a recognition that this was a cowardly libel and one of the worst that could possibly have been printed against any man. It was an allegation that the *Times* had been perhaps entrapped, perhaps induced, perhaps misled, into publishing something which, although not true in that particular form, would be found to be true if the *Times* had an opportunity of submitting to the Court their reasons for the publication. Therefore, the payment of 40s. into Court is merely for a technical purpose, and has no relation to the position or conduct of the person injured. It is monstrous for the Chief Secretary to pretend to-night that the payment of 40s. into Court ten months ago would have warranted this Motion being made at that time. What the *Times* has since done in paying exemplary damages to the person libelled, in no way clears it from the charge of breach of privilege.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): It has been said that this is a cowardly Amendment, but I propose to vote for it, and I will tell the House why. There surely is some confusion with reference to this matter. An hon Member behind me has referred to the fact that it was lamentable that such a letter should have been published in the

Times. I agree entirely with the view of the hon. Member in regard to its being a lamentable circumstance. There is, as I have said, a private wrong in the case of the hon. Member for Cork, and if he called upon the House to do justice to him in that respect he would be entitled to it. But we are not called upon to do that. The hon. Member for Cork, from the first day, had an opportunity of appealing to the Courts of Law. He was wise in not doing so, because the machinery of the Courts would, in my opinion, have been unequal to the task placed upon it, and there would probably have been a miscarriage of justice. Thanks to whom—shall I say Her Majesty's Government—well, thanks to this House, because we are all responsible for the course which was taken—another tribunal was established with stronger powers, greater and more searching powers, and the result has been, so far as the letters are concerned, that the hon. Gentleman has come out of the difficulty successfully, and to the satisfaction of his friends. Aye, I will tell hon. Gentlemen opposite that nobody rejoices more than I do at the result. I have never upon any platform said anything different to what I am saying now. From the first I said that my only desire was that truth should be ascertained. I rejoice that it seems to be a fact that the letters were forged. The Parnell Commission has found that out. The private wrong has been dealt with, and has been redressed. I do not mean to say that any tribunal could ever give full satisfaction to a person wronged by a transaction of this nature; and I quite accept the view that no damages and no judgment could do full justice to the hon. Member. But now we are asked to deal with the question of privilege, and we are now dealing in fact with the dignity and privileges of this House. But how does the private wrong of the hon. Member affect the question of a breach of privilege? Privilege is only invoked when the dignity of this House or its freedom of action is interfered with, and I certainly think that the House would stultify itself—having allowed the proper time to pass, and having subsequently appointed a Commission whose labours have resulted so favourably to the hon. Member in the elucidation of the facts—if it were to say that a breach of privilege has been committed. To take such a step would indeed cause the House to look ridiculous, and it is to prevent that calamity that I intend to vote for the Amendment.

*MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): The Amendment and the speeches in support of it are a most unworthy attempt to escape, by quibbling, the obvious duty which lies before the House. The hon. Member who last spoke has told us that the hon. Member for Cork was right in not appealing to the Law Courts at the date of the publication of the forged letters, although right hon. Gentlemen opposite declared it to be his duty at that time. We remember that most exciting Wednesday afternoon, when the hon. Member for Cork got up, and in most indignant language denied the authorship of the letters, and the hon. Member for Mayo the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, and other hon. Members, got up and supported the hon. Member in imploring the House, for the sake of its own dignity and honour, to give that satisfaction which would have been refused to no other body of men, and to grant a Select Committee to inquire into the matter. The Government refused it; yet now all we get is a candid expression of regret for acts in which indeed they were moral participators. The right hon. Baronet who to-day moved the Amendment, objected to the Motion because it was too late, and also because it was too early, on the ground that the Commission had not reported. The real truth is that no time could be the right one for those who never had the intention to give the hon. Member an oppor-

tunity for the vindication of his character. The Amendment is dictated by political expediency of the least reputable character. We are told that there is no precedent for carrying this Motion. I suppose there is no precedent in which a great organ of public opinion has, for political purposes, and with the object of crushing a political opponent, used the dastardly weapons of forgery and calumny; and, if that is so, how could it be possible to find a precedent on all fours with this case? If there is no precedent, the House is bound by every sense of duty and honour to make one. It will be a foul aspersion on British fair-play if the majority of the House, impelled by political considerations, refuse the demand now made upon them by a great party, on facts which cannot be gainsaid; a demand made, be it remembered, in the name of fair play, and in the interests of the honour and dignity of the House.

MR. LOCKWOOD (York): I wish for an opportunity of making some observations in answer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who was put up, on behalf of the Government, to answer the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. The first and, indeed, the only answer that has been given to Her Majesty's Opposition on this Motion is that we are out of time. So far as the proposer of this Motion is concerned, he established distinctly that there had been a gross breach of privilege of this House committed; and he also showed who was responsible for the delay which has taken place in the bringing of this matter to the notice of this House. Why, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman said, in the first place, that we were out of time inasmuch as some three years had elapsed since the libel was published in the *Times*. That libel was met in this House by the hon. Member for Cork with an indignant denial, and he asked for the Constitutional method of investigating the matter by a Select Committee of the House. That privilege was denied to him by Her Majesty's Government and its supporters, and he was taunted with not resorting to the Courts of Law in order to vindicate his character. Then another tribunal was chosen for him, and the majority of the House forced the Special Commission upon him. When the constitution of the Commission was under discussion, we were constantly told that its first duty would be to inquire into the question of the letters; and those of us who were legally connected with it went into Court expecting that the first matter to be brought before it would be whether the letters were genuine. The hon. and learned Member for Hackney, whose absence I regret, day after day called upon his opponents to bring the main question to an issue. We made the appeal in vain. Months elapsed before an opportunity was afforded, and then the falsity of the letters was speedily established. The Commission was then asked to make a pronouncement on this matter, but it declined to do so, and up to the close of the civil action the other day there was no pronouncement upon the guilt or innocence of those who had formulated and circulated these forgeries, which would enable the supporters of the hon. Member for Cork to say that the case did not stand alone upon his denial. But now his denial does not stand alone; it is supported by the finding of a Court of Justice. Much has been said about precedents for this Motion, but it is not incumbent upon us to show a precedent in favour of it. It being admitted that there has been a gross breach of privilege, the onus and responsibility rests upon the Government of showing that there is a precedent for refusing the relief which the Motion would afford. The hon. Member for Cork might very well rest content so far as he is personally concerned. He has denied in this House the authenticity of the letters, and that denial was accepted by many hon. Members. But I regret that it was rejected by some. Now that denial is backed up by the finding of a Court of Justice; and, in addition, we have the *Times* pleading guilty to a most outrageous libel. Surely, Sir, this is the proper time for

the hon. Member for Cork to claim to have the privileges of this House exercised in his favour. This is the first occasion on which the privilege of the House could be appealed to against those who have assailed its honour and dignity, which it is always jealous to protect. It is absurd to pretend that the publication of the libel was not an attempt to influence a Division in this House. We who were Members at that time know perfectly well the sensation caused by the publication of the letters, and how the minds of many men were influenced by them, seeing they purported to be an incitement to murder by a Member of this House. There is no precedent for the situation in which the hon. Member for Cork has been placed, and the House can only uphold its honour by declaring that there has been a breach of privilege.

*MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I do not think that any Irish Member rising to speak on the subject should be received, as I have been, with an ironical laugh, and as the most solemn denial of the hon. Member for Cork, on a matter affecting his life and honour, was received some three years since. These, unfortunately, are the weapons with which we are met by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Whatever you may think of us as political foes, however much you may traduce us in England, we, on our side, are ready to take the consequences of our own acts; and we are not ashamed to acknowledge when we are guilty of error. Gentlemen are very chary of their words to-night. Members on that side have made use of the forged letters and libellous charges, and have sent the letters in *facsimile* all over the country at the various elections; and, as almost every man of them expressed belief in those charges, it has been interesting to watch the efforts to pick out some colourless time-serving lawyer here and there, either to say that he had not the backbone to assert those charges at the time, or that he had a convenient memory to forget them now. This is how the Government meets those charges this evening. It has been stated in plain language by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby that in his opinion, and he has verified his statement by quoting precedents in this House, there has been a breach of the privileges of this House. Your only answer to this is that, because that breach has been committed against an Irish Member, and the leader of the Irish Party, you will therefore take no notice. I see an hon. and gallant Gentleman listening to me, who, on the morning of the 18th April, with a delighted countenance, said to me: "Have you seen the *Times* this morning? It is very interesting for Mr. Parnell." That hon. Gentleman sits silent to-night; he will vote, yet he has not the courage nor the manliness to say now: "I disbelieve those charges, and I am sorry I ever believed in them." This is the honour of English gentlemen; this is the bravery displayed abroad among savages, and which is so beautifully illustrated here. What opinion can we have of the honour of Gentlemen opposite. Is there any charge which they have believed of us that we might not, by their actions here to-night, be justified in believing of them? But I think we may say that they cannot point to any parallel in our newspapers in Ireland for what has been done by the *Times*. Some reference has been made to *United Ireland*. I take it as typifying the Nationalist papers of Ireland. But it should not be forgotten that the Irish papers attack the powerful heads of Governments, and that they stand by what they have done, and suffer for it by taking the consequences. But what of the letters in the *Times*? They were published on the day of the Second Reading of the Crimes Bill, which was avowedly for the purpose of trampling on the wishes of the people of Ireland, whose Representatives were in a minority in this House, and those letters were published in the interests of the Government of the day; they were published, as I believe, by the *Times* in collusion with Members of the Government of the day. ["Oh!"] They say "Oh." Will any

Member of the Government stand up to-night—if he would it might obviate a great deal of friction in this debate—and say that when the time comes the Government will grant full and fair inquiry into the history, origin, and source of these libellous charges? This Government is already known to the English people, and I think it will be known to them in history, as a Government that is willing to formulate and advance charges against its political opponents, and, when those opponents have vindicated their honour, will not afterwards do them simple justice by sealing that vindication with the vote of the House of Commons. It is interesting to note that we have not heard the voice in this debate of the right hon. Gentleman who has been rather inaptly called the natural leader of the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman has a personal interest in this matter; perhaps it might be considered out of taste to say that he had a monetary interest in the circulation of these libellous charges—["Oh, oh!"]. How delicate are the honour and conscience of hon. Members opposite. Yet these gross and libellous and murderous charges may be made against my hon. Friend, while it is thought sacrilege to make this reflection on the First Lord of the Treasury. That is an indication of how the characters of Englishmen and Irishmen are looked upon. Still, Irishmen consider themselves as true and trustworthy as hon. Members opposite, and are willing to stand side by side with them to be judged. I say that the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House has a right to tell us of that old friendship between himself and Mr. Walter. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for England ought to speak in this debate. He also had a monetary interest in this matter. Many appeals have been made to him to admit as wrong the charges he had propagated, and it is not too late for him to make the acknowledgment. I remember in connection with this very case that he accused two Members in open court by implication and by name of having tampered with witnesses, and when it was proved that they had done no such thing, he had not the manliness to withdraw the charge. Where is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in this debate, who said "the charges may or may not be true, but I will suspend my judgment on the matter?" He may suspend his judgment, and he may suspend himself politically for all the country cares. But at the time he led us to understand that if these letters were proved to be forgeries he, as an Englishman, would feel it his duty to express his regret and his condolence with the hon. Member for Cork. Where is the honour of English gentlemen gone? Have we, who are accused of being obscure and criminal rapscallions from Ireland, to preach honour to you English gentlemen? We have heard advanced this evening, on behalf of the Press, an extraordinary doctrine, at which I fancy the pressmen of the world will be astonished, when they see it to-morrow—the doctrine that a man might for example be charged in a letter, proved to be a forgery, with condoning murder, and that nothing was to be done to the paper that published it. At the time the hon. Member, whose word you never had reason to doubt, pledged his honour that he had nothing to do with these charges, he was received with a shout of savage derision. Was he after that to go before a jury composed possibly of a more ignorant class of men—if not more ignorant, at any rate more prejudiced. There was the evidence of the experts and others on which they were prepared to go, and in which the Attorney General believed almost up to the last, because he would not certainly have been guilty of taking his fee up to the last moment if he had not believed in the genuineness of the evidence. The *Times* believed, no doubt, that it was a matter of money and time to put down the Irish leader and the Irish people. It will yet be proved that it had at its back the powerful aid of Members of this House, monetarily and otherwise. The *Times* knew that it had at its service the State documents of Ireland, the Secret Service information of Scotland Yard, and the services of the Irish Police and the Resident Magistrates; and so intimate was the connection that Shannon, who sent Pigott away to Madrid, and who was employed by the *Times*, was the brother of a Resident Magistrate in Ireland, who in his turn had been Secretary to Colonel

Turner. That is how justice is administered in Ireland, while Irish Members, who were accused of complicity with the hon. Member for Cork, were actually put into prison during the time the charges were being investigated. And this is what you call showing fair-play. I think it is obvious after what has been said from these benches, that we ought to hear something from the leader of the House, and that there should be some candid disavowal of belief in the genuineness of these letters, from the Attorney General. As for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, though we did expect that he would think it his duty to speak, we may say that really so far as his voice goes in the matter, we are little concerned whether or not he expresses his opinion or belief.

*SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): In the course of this debate the House has heard from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham a remarkable and peculiar doctrine as to the liberty of the Press; but I will ask the House to consider what is the occasion we are discussing, and what is the Motion of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). His Motion declares that these libels are a breach of the privileges of this House. Well, how is that met? No hon. Member, least of all those on the Treasury Bench, has ventured to get up and controvert or deny, or in any way traverse the proposition contained in that Motion. We have had it said that the Resolution is a merely declaratory one, declaring that these are malicious libels, and no one has questioned that they are false and scandalous libels, or that they were expressly published for the purpose of influencing the opinion of the House in an important Division upon a matter of great importance to the Irish Members, and yet the Government come forward and say, "We admit all this, and yet we ask the House to pass an Amendment declining to treat the libels as a breach of privilege." That seems to me to be an attitude in which they are really stultifying themselves. If we were to pass this Amendment of the Government it would be impossible for this House at any future time ever to take notice of a similar libel as a breach of privilege. I say that we shall be false to the traditions we have inherited from the great men who were formerly leaders of this House if we take that course, for because it does not suit Her Majesty's Government to take notice of these libels as a breach of privilege we are asked to pass an Amendment that may be a precedent for all time and which I venture to say will overrule all previous precedents and make it impossible for the House on any future occasions to treat such a case as a breach of its privileges. The Under Secretary of State for India has asked, "Where are your precedents?" and in the next sentence he abused us for proceeding on musty precedents. I ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite was there ever such a case as this before? Are not the circumstances wholly unprecedented? Was ever a case known in which a libel like this, brought forward with the avowed object of influencing the decision of the House on an important Division, was so treated by the Government? Can anybody quote a precedent for the House having refused an injured Member his demand for a Select Committee which is the proper tribunal in such a case? Was there ever a precedent for the House forcing upon a person like that of the hon. Member for Cork, a tribunal for which he did not ask and which he did not want. There is another thing, Sir, which I conceive to be absolutely unprecedented, and that is that the leader of this House should not get up in his place when a question of privilege is brought forward and endeavour to assert what were the undoubted rights and privileges of this House. We have been accustomed to look to the leader of this House as representing us on occasions like this, and as one whose duty it is, perfectly irrespective of party, quite irrespective of the part of the House in which the aggrieved person may sit, to come forward as the champion of our rights, our privileges, and independence. But to-night we have been favoured with no speech whatever from the leader of the House. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman will address the House, but I say that in a case where there has been such a charge of breach of the privileges of the House, it is absolutely unprecedented that the rights, privileges, and independence of the House should be left

to the charge of a private Member, without any guidance from the leader of the House. From the very first moment, although the truth of those libels received a distinct denial from the hon. Member for Cork, there has not been a single occasion in the history of the whole transaction when the House or the Members of the Government have shown the slightest willingness to give the Parliamentary Committee that was asked for, and which undoubtedly was the proper tribunal for the investigation of those charges. Of course, if in the early part of the business the hon. Member for Cork, or any one on these benches, had moved the House to action in the matter, he would have been told clearly and properly that, until the untruth of the statement published by the *Times* had been proved, there was no case for the consideration of the House, because it is not one of those libels which are a breach of privilege whether true or not. The whole point of the case which is now raised rests upon the untruth of the letter, and the forgery which took place; and until it was established that the letter was a forgery, there was no occasion on which we could properly have brought it forward as a breach of privilege. But the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, has told us we might have summoned the printer of the *Times* to the Bar of the House when Mr. Walter paid the sum of 40s. into Court. I think the right hon. Gentleman was very badly advised in that statement, because, as the matter has already been put before the House, the payment of 40s. meant nothing more than this —"We admit the libel, but your character is so worthless that, upon that ground, as well as for other reasons, although we have committed a technical libel, you are not entitled to substantial damages." The payment of 40s. left open the question of what damages might have been claimed, and I ask what would have been said if we had moved in the matter in this House while that question was pending? Why we should have been told that a debate on the subject in this House was calculated to prejudice a fair trial of the issue then before the Court. I deny, therefore, that there has been a single moment in which a Motion such as that of my right hon. Friend could have been made with any hope of success until judgment was actually given against the defendant. I think the contention that we are too late in coming forward at this moment has thus been completely disposed of, and the contention that we are too early answers, really and truly, itself. Well, let me ask what other reason is there for the extraordinary course the Government are asking us to take? The only other reason assigned is that the libel is not of such a character that the House ought to take notice of it. If this libel be not one which affects the honour and character of this House why, let me ask, did the House grant the tribunal which has investigated at so much length the circumstances arising out of the publication of the forged letter? It was solely on the ground, not that it was a personal question affecting the character and conduct of the hon. Member for Cork, but one which affected the honour and character of the House itself, that a special tribunal was created for the purposes of that investigation. I have failed to hear in the whole course of this debate a single ground for asking the House to refuse to declare the libel complained of to be a breach of privilege. Still another reason has been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who said he could not assent to any proposition implying that the *Times* had knowingly issued the forged letter. For my part I can only judge of the motives of that publication by the conduct of the *Times* and their own admission; and I most distinctly deny that the *Times* are in a position to allege good faith in the way they have made that allegation. I do not wish for a moment to be understood to say that they did not believe that the letters were not genuine, but I say they believed it on wholly insufficient grounds—on grounds wholly insufficient to have satisfied a person of the slightest intelligence. Moreover we have the statement given in evidence by Mr. MacDonald himself, that he believed in the letter because it was just the sort of letter he would have expected the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) to write. He was satisfied of the authenticity of the letter without having asked the question which would be the first question anybody else would under the circumstances have asked, namely, what were the circumstances under which it had

come into the possession of the person who offered it. Without being satisfied as to the source of such a letter, no man of the slightest common sense would for a moment have had anything to do with it. Therefore, while I do not say that the *Times* did not believe the letter to be genuine, I say you cannot acquit the *Times*, on the materials you have before you, of being reckless and indifferent as to whether the letter was genuine or not. I wish to impress on the House the extraordinarily unprecedented character of the course we are invited by the Government to take; and I cannot sit down without repeating that it is a course which is calculated to stultify the House, and one for which no justification whatever has been given by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench.

*The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): I should like to offer a few observations to the House on some of the topics which have been touched upon in this debate, and especially on one or two which were referred to by my hon. and learned Friend who has just sat down. My hon. and learned Friend's memory does not seem very clear as to the Parliamentary occurrences of only a few years back, for his chief objection to the form of the Amendment is that it is unprecedented. The fact is that the proposition offered to the House this evening is in the exact words of that which on the 6th of May, 1887, was accepted by a large majority of the House when a claim of breach of privilege was made on the ground that there had been an article in a newspaper imputing deliberate falsehood to a Member in a speech delivered in the House itself. My hon. and learned Friend says that the present Amendment would be of most mischievous consequence and example, and that in similar cases the House would debar itself from dealing with them as breaches of privilege. I hope that it would, for I do not think such matters as were brought before the house in May, 1877, or the article now under discussion, are matters which the House can usefully deal with by way of privilege. Two years and a half ago I showed that in the whole course of recent precedents—and I cited 12 cases down to the year 1810—the House had not dealt with libels of this kind by treating them as matters of privilege. but had instituted proceedings which were conducted in the ordinary way in the Courts of Law. Early in the evening my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India challenged the correctness of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby with regard to the custom of Parliament to deal with an offence which had been committed in another Parliament or in another Session. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the second volume of *Hatsell's Precedents*, and sa'd that a list of cases would be found there which Parliament had so dealt with. But that was a list of cases where the examination of complaints made in one Session was continued in a subsequent Session because it could not be completed in the previous Session. I repeat what my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India said, namely, that there is no precedent to be found in the whole annals of Parliament where, three years after an offence against its privileges had been committed, and after an appeal to the judicial tribunals of the country, the power of Parliament was invoked as a matter of privilege. The object this House has in view in dealing with privilege is simply to protect the regularity and freedom of its own proceedings, and there is no sort of parallel between that case and the one now before the House. The warning which I desire to offer to the House upon the subject was offered to the House 10 years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby in one of the very cases to which he referred in his speech this evening. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the case of the present Lord Justice Lopes in 1875, to the case of Sir Charles Russell, the Member for Westminster, who made a complaint against Mr. Plimsoll, in 1880, and to the case of Mr. John Bright, against whom a complaint was made, in 1883. In 1880, when the complaint was made against Mr. Plimsoll, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby took a leading part in the debate. A proposal made by Sir Stafford Northcote that the placard complained of should be declared to be a breach of privilege was resisted, and by whom, and upon what ground? By the right hon. Gentleman

the Member for Derby, who declared that such a resolution would be "striking a fatal blow at liberty of speech." This placard charged a Member of this House with inhuman conduct in blocking a certain Bill, yet the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, in words far more wise than those he has spoken to-night, urged the House not to put on record a Resolution that it regarded such a placard as a breach of privilege. The hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. J. M. Maclean) has spoken to-night of the liberty of the Press, and I certainly think he was justified in protesting against some of the language that has to-night been applied to the conductors of the *Times*. I speak as one absolutely disinterested, but I think it is right to say that, though the forging of these letters was a foul and wicked thing, there is not the smallest justification for applying those epithets to the conductors of the *Times*. The fact that such epithets have been used show that hon. Gentlemen are not sufficiently cautious in the language they use towards those whom they criticise. It would of course be idle to suggest that the Press should be free from the control of this House if it attacks the privileges of this House, but I do submit to the House that to enter upon proceedings such as these now suggested, after the delay that has taken place, would be foreign to the traditions of the House, would be straining the doctrine of privilege beyond its true limits, and would be establishing a dangerous precedent. I do not wish to enter into any controversy as to the details of the lapse of time, but I do challenge the statement that there was no time at which this matter could have been brought forward as a breach of privilege before to-night. There is a gap in the history of this matter. It is not accurate to say that the hon. Member for Cork came to the House and complained of a breach of privilege or asked for a Committee. The Committee was asked for in regard to other matters. It was only incidentally in the course of debate that a telegram was read from the hon. Member for Cork, stating that he would be willing that this matter of the letter should be included in the reference. That Committee was refused: but what happened then? The hon. Member was left to his legal rights, and what did he do? He did nothing: he did not take any step in the matter for 12 months. I am not cavilling at the hon. Gentleman's conduct. I do not desire to say a single word which would derogate from the fulness of the acknowledgment that he has absolutely cleared himself. [*Cheers and laughter from the Home Rule Members.*] I notice that when any Member on this side of the House expresses any feeling of this kind he is invariably greeted with jeers. I may add that I am prepared to give a distinct contradiction to the statement that has been made that when the hon. Member for Cork made his speech in this House on the evening of the 18th of April, with regard to the publication in the *Times*, that speech was received with jeers. I was in the House myself, and I have a distinct recollection that that was not the case. But I desire to make this suggestion to the House. If this Resolution were carried, and this House declared that there had been a gross and scandalous libel, that Resolution would necessarily have to be followed by some action. The mere protective action of the House to order a person to the Clock Tower would be entirely inadequate and out of harmony with a long series of precedents with regard to cases of gross and scandalous libel. The House would be called upon to order a prosecution. Would the House be willing to order such a prosecution now? If the House were to order such a prosecution now it would be doing now exactly what the Government offered to do on the 4th of May, 1887, when I, following the speech made by the leader of the House, made this offer on the part of Her Majesty's Government. [Mr. T. P. O'Connor: The *Times*' counsel.] No, that was not so; for in the clearest terms the offer was made that while provision should be made out of the Public Funds for the conduct of that prosecution, the choice of counsel to conduct the prosecution in Court, and of solicitors to instruct counsel, should be at the absolute choice of the hon. Member for Cork himself. If we were now to adopt this Resolution, and to take that which, according to the traditions, and the comparatively late practice of Parliament, would be the natural step and sequence to it, and order a prosecu-

tion, we should be doing that which was offered and refused two years and a half ago; we should be taking that step in respect to a litigant against whom the hon. Member has chosen his remedy, has enforced it, and obtained it; we should be taking against him a step which under the circumstances, I think, would not only be justified by no precedent, for there is nothing approaching it in the books, but would be substantially inconsistent with those principles of justice which say that a man shall not be punished twice for the same offence. I submit that the House may with perfect regard for its dignity and honour accept the Resolution offered to it by my right hon. Friend—a Resolution which I again remind it simply applies to this case a conclusion which the majority of the House came to two years and a half ago.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, the main drift of the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman appears to me to be that the House ought not to accept the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) because the period occupied in the inquiry directed by the House into the authenticity of the letter in question has been a long one. The hon. and learned Gentleman does not venture to say that because there has been this inquiry, and because there has been some delay, therefore the House cannot treat this as a question of privilege, because he knows very well that the pages of *Hansard* contain many precedents in which the House has paused before proceeding to exact a penalty for a breach of its privileges; has done what it did in this case, has held or directed an inquiry into the truth or the falsehood of the accusations in question, and, after having ascertained their falsehood, has proceeded to exact the penalty which attaches to the offence. But the hon. and learned Gentleman points out to us that over and over again the House has held inquiry by its Committee into questions of alleged breach of privilege before it has proceeded to act, and, these Committees having reported, the House has punished the breach of privilege. This is what we asked from the beginning. We asked that this question might be settled quickly and speedily by the Report of a Committee of this House. Supposing on the day of the publication of this letter we had been so unreasonable as to bring it forward as a question of privilege and punishment, we should have been told by everybody on that (the Treasury) bench that we must first demonstrate the truth of our accusation against the *Times*—that we must first show that this letter was the forgery that we claimed it to be. That would have been a very reasonable contention for the Government to have made, and we should most justly have been put out of court in our appeal to the House of Commons to exercise its jurisdiction. We asked then that there should be an inquiry into the genuineness of this letter before a Select Committee of the House. Why did not you grant it? The hon. and learned Gentleman says that the request was not made by me. It was made after communication with me by my hon. Friend the Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon). We asked that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the genuineness of the letter, and then we agreed to extend the scope of the inquiry into the charges and allegations, although it is, in the report in *Hansard*, put in the converse way. That inquiry was refused by the Government, who said that a Court of Law was open to me, and that I ought to go before a jury like anybody else. I had not made up my mind at that time that I would not go to a Court. I had never made up my mind that I would not go to a Court of Law, but I considered that it was absolutely necessary, in order to show that that letter was the forgery which I knew it to be, that I should know from whom the *Times* got it; and I recognised that it would be impossible for me to compel the *Times* to give up the name of this person in an ordinary Court of Justice, and that we should be left just as badly off as we were before. Before going to a jury, I took steps to ascertain who the forger of the letter was, and I think I was justified in the result, for when, in the case of "O'Donnell and Walter," the question as to the person from whom the *Times* got that letter was raised, the Attorney General, acting as counsel for the *Times*, stated that under no circumstances would the *Times* give up the name of the person from whom they got the letter. That is the answer I should have had if I

had gone before a jury in the first instance. I should have been left with the opinions of all the trained experts of this country against me—of Mr. Inglis, whose opinion up to this time had never been shaken; of Mr. Birch, of the British Museum, the celebrated decipherer of ancient manuscripts. I should have been left with these authorities against me, and with only my own word to convince the jury of the truth of my statement that this letter, advanced under the great authority of the *Times*, was not genuine. Well, Sir, I think the result has proved that I was wise. I could not compel the *Times* to furnish me with the only information which would have enabled me to conclusively prove—as I was perfectly confident of being able to prove within 48 hours after obtaining that information—that the letters were the forgeries which I always declared them to be; and I asked for a Select Committee because I knew that a Select Committee would have the power to compel the *Times* to do that which they could not be compelled to do in an ordinary Court of Law. We were not given that Select Committee, so let not the hon. and learned Gentleman blame us for the delay that has arisen. If you had chosen to give us the Committee which we asked for on the 6th of May—18 days after this letter was published—you would have had the demonstration of the forgery of that letter within 48 hours after the Committee had commenced its investigations. You chose a different course. For 12 months you refused us that Committee. You referred me to my illusory rights before an ordinary jury, which was to be denied by the counsel for the *Times* the only information which would enable me to disprove the genuineness of these letters. It was not until the proceedings in "O'Donnell and Walter," more than 12 months afterwards, that you agreed to constitute a special tribunal for the purpose of investigating this question, and many other questions besides—a tribunal sufficient for the purpose undoubtedly. But you arranged the terms of reference in such a fashion that many months must elapse and thousands of pounds must be spent before it was possible for us to come to the truth of these forgeries. When we did come to the question of the forgeries, Richard Pigott was only in the box for something like two days before we conclusively proved to the judgment, not only of the Court, but of the whole civilised world, that these letters were not genuine, and that he was the forger. Now, why was not that done at first? Why was it not done on the 8th of May? You who talk to us of the delay in this matter as being a bar to the entertainment of this Motion, can you answer that? We asked for a committee which would have shown it. The reason you refused us that committee was because you wanted to use this question of the forged letters as a political engine. You did not care whether they were forged or not. You saw that it was impossible for me under the circumstances, or for anybody under the circumstances, to prove that they were forgeries, and it was a very good question for you to win bye-elections with—[Mr. JOHNSTON: Partick, for instance]—to send your stump orators over the country to make capital out of them against me. It was also a suitable engine to enable you to obtain an inquiry into a much wider field and into very different matters—an inquiry which you never would have got by itself and apart from these infamous productions—an inquiry which these letters were forged for the purpose of obtaining. The Attorney General smiles. To my mind neither the Attorney General nor the Government to which he belongs will be held blameless at the time when this question is ultimately disposed of. The Attorney General offered himself as counsel for the *Times* without any investigation into the genuineness of these letters, without having taken the most ordinary precautions to ascertain that his case was a good one. He acted as counsel for the *Times* in the case of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter." He staked his great position at the bar, and his still more important position as the first Law Officer of the Crown, on the fact that the Lord Frederick Cavendish letter was a genuine letter. He made himself the tool of the *Times* for disseminating, by means of the so-called judicial proceedings in that case, still further and more atrocious libels, for which the *Times* could not have been punished had it not happened most incautiously to have commented on them in its leader next day, and

which the managers of the *Times*, and probably, the Attorney General, supposed they were disseminating from the safe position of a Court of Justice. He did this without using the most elementary precautions to ascertain the truth of his assertions. I warned the learned Gentleman after he had published these libels, after he had used his high position to protect the publication of these libels and to obtain a credence for them which they never would otherwise have had—I warned him in this House, after the conclusion of the case of "O'Donnell and Walter," that he ought to have looked into the origin of the letters before he published them. I asked him publicly in this House whether he had inquired into their origin, whether he knew of whom the *Times* had got them, and the learned Gentleman was dumb. The proceedings subsequently before the Special Commission showed that not only the Attorney General, but the managers of the *Times*, had not up to that period, and I think not until the beginning of the subsequent October, taken the trouble even to ascertain from whom the young man Houston had got these letters. Such recklessness would be incredible if it were not a mournful and sorrowful fact. I should be sorry, as I said when the Special Commission Bill was passing through this House—leader as I am of a Party which is in a minority, and which, as an Irish Party, must always be in a minority here—I should be sorry to treat my most powerful opponents with the depth of incredible meanness and cowardice with which I have been treated in this matter. You now add to this. I do not know why it is, unless you are bound by some secret ties and obligations. But the learned Gentleman who moved this Amendment has put on the records of the House, and has asked you to affirm, an Amendment which is a further insult. You still leave the public and the world to suppose, by proposing this Amendment, that in the opinion of the majority of the House there is still a doubt as to whether this letter is genuine or not. Do you believe it to be forged? If you do, why have you not the simple courage and manliness to say so at once? You talk of "the letter" and impute it to me as if, instead of being the year 1890, it was the month of April, 1877, as if, instead of being at the end of the vindication which has taken all this time, anxiety, trouble, and money, we were at the beginning of it—as if the matter was still *sub judice*. If you think that is a course of conduct worthy of yourselves, I shall leave you to consider so: I am sorry for you, but I shall give you the opportunity of, at all events, removing this most extraordinary omission from your resolution by moving to amend the Amendment by inserting the word "forged" before the word "letter."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I will say one word only in reference to the speech which has just fallen from the hon. Gentleman. He has attributed to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House a desire to attribute to him the authorship of the letter which is acknowledged to be a forgery. I think if the hon. Gentleman had followed the observations of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary he would have realised how completely he joined with hon. Gentlemen opposite in expressing his detestation of the forgery and the forged letter, and the means by which, and the circumstances under which, the forgery had been published. I wish, on behalf of myself, my right hon. Friends on this Bench, and all those who sit on this side of the House, to express our detestation of the act which has been committed, and our pleasure and satisfaction that the hon. Gentleman has been relieved absolutely and completely from the imputation under which, for a time, he laboured. The hon. Gentleman has asked that the word "forged" should be added to the Amendment. I have not the slightest objection. I wish to give him every satisfaction which we can legitimately give him under the circumstances. At the same time, I must express a belief that, in the interests of the honour and dignity of this House, and in the interests of all who are concerned in maintaining the authority of the House, it is better that we should accept the proposal made by the Government instead of that made by the right hon. Gentleman

opposite. I propose, Sir, to add the word "forged" before the word "letter."

*MR. SPEAKER: That would more properly be done when the Amendment came to be the substantive Resolution before the House.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 212; Noes 260.—(Div. List, No. 1.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Amendment amended, by inserting the word "forged" before the word "letter." —*(Mr. William Henry Smith.)*

Question,

"That the words 'this House declines to treat the publication in the *Times* newspaper of the 18th April, 1887, of a forged letter purporting to have been written by Mr. Parnell, and of the comments thereon, as a 'breach of the Privileges of this House' be there added,"

—put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House declines to treat the publication in the *Times* newspaper of the 18th April 1887, of a forged letter purporting to have been written by Mr. Parnell, and of the comments thereon, as a breach of the Privileges of this House.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Copy ordered—

"Of Account of the Receipts and Payments of the Accountant General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, in respect of the funds of suitors in the said Court, in the year ended the 30th day of September, 1889; together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets, and particulars of Securities in Court on the 30th day of September, 1889."—*(Mr. Jackson.)*

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 9.]

Mr. W. H. Smith

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1888-9.

Copy ordered—

"Of Accounts showing—

1. The Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1889;
2. The Distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year, together with the Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon." — *(Mr. Jackson.)*

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 10.]

CIVIL SERVICE (LOWER DIVISION).

Copy ordered—

"Of Treasury Minute, dated the 4th day of February 1890, relating to the Lower or Second Division of the Civil Service."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 11.]

SEA FISHERIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Return ordered—

"Of Statistical Tables and Memorandum relating to the Sea Fisheries of the United Kingdom, including Return of the quantity of fish conveyed inland by Railway from each of the principal Ports of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, during each of the years from 1884 to 1889, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 6, of Session 1889)." —(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 12.]

CORN AVERAGES.

Copy ordered

"Of Statistical Tables of Corn Prices for the year 1889, with Comparative Tables for previous years, and Memorandum."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 13.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 12th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

THE BERNE LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in consequence of the postponement of the Labour Conference at Berne, fresh invitations have been issued by the Swiss Government to the European Powers; and, if so, whether he will state what answer England returned?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Yes. A fresh invitation has been received, but it has not yet been replied to.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman can inform the House if it is contemplated to furnish the British delegates with powers to discuss any question?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: The invitation has been received within the last day or two, and we cannot say what will be done until it has been considered by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Will the Government be able to give the House any information on the subject before the termination of the debate upon the Address?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: If the debate should be as short as I hope it will be I should say "No"—[*Laughter*]—but that is obviously a question which I cannot answer at present.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Then I beg to give notice that in case the Government are not in a position to furnish the House with information during the debate, I will take an opportunity of calling attention to the subject during the debate.

THE PORTUGUESE IN EAST AFRICA.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the numerous statements which have appeared in the Press, concerning the excited state of public opinion in Portugal, and the hostility displayed towards British subjects resident there; whether the Goverment have any evidence as to the causes of the excitement and hostility; what is the nature of the relations at present existing between this country and Portugal; if the Government have received any request from the Government of Portugal that the questions in dispute shall be referred to the mediation of a friendly Power, or submitted to arbitration; and, whether the Government are willing, or have considered the advisability of submitting the differences of this country and an ancient ally to such friendly and peaceful settlement?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are aware that popular feeling in Portugal has been greatly stirred by the late difference between the Governments of the two countries. I believe that the facts as they will appear in the Papers presented to Parliament yesterday will largely dispel the misapprehension from which that feeling arises. The relations between the two Governments are friendly. The Portuguese Government has suggested a reference of the matters in dispute to arbitration, but Her Majesty's Government consider the case inapplicable to that process.

MR. CREMER: Arising out of that answer may I ask when the Papers referred to will be in the hands of the Members of this House?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I was informed that they would be in the hands of hon. Members to-day, and I hope they will be.

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Copy ordered—

"Of Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for each month during the year 1890."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.]

QUEEN'S SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported Her Majesty's Speech, made yesterday by Her Chancellor [see page 2], and read it to the House.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

MR. ROYDEN (Liverpool, W., Toxteth): I rise, Sir, to move that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty in reply to the most Gracious Speech from the Throne. The assurance that Her Majesty's relations with Foreign Powers continue to be of a friendly character will, I am quite sure, be received by the country with the utmost satisfaction, and as a guarantee that other nations, as well as this country, desire peace. That guarantee will be still more satisfactory when we consider the magnitude of the interests of this country which are involved in almost every quarter of the globe. Difficulties will no doubt occur from time to time, and when they do occur they should be met by a resolute policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The action of the authorities in the colony of Mozambique in dispatching an armed force under a Portuguese officer into a territory where British settlements had been formed, and where there were native tribes under the protection of Her Majesty, resulted unfortunately in loss of life, and for the vindication of the honour of this country it seems to me that there was one course, and one course only, for Her Majesty's Government to take, and that was immediately to demand the return of that armed force. The demand was made to the Portuguese Government that this should be done; and when the heat and passion of the moment have been allayed and a calmer judgment prevails, I have no doubt that the cordial relations and the good feeling and friendship which have existed for so many years between the two countries will be restored, and will remain undisturbed in future. I will now pass on to the consideration of a subject which must naturally be of the greatest interest to this country. To the honour of England, Great Britain was the first nation which, at great sacrifice, abolished slavery. Years have elapsed since; but our good example has borne fruit, and has even been followed by the American people, who have gradually abolished slavery within the limits of their dominions. We are now coming to a period when the last link of slavery will be abolished for ever. Her Majesty announces that a Commercial Convention has been concluded with the Khedive of Egypt, and I trust that it will be of such a favourable character as to lead to a great extension of the important trade which already exists between this country and Egypt. A provisional arrangement for the adjustment of pressing fiscal questions has also been made with the Government of Bulgaria. Some difficulties appear to have beset the Government of that country, which at one period seemed to threaten an acute stage, but happily those difficulties have now passed away. We are told that the disordered condition of Swaziland has rendered it necessary to make better provision for the Government of that territory, the existing Government having been found quite inadequate for the growing wants of the colony. I think it was wise on the part of Her Majesty's Government to take time by the forelock, and, in harmony with the President of the South African Republic, to endeavour to establish such a form of Government as would meet the merits of the case. Bearing in mind the views of the inhabitants of that territory there can be no doubt that great as has been the progress of this South African colony, in the future it will be greater still. It would seem that there is an enormous field which is about to be developed and opened up to the trade of this country, and I think it is wise on the part of Her Majesty's Government to be beforehand in providing for any difficulties that may arise, so that no disturbance may hereafter take place. The Conference which is now being held in regard to the federation of the Australian Colonies naturally forms an important item in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. In that growing continent it is only right that the colonists should desire to strengthen their hands, so that if it should ever happen that this country was involved in war, they would be able to combine their resources and materially assist in their own defence. I now come to what may be regarded as the most important measure that will have to be placed under the consideration of the House. I refer to the measure for extending the Act for increasing the number of tenants in Ireland in order that they may become landowners. No one denies that there has been very great, marked, and substantial improvement in

the condition of Ireland, and especially in the last few years. There are various indications perfectly well-known to the House of the truth of that statement. It may be said that the improved harvest of last year has had something to do with this. That may have been one cause, but I think the main and the great cause has been the admirable way in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland has performed his duties. I may not, in making that assertion, be able to carry with me the assent of hon. Members on the other side of the House; but I think at any rate we may say this: that if it is not due to that, it is a curious coincidence that the improvement has taken place since the right hon. Gentleman commenced his duties. It is certainly a very happy coincidence, and I hope that the same improvement will continue as long as the Government holds office. The success which has attended the working of the Ashbourne Act to enable tenants to purchase their holdings, encourages Her Majesty's Government to attempt something further in the same direction. The Act of 1881 made the condition of landlord and tenant almost inseparable. That may be a very advantageous thing if the conditions of life were the same, but it has not proved to be altogether an unmixed blessing. In regard to the landlords and tenants of Ireland, antagonistic interests have cropped up; and the tenant has felt that, in carrying out improvements, the encouragement given to him to employ his best talents and industry has not been quite as strong as if the land were his own. When he is the landlord himself he must feel that every improvement he makes is for his own benefit, and that every blade of grass and every ear of corn he produces is entirely for his own good. He has then a direct incentive to do the best he can, and when that is the case the more likely is the country to get a hard-working and industrious peasantry. There is, of course, one consideration which must be kept in view, and that is the necessity of a State guarantee, in order that the money may be borrowed on the best possible terms. I know that there is a great objection to this if it should entail any extra expense on the British taxpayer; and I, for one, admit that I feel the force of that objection. But I think, judging from past experience, and to the honour, be it said, of the Irish tenants who have availed themselves of the privilege of buying their land under the Ashbourne Act, they have most honourably and faithfully fulfilled the engagements which they entered into. This shows, I think, that we may proceed further in the same direction, coupled with the guarantee which Her Majesty's Government propose to provide for the security of the British taxpayer. I feel that the responsibility will be but a nominal one; and if we can hold out more favourable terms to the tenant to enable him to buy his land, we shall confer an immense benefit upon that country. Before I pass away from that subject, let me say that I rejoice that the Government contemplate the introduction of a measure which will give the Irish people the management of their local affairs upon the lines of the recent English and Scotch Acts. There will naturally arise some different circumstances; but, in the main, it is desirable that a people in that position should be entrusted with the direction and regulation of their own local affairs. I am also glad to find that Her Majesty's Government propose to re-introduce the Bill for facilitating and cheapening the transfer of land in England. The object of the measure is, no doubt, to induce small holders to buy land, and if with safety any measure of that kind can be passed to enable small holders to become interested in the land, I think it will be of advantage to the country that the land should, as far as possible, be in the hands of a well-to-do peasantry. The Bill which the Government propose to introduce for the amendment of the Employers' Liability Act will meet cases of hardship which frequently arise; and although I am aware that it is impossible to give adequate compensation in cases where there has been a loss of life—for you cannot estimate by pounds, shillings, and pence, the value of life—still the measure will tend to make employers more careful in affording protection to the lives of their servants. I rejoice that it is also proposed to meet in the Bill the case of seamen, who are at present quite outside the benefit of the Act. There is no reason why the advantage of legislation in this direction should not be extended t›

sailors. The subject of the sanitation of the dwellings of the poor in the Metropolis I regard as being of equal importance to anything which I have yet mentioned. How to deal with our very poor is one of the problems of modern society. It is impossible for the State to enrich the poor or to find them employment, but at least it may improve the conditions under which they live. I maintain that it is the duty of the State to see that the very poor are not huddled together in places where we would almost be ashamed to put our dogs—without distinction of sex or age—and in places where it is almost impossible for the most courageous philanthrophist to visit them. In Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and elsewhere the authorities have been able, under Lord Cross's Act, to materially increase the comfort of the working classes. In the city of Liverpool we have been able to reduce our death-rate by something like 25 per cent, and materially to increase the comfort of the working classes. No doubt the size of the Metropolis is the greatest difficulty in the solution of the problem in London, and the overlapping of the Metropolitan Authorities makes it difficult to affix blame to any particular body for the evils that exist. All will admit that a proper system of inspection should be at once established; and I trust that the measure which the Government are about to introduce will at least insure that, however poor people may be, they will in the future be able to breathe something like fresh air and enjoy a glimpse of sunlight. Although the list of measures which has been proposed may appear long, it is really nothing more than the House can very well get through, if it resolutely sets itself to try how much it can do instead of how little. These measures are mainly for the advantage of the great masses of our countrymen, and appear to me to be outside what I may call ordinary political questions. It is the welfare of the great bulk of our countrymen in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales that these measures are designed to promote. Therefore, I venture to hope that in this House Members on one side and Members on the opposite side will show the country, in considering the measures propounded for the material and social welfare of the people, that they are really at one, however much they may differ as to the means for attaining the end, that they desire to do their duty to their constituents, and that they are anxious to improve the material prosperity and welfare of the great masses of their countrymen.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to thank Your Majesty for the Most Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament:

We humbly thank Your Majesty for the information that Your Majesty's relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that an armed force under a Portuguese Officer was dispatched during the autumn from the Colony of Mozambique into territory where British Settlements had been formed, and where there are Native tribes who have been taken under Your Majesty's protection; and that a collision, attended with bloodshed, took place; that acts were committed inconsistent with the respect due to the flag of this Country; and that the Portuguese Government have now, at Your Majesty's request, promised to withdraw their military forces from the territory in question:

We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that a Conference of the Powers interested in the suppression of the Slave Trade has been convoked at Brussels by the King of the Belgians, and that Your Majesty earnestly hopes that the results of its deliberations will advance the great cause for which it is assembled:

We thank your Majesty for the information that a Commercial Convention has been concluded with the Khedive of Egypt, and that a Provisional Arrangement for the adjustment of pressing fiscal questions has been made with the Government of Bulgaria; that Papers on all these questions will be presented to us:

We learn with satisfaction that the Convention concluded by Your Majesty with the Emperor of Germany and the Republic of the United States with respect to the Government of Samoa will be laid before us, together with the Protocols of the Conference; as also a

Treaty which has been concluded by Your Majesty with the United States for amending the Law of Extradition between the two Countries, the latter instrument still awaiting the ratification of the Senate:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the disordered condition of Swaziland having rendered it necessary to make provision for the better government of that territory, the independence of which was recognised by the Convention of London, Your Majesty has, acting in conjunction with the President of the South African Republic, sent a Commissioner to learn the views of the Swazis and of the white settlers:

We humbly thank Your Majesty for the information that your Majesty awaits with lively interest the result of the Conference now being held to discuss the important question of the federation of the Australian Colonies, and that any well considered measure which, by bringing these great Colonies into closer union, will increase their welfare and strength, will receive Your Majesty's favourable consideration:

We thank your Majesty for informing us that the Estimates of the year for defraying the cost of the Government of the Country will be laid before us, and that they have been drawn with a due regard to economy and to the necessities of the public service:

We learn with satisfaction that the continued improvement in the state of Ireland, and the further diminution in the amount of agrarian crime, have made it possible very largely to restrict the area in which it is necessary to deal with certain offences by summary process; that proposals for increasing under due financial precaution the number of occupying owners; for extending to Ireland the principles of local self-government which have already been adopted in England and Scotland, so far as they are applicable to that Country; and for improving the material well-being of the population in the poorer districts, will be submitted to us:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that a Bill for facilitating and cheapening the transfer of land in England will be again presented to us; and that provisions will be submitted to us for diminishing the difficulty and cost which at present attend the passage of Private Legislation required for Scotland:

We thank Your Majesty for the information that a Bill for improving the procedure by which Tithe is now levied, and for facilitating its redemption, will be laid before us:

We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty has appointed a Commission to report upon the best means of improving the economic conditions which affect the inhabitants of some parts of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be invited again to a Bill for ascertaining the Liability of Employers in case of Accidents, and to a measure for improving the procedure in winding up insolvent Companies under the Limited Liability Acts:

We thank Your Majesty for the information that there will be laid before us Bills for the consolidation and amendment of the Laws with respect to public health in the Metropolis, and to the Dwellings of the Working Classes; and also a Bill for the better regulation of Savings Banks and Friendly Societies:

We thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be directed to the state of the accommodation now provided in Camps and Barracks, and that we shall be asked to make better provision for the distribution as well as for the health and comfort of Your Majesty's Troops:

We humbly assure Your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust that in these and all other efforts which we may make to promote the well-being of Your Majesty's people we may be guided by the hand of Almighty God."—(*Mr. Royden.*)

LORD BROOKE (Colchester): Sir in rising to second the Address to Her Majesty's gracious Speech from the Throne so ably moved by my hon. Friend, I must crave the indulgence of the House an indulgence which I am sure is always extended to those who undertake this task. I also crave the indulgence of the House from the fact that this is the first time I have had the opportunity of addressing it or of occupying its attention. I may say that the opportunity has been somewhat longer deferred than I had anticipated, owing to the business which occupied the House yesterday afternoon. I feel that in following the Mover of the Address I shall experience considerable difficulty in following the tracks which have marked his progress and which so obviously commanded your attention. In the first instance my hon. Friend called our atten-

tion to the fact that we are at peace with all other Powers. Now, Sir, last Session we were occupied with the discussion of measures for the protection of our shores, and I think it is very satisfactory to us that those protective measures have in no way jeopardised the peace of Europe. If there is one Member of the present Administration who enjoys the confidence of the country, I am sure that it is the Foreign Secretary. The abilities of Lord Salisbury have been acknowledged by Gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House, and generously admitted, and I sincerely trust that this admission may be made again and again. We have before us a string of Conventions and negotiations with other countries, and it is most satisfactory to this House to feel that they are in the hands of so able an administrator. With regard to the slight difference which has occurred between us and Portugal—a country which has so long been on terms of the most friendly intimacy and alliance with us—we have every reason to hope from the Speech we have just heard read that all matters will be amicably settled. It would indeed be a disastrous thing were we to quarrel with so old an ally, and one who bears on her records the evidence of battles and victories gained in conjunction with this country. I am aware that we have a great interest in South Africa. There may be recollections associated with the past in connection with that great continent which are of a painful nature, but under the auspices of peace we have seen the industry, the wealth, and the intelligence of this country so poured into the great African Continent that we have every reason to hope that in future it may prove an unfailing field for English enterprise. I think that Her Majesty's Government would have done wrong if they had not done their best to secure for us some sort of recognition of British rights by explorers under our flag. I think it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to preserve in that country intact those regions over which our flag waves, whether as a ruling or a protecting Power. I have heard it said that a weaker Power has been treated with over-firmness by Lord Salisbury. I venture to think it would have, indeed, been mistaken kindness on our part had we led the Portuguese on to believe that protracted diplomatic negotiations would have obscured the great interests at stake, or ultimately, in any way, have altered our final decision. The other questions of foreign importance touched upon in Her Majesty's Speech have been so fully alluded to by my hon. Friend that I will not trouble the House upon them, resting sure, as I have said, that under Lord Salisbury they will be ably negotiated and settled. But, Sir, I will call the attention of the House for a few moments to the proposals of the Government with regard to Ireland. It is, indeed, most gratifying to hear that there has been an improvement in that country. Whether, as my hon. Friend has said, it is due to increased agricultural prosperity, or to those measures which Her Majesty's Government have thought it necessary to introduce, the fact undoubtedly remains that the condition of that country exhibits a marked improvement. This must be a matter of congratulation to all Members of this House, irrespective of the side on which they sit. I do not wish to trouble the House with many figures, but I should like to call attention to one or two just to bear out what my hon. Friend said regarding the diminution of agrarian crime of that country. In 1886, the number of cases of agrarian crime stood at 385; in 1887 they were 352; in 1888, the number was 229; and in 1889 it had fallen to 176; the cases of boycotting, which in 1888 stood at 1,179, now number 313; and it is most satisfactory to find that at the Winter Assizes the Judges were able to call attention to a most decided improvement in that country. My hon. Friend has alluded to the proposed extension of ownership in Ireland. This is a very satisfactory measure for us to note, because, as he has remarked, an increase in the number of small owners in that country must be followed by an increase of loyalty, and a greater desire for peace in that country, which has hitherto been so much disturbed. We have had ample evidence that the Ashbourne Act has worked most admirably. We know that up to the present time there have been applications amounting to considerably over 20,000, representing a capital of over £10,000,000, and that up to the end of last year over 10,000 holdings have been purchased, representing a capital of very nearly

£5,000,000. I think it is a subject for congratulation that Her Majesty's Government should have proposed to extend in some manner, under suitable financial securities, this state of affairs in Ireland. I think, moreover, that the fact that peace has been restored in that country enables Her Majesty's Government now to give some assurance to us that the Local Government which we have enjoyed in England for some time, and which has more recently been adopted in Scotland, may, under proper safeguards, be extended to Ireland. I turn from the subject of Ireland to call attention to the Bill which is proposed for facilitating and cheapening the transfer of land in England. That Bill has previously been presented to us, and all I would say regarding it is that I believe it is a measure which may be of considerable use to this country, cheapening to those who own property the expense of sale, and diminishing the loss of time which is often occasioned by legal delays; and I sincerely trust that the large legal element in this House will enable us to pass that measure in a short time. There is also a measure to be submitted to diminish the cost and difficulty which at the present moment attends the passing of Private Bill legislation in Scotland; and anything which can attain this desirable result will, I am sure, be welcomed in the House of Commons. I now come to a question which is of very considerable importance, especially to those who, like myself, live in a part of England which has lately been suffering very considerably from agricultural depression. I allude to the tithe question. I am aware that I am speaking as a member of a class not perhaps always viewed with favour by some Members of this House — I mean the landlord class. But I assure those Members of the House that in times of the very greatest difficulty, we English landlords have done our best—not withholding in any way our money from the land, or our assistance to those among whom we have lived and endeavoured to do our duty. I know that the tithe question has reached a rather acute stage in Wales, where a sum of upwards of £250,000 a year is paid in tithes; but I may say that one of the Eastern counties, in which I live, pays every year the large sum of £750,000 towards tithe; therefore it may be imagined that living in such a county I speak somewhat feelingly about tithe. It is far from my wish to suggest any idea of confiscation. I know that in these times the difficulties of the tithe owner as well as of the tithe payer are considerable, but I believe that the measure which Her Majesty's Government now propose will be the means of alleviating very many of those difficulties. In the first instance, I believe it is proposed to improve the procedure by which tithe is now levied. I think it is fair and just also that tithe should fall upon the right person — upon the landlord; and I sincerely trust that, although it is surrounded with very great difficulties, some measure for facilitating the redemption of tithe may be brought before us. But I look rather further than this, and I feel that the tithe question is one which is so little known to the people of this country that I hail with delight the opportunity which will be afforded to this House, when this measure comes on for discussion, of clearing away some of the clouds which surround the subject. I would remind the House that in the olden time of protection, to which time I do not say we ought to return, the burden of the tithe fell not only upon the land, but I hold that it fell upon every portion of the community, because those protective duties not only enhanced the value of the tithe to the tithe-owner, but at the same time they were of the very greatest material assistance to the tithe-payers of this country. That burden has now entirely fallen upon the land, and it is not borne by the wealth of the country. I trust this House will bear that fact in mind when the subject comes up for consideration. I now come to that passage in Her Majesty's Speech which deals with the Western Highlands and Islands. Those who have visited that portion of Her Majesty's dominions must be aware of the very great distress and misery in which many of the inhabitants live, and I think it is obvious that it is impossible for them to live on their land, such land as it is, with any hope of being in any other condition than that of squalor and misery. I therefore trust that Her Majesty's Government may be enabled to bring forward measures for the improvement of the harbours and railways in that part of the country, and

other measures which will enable the people to bring the produce of the sea more readily into the markets of the country. In this matter I think the Government are acting very wisely, and I believe we shall shortly see that the condition of the people in that part of Her Majesty's dominions has much improved. I will not touch upon any other subject now, except to allude to the fact that accommodation is to be provided for our camps and garrisons, and better provision made for the distribution as well as for the health and comfort of our troops at home. Representing, as I do, a garrison town, that subject is naturally of the very greatest interest to me. It must have been with considerable regret that Her Majesty's Government have at times heard of the sad deaths which have occurred owing to the insanitary condition of some of our barracks, and I think that none too soon has it been announced that measures will be taken for changing this state of affairs. I feel that it would be wrong of me if I detained the House any longer. I am aware that it has been said that it is impossible in the present state of business to discuss many questions of Imperial importance, but I know that very recently one of the greatest engineering feats of the day has seen its completion in the northern part of this country—I mean the Forth Bridge. The engineer had to wait for opportunities to occur in the atmospheric conditions, when he could bring together the various portions of that structure and so weld and forge them together that they might be of permanent use for traffic; and so I sincerely trust that the leader of this House may be able so to find his opportunities for welding and forging together the various portions of this House, that we may have satisfactory Parliamentary traffic. I remember two years ago one whom we all respected and honoured—the late Member for Finsbury, Colonel Duncan—in words honourable to himself and honourable to the House which adopted his sentiments, recalled our attention to our duties in this House. I will not repeat his words, but the memory of them is still in our recollection. I trust that those words may sometimes serve to soften the asperity of party feeling in this House, and enable us to remember that we have been sent here, without undue discussion, to pass measures for every class of Her Majesty's subjects.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): It must always, Sir, be in the power of the leader of this House, from the ample stores of ability, information, and character which are at command, to make satisfactory selection of the Gentlemen to whom to entrust the office, the honourable and distinguished office of bringing under the consideration of this House the subject of the Speech from the Throne, and undoubtedly I think it will be generally felt that the right hon. Gentleman has not failed in his selection on the present occasion. We who sit on this side of the House are not to be expected to subscribe in terms to every sentiment which falls from the Mover and Seconder of the Address, but we have a right to expect from them that they shall show a certain regard to the general sentiment of the House, and shall not unnecessarily provoke hostile discussion on statements proceeding from themselves. To these principles I think there has been a full adhesion on the present occasion, and I congratulate the Mover and Seconder without reserve on the manner in which they have discharged their important duties. In general I have taken the opportunity, in conformity with ancient tradition, of seizing the occasion that follows the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Address to make such observations as seem to be necessary upon the tenour of the gracious Speech from the Throne. I have done so and it has been done by others in the past in the belief that that was the best method of shortening the discussion on the Address. I am not so sanguine at the present moment—after an experience which has now extended over not less than six or eight years—I am not so sanguine of great brevity as in former times. But undoubtedly in the comments that I shall have to make I shall bear in my memory the old, and I think useful, tradition which should always be borne in mind, that apart from the proposal of positive Amendments—a perfectly legitimate course on sufficient cause—it is very difficult to arrive at any satisfactory result by a general discussion on the Address to be presented to the Throne.

Although it is absolutely necessary that on certain points observations should be made, these observations do not always tend to delay or obstruct the proceedings of the House, especially as regards the foreign affairs of the country. For I think it will be felt that if the conduct of the noble Marquess at the head of the Government in his character of Foreign Secretary has called forth the eulogies of the Mover and Seconder of the Address, on the other hand there has not been shown in any quarter of the House, and certainly not on this side, any disposition prematurely or without necessity to call in question the conduct of the affairs of the Foreign Department. On this occasion undoubtedly much of the language that I shall hold will be language rather of congratulation than of censure. In the first place, as regards the Portuguese question, I deeply regret, as all must regret, and as the Seconder of the Address himself has frankly stated he regrets, that any occasion should have arisen in which we were brought into diplomatic conflict, especially when that conflict is of a stringent character, with an ancient and a weak ally. I have heard it said in this House by great authorities—by Lord Palmerston, whose knowledge of foreign affairs was great—that the smaller Powers of Europe, or some of them, have sometimes presumed on their weakness to make demands which justice would not warrant. I do not deny that such occasions have occurred, still, the greater Power can never be exempt from the obligation of considering what is due to that weakness, and how much public sentiment would be affected by the exhibition of any disposition to take advantage of that weakness. I entirely acquit Her Majesty's Government and the Foreign Minister of any such disposition on the present occasion. My impression is there was cause for action, and if there was to be action it was very much better that that action should be prompt. I cannot say that I think there is no room for criticising the terms in which these just conclusions have been conveyed. But we are all aware of the peculiar powers possessed by the noble Marquess, and especially of the unbounded store of his sarcastic resources. The application of this remark does not depend on any criticism from this side of the House. It was from that Bench on a memorable occasion—and by a most distinguished person, then Prime Minister of the country and leader of this House—that the House was informed, in terms which I do not think it necessary to quote, but which were certainly not deficient in point and power, of the nature of the resources possessed by the noble Marquess. When an individual has a particular gift which he holds in great abundance, it is very difficult altogether to abstain from some superfluous manifestation of it, and undoubtedly if there had been a censorship, not of the Press but of the despatches proceeding from the Foreign Office, I think it is possible that the censor might have judiciously and usefully criticised some of the language and style employed on the present occasion. But that must not blind us to the substantial issue that is before us, and as to that substantial issue I think the conduct of the noble Marquess will not attract general disfavour in the country. There is one other subject which I cannot pass by wholly without attention in reference to Portugal, and that is that I think that the occurrence of this unfortunate conflict—for such undoubtedly we all feel it to be—however unavoidable it might be on our side, will arouse in many minds most serious regret when they reflect that there was under the Foreign Secretaryship of Lord Granville a Treaty before the country which would have disposed of the whole of this question between Portugal and England, and would have absolutely precluded the revival of any such occurrence as this. It was owing to what is called agitation—it is called agitation when proceeding from this side of the House—I do not know that it proceeded exclusively from the other side of the House—but it was owing to the pressure and unfortunate interference of the sentiment so excited that Her Majesty's Government was prevented from carrying that arrangement to its conclusion, thereby leaving the door open for the unhappy circumstances which have lately arisen. Now I pass on to the reference made as to the Convention relating to the Island of Samoa. I speak of this Convention so far as I am acquainted with the circumstances. I do not anticipate the effect of further information which I presume will be laid before us, but so far as my knowledge goes I am disposed to congratulate the

Government on the nature of this arrangement. It is a good example of what may be done by a temperate resort to pacific means of settling disputed questions, even when they arise at the other end of the world, instead of the hasty use either of military measures or of that angry language which is the surest mode of bringing about sharp conflicts between the disputants. I am heartily glad that that conduct has been pursued and that the result has been satisfactory. With regard to the question of Swaziland, I am not at all surprised that the Government find it necessary to consider the question of making better provision for the government of that territory. The truth is that, great as have been and are the responsibilities of this country in other quarters of the globe, and limited as for a long time our responsibilities in Africa appeared to be, unquestionably causes, mainly connected not with the action of political parties or of Governments, but what may be called natural causes, have brought about an enormous increase of British interests in South Africa, and have opened up new prospects in that country. What we have been accustomed to regard as the Transvaal Republic, so far as the material of the community is concerned, is now, I believe, more, and a great deal more, a British settlement than a Dutch one. British influence—legitimate British influence—is naturally dependent on the number of our fellow-subjects who find their way to Africa, and such has that number already become, and such are the prospects of its extension, that we have now arrived at a state of things in which our African responsibilities have assumed a magnitude not inferior to those which have long been incumbent upon us in connection with America and Australasia; and, although it would have been a daring and even an unwarranted prophecy to make 20 or 30 years ago, the time has come when we may anticipate—I will not say as certain, but as possible and even probable—that the colonial possessions of Her Majesty in Africa may become in no way unworthy to compare with those in North America and Australasia in their magnitude and importance, and especially so long as we avoid anything that looks like political ambition and aggression, and so long as we avoid that which has a tendency to collision and bloodshed. I am not at all surprised that we have reached a point with respect to this comparatively unknown country, Swaziland, when Her Majesty's Government have thought it wise to take precautions of a peaceful and apparently a rational kind for bringing about the better government of that territory. I believe at this moment Englishmen generally in the Transvaal Republic are not, under the laws of that country, able to exercise the franchise, and I shall be very glad if, by the influence of rational and constitutional discussion, they should be placed on a footing of the fullest political equality that the principles of justice warrant with the original settlers to whom the foundation of that Republic is due under circumstances that give them special title to consideration. I think it is better, before passing to the domestic subjects touched upon in Her Majesty's gracious Speech, that I should refer to a subject which I do not find mentioned, and which I do not blame Her Majesty's Government for not mentioning, but yet which I feel it impossible to pass by wholly in silence—I mean the condition of the Turkish Empire. We are sensible, and painfully sensible, notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made towards peace and good government in the Levant by European agency, that those affairs have been for some time gradually assuming an aspect that causes apprehension for the future, making thus a subject—I will not say of present danger to the peace of Europe, but of present anxiety with respect to the condition of the Turkish Empire, and of possible danger in a more or less approximate future. In approaching this question I can never forget that Her Majesty's Government are placed in of position of difficulty, and that we must not expect too much from them; but one thing we must expect from them, and that is that they should never put glosses on the case and never attempt to represent the state of facts as more favourable than there is just ground for believing it to be. There is a temptation in that direction, but I hope they will never shrink, as Ministers of the Crown and as Englishmen, from speaking of abuse, tyranny, and cruelty when found in the Empire of which we are a guarantee-

ing Power—that they will never shrink from speaking of such things as these in terms which befit their character. Now, Sir, we approach, at least I approach, this question with one great advantage—that I have full confidence in the British Embassy at Constantinople. I do not mean to say that there have been periods when that Embassy has been held by men who were either wanting in ability or honour. I make no such insinuation; men may be able, and men may be honourable, but they may be either insufficiently informed or liable to prejudices which bias their judgment. I must say I believe, so far as I am able to judge, that the present British Ambassador at Constantinople, who owes his place to the noble Marquess at the head of the Government, is a man who combines every quality that can be desired for enabling him to deal in a satisfactory manner with the difficult questions that are continually arising in that quarter. And whenever I know that a matter has had the full cognisance of the Embassy at Constantinople, and that the Embassy at Constantinople has a clear view upon the matter, the communication of such a view will undoubtedly carry great weight with me, and ought to, as I believe it will, carry great weight with the House. These, however, are personal observations, and preliminary to what I have to say on this particular subject. With regard to Armenia, the world, I think, and the public opinion of the world, and the public opinion even of the countries least disposed to interfere in Turkish matters in a sense unfavourable to the actual Government, is dissatisfied with the present position of affairs: I will say for the present purpose exclusively—for I shall mention nothing else—in regard to Moussa Bey. It is felt, and I think it is justly felt, that it is an accumulation of mischief upon mischief when there is a semblance of judicial inquiry, and that judicial inquiry is so conducted as to constitute a mockery rather than the administration of justice. The certain effect of that, even if the individual himself should be precluded from returning to Armenia and there resuming his criminal and most disastrous practices, will be that others will be led to follow his pestilent example and will feel that impunity is secured for them. I am making no complaint of her Majesty's Government upon the subject, because I do not know what they have done or mean to do; but I confidently hope that they will endeavour to secure this for us at least, that that trial, as it now stands, shall not be the conclusion of the whole matter, but that, after promise has been given solemnly, and has been admitted by substantive and noticeable acts, to do justice in the case, that justice shall, so far as we can secure it, be done. With respect to Crete, I am afraid that the case is one of very considerable difficulty. For my own part I have not been disposed ever to push the argument respecting the Ottoman power in the East to the extreme, and to say that it ought to be summarily swept away. I have always believed that by timely and judicious acknowledgment of local rights for the purpose of practical good government much might be done, even by an empire in a state of decay, for the purpose of arresting that decay, possibly for the purpose of establishing a separate state of things. I am aware of no example within the Turkish Empire at this moment, where local government has been freely given, where it has failed to operate in a manner most beneficial to the Sultan and the Porte on the one hand and to the subjects of the Sultan and the Porte on the other. With regard to Crete, I make no question that the noble Lord at the head of the Government was well informed when he referred these recent difficulties and disturbances to a local quarrel; but I am afraid it is the fact that that local quarrel has expanded into a practical danger. I shall be very glad if Her Majesty's Government can give an assurance that there is no likelihood of a renewal, when the spring approaches, of serious disturbances in Crete, recalling the recollection of that Cretan insurrection which some years ago was so dangerous to the Turkish Empire. Undoubtedly, so far as information has reached me, I entertain that apprehension, and it is quite clear that if these insurrections are renewed and are found to continue, and if we see a tendency, which we have recently seen, to pursue a reactionary policy in Crete, the end of such a course of things must be the severance of the island from the Turkish Empire. I do not desire to promote disturbance either in the Levant or else-

where. I do not bring an universal impeachment against the conduct and policy of the Sultan. There are two occasions to which I can point to-day with satisfaction. I think in the matter of Eastern Roumelia, which was one of considerable difficulty, and of its union with Bulgaria, the Sultan and the Porte showed great forbearance, self-command, and moderation; and I think that similar qualities governed their proceedings when once they had entered into an engagement with respect to Greece nine years ago. I do not speak of their conduct anterior to that; but when they had entered into that engagement I think it was fairly and justly carried through. But still it is impossible not to bear in mind that this matter is one which has calls upon us totally different from those which may arise in conjunction with abuse or in conjunction with cruelty happening in any other country. We are deeply involved by positive engagements which make all changes in the Turkish Empire matter of European concern, and we have no right to pass them by, little as it is desirable that we should intervene in the affairs of other countries when we are sufficiently charged with the heavy burden of the management of our own. As I have referred to foreign countries, I will just say one word to the Under Secretary of State. Public attention was very painfully drawn not long ago to accounts of transactions in Siberia which bear an aspect which cannot be passed by. I know very well the difficulties of intervention in such cases. I know that remonstrances which can be repulsed and repelled on the ground of no title to interfere are remonstrances which are very hazardous and dangerous to make. I do not urge upon the Government to do any such thing; all I say is that I think it would be a matter of great satisfaction to the House and the country if they were happily in a condition to assure us that there has been material exaggeration, and still more that there has been serious misapprehension in what I may call the popular or newspaper accounts of these transactions which have considerably grieved and shocked the public mind. In passing to the domestic affairs touched upon in the Gracious Speech, I shall be very short on the subject of Ireland. I will not enter upon the question of how far the improved state of that country is due to one cause or another, because it will be brought under consideration in a more substantive form. I will only say that I am not aware of any reason that should check the satisfaction with which any Gentleman sitting in any quarter of the House may regard the facts that can be quoted to prove the improvement in the condition of that country. Gentlemen who sit on the opposite side of the House may feel satisfaction that this improvement is due to coercive measures. If so, they will understand that we derive not only an equal, but a far more lively satisfaction when we are enabled to believe, and do firmly and confidently believe, that the improvement is due to causes wholly separate from coercion; that it is due to hope; that it is due to salutary influences, so far as moral causes are concerned; and no doubt it is due in a considerable degree, as the noble Lord judiciously pointed out, to the great improvement that has taken place in the agricultural condition of the country. I learn with satisfaction that now at length, after precedence has been given to so many other subjects, Irish and non-Irish, we shall have a Bill for Irish local government. I trust that that Bill will be conceived in a liberal spirit—I do not say whether it ought or ought not to be accepted. If it contains substantial good, I hope it will be accepted, and cheerfully. But I make this observation—that if it be conceived in any niggardly spirit Her Majesty's Government must lay their account with this certain result, that its main effect will be to produce new materials for agitation and new encouragement for further demands. With regard to the Bill for promoting land purchase in Ireland, I observe that favourable comments have been made on the working of Lord Ashbourne's Act, but I observe with greater satisfaction that the Bill which is to be introduced for the extension of the present legislative provisions is a Bill which is to extend them "under due financial precautions." I do not go into the meaning of those words—I express my satisfaction that they have been employed, and I shall be disposed to give fair and reasonable consideration to any provisions I find in the Bill when laid before us if they show that Her Majesty's Government intend firmly and fully to act upon them. I will say one-

word with respect to the provisions that are to be submitted to us for diminishing the difficulty and cost which at present attend the passage of the Private Bill legislation required for Scotland. The object in this case is excellent—it is excellent and it is necessary. Scotland ought not longer to be disappointed in this respect, but I think I may say on the part of Scottish opinion that if the plan that is to be proposed is to be effectual and satisfactory it must contain a popular and representative element. It will not do, I think, to relieve Scotland of the cost, and I do not think Scotland will be satisfied with being relieved from the extra cost of coming to London, where at all events her cases are tried by a representative assembly, if she is told that they are to be tried in Scotland simply by certain persons, however unimpeachable, who owe their title and authority to the nomination of Her Majesty's Government. It is only fair to take this early opportunity of expressing an opinion to this effect. Might I go back to a matter I have omitted simply for the sake of removing a misapprehension? The noble Lord who seconded the Address referred to the diminution in the number of agrarian offences in Ireland. I only wish to clear up a matter of fact. I presume he was quoting agrarian offences other than threatening letters. [Lord BROOKE assented.] It is right that that should be understood, as the figures are totally different according as they include threatening letters or not. The noble Lord took advantage of the introduction of one of these subjects to say that he thought that English landlords as a body had been doing their duty under the pressure of the recent agricultural distress. From the position I hold and from such information as I possess I desire to echo that sentiment. I think it is true, so far as I am able to form a judment, that the manner in which both the landlords and the occupiers of England have met this crisis, have faced it, and I hope gone through with it—for I think we have reached a time in which, in some cases, it is coming to be but mildly felt, and in almost all cases its pressure is undergoing mitigation—I say I think their conduct has been such as is satisfactory in the retrospect, and as I hope and believe will tend to rivet the ties of goodwill between them in future. With respect to tithe, I feel that it is tender ground, but I venture to say one thing, and one thing only, upon it. I hold that we should carefully sever in our own minds those questions which relate to the present appropriation of tithe from those questions which relate to the tithe itself. The tithe itself is a property which ought to be respected and preserved with due regard to the rights and position of all those who are concerned in the administration and the use of it—I think it ought to receive that consideration and respect from those who hold it, as I for one do, to be national property; and in giving it that consideration we must take care that in our disputes about modes and circumstances we do not allow it to be frittered away. There is one subject mentioned in the Speech upon which I have a word to say rather of a friendly than of a critical character. The Speech promises, evidently on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that we are to have a Bill for the better regulation of Savings Banks and Friendly Societies. I do not know that that means that both those subjects are to be combined. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: No.] I thought not. They are evidently two quite distinct subjects, both of great importance; but I thought that, as a man of business, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would prefer to deal with them separately. I presume that the Bill for the better regulation of Savings Banks refers exclusively or mainly to what are called the old Savings Banks. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Mainly.] I perfectly conceive that the experience now obtained with regard to the Post Office Savings Banks—which have become almost a great institution of the country—may have suggested amendments in the law; but I presume that the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is to give greater and more effective security to the depositors in the old Savings Banks. If that is so, it is a subject which is not free from difficulty. I am not aware of the validity or sufficiency of the reasons which led, now many years ago, to a change in the law which relieved trustees of Savings Banks of the liability to depositors which formerly they lay under. If the right hon. Gentleman can do anything to

improve the security the depositors now possess, and which undoubtedly from time to time, not in a great number of cases, but in particular cases, grievously fails, and subjects innocent persons to unmerited loss, I think he would be doing a public service, and I should be disposed to look with favourable consideration on his proposals. But now I have a word or two to say as to what the Speech does not contain with regard to home legislation. I am very sorry to find in it nothing with respect to the subject of local government in England and Scotland. You must recollect that, although great good has been done and most important principles have received the definite sanction of the Legislature, we are very far, indeed, from having given to those principles as yet a full application. In some respects it is admitted on both sides of the House that their application has not yet been full or satisfactory, for I hold in my hand a copy of the Gracious Speech delivered to us from the Throne at the beginning of the Session of 1889, in which it is authoritatively stated by the Sovereign that:—

"Some portions of the Bill which was presented to you last year for amending the local government of England and Wales were laid aside in consequence of the pressure on the time of Parliament."

And it is stated that Bills dealing with those matters would be laid before us. If they were to have been laid before us last year, although the promise given unfortunately could not be fulfilled, it seems quite plain that the lapse of time has not weakened, but confirmed and corroborated their title. I am bound to say that we on this side of the House take a strong view of this subject. We hold, in the first place, that the pledge given in the Speech of 1889 ought to be redeemed, and in that we expect the concurrence of the House at large. In the second place we hold that the principle of the sub-distribution of power in the different parts of the country ought to be carried further—ought to be carried down to the smallest practicable unit: if possible, to the parochial unit. We think also that, not only the machinery, but the powers of the local authorities ought to be greatly increased. I will not enter now into the details of these subjects—they have all been debated by us on the passing of the Bills of 1888-9 and at other periods. Of course, what I now say is applicable to Scotland not less than to England. In regard to one subject in particular, that of allotments, I must say that it is one which has been attracting from year to year a constant and rapid growth of attention and interest on the part of the agricultural population. The present condition of the law is totally unsatisfactory; the principle that has been laid down is so clogged by the complexity of the process necessary to give it effect that it is, I do not say valueless, but not possessed of anything approaching the value that ought properly to attach to it. I cannot but regard with regret the omission from the Speech from the Throne of reference to this matter, which clearly belongs to the function of local government. There was a remarkable declaration of the Prime Minister at the close of the year with reference to education, not under the name of free education, but under the name of assisted education. The declaration was understood to mean that the considerable surplus, which it was pretty well-known the revenue, as compared with expenditure, was likely to yield, was to be applied in large measure to a further relief of the parents of children whose attendance at school has now become a matter of compulsion. I do not intend to do more on this occasion than to express the general interest of the country in this matter, and the feeling that is generally entertained that it might have been a very proper subject for mention in the Speech from the Throne, for we are under the belief that if there is to be an important change in that respect it is a change that can only receive effect from legislation. There is a limit at present fixed by the law to the payment that can be made by the State in aid of the education of each child in primary schools, and if the declaration of Lord Salisbury is to be made good it will require a legislative change in that respect, and such a legislative change would be of so great importance that it undoubtedly deserved to be mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. I do not mean to express more than a general opinion that this is undoubtedly a large financial question, and that it involves a great number of considerations over and

above the mere extension of your liberality to a point somewhat beyond that which it has heretofore reached. I should be very glad if the notice I have taken of the subject should lead to any explanations on the part of the Government that will enable the House in some degree to understand what it is we have to expect in this important matter. There is another subject which last year appeared before us with pretensions to a serious character, and which has vanished not only into the shade, but into impenetrable darkness. It is the subject which is known as the Sugar Convention. This, Sir, is not an inchoate process, it is a completed process. Evidently in the minds of the Government it is completed, because the right hon. Gentleman who negotiated the Sugar Convention has actually received and is now in the enjoyment of his reward. He has been added as a Privy Councillor to that august body, and the addition of his name to the Privy Council is in itself the sign, the seal, the stamp placed on the Sugar Convention of the approval of Her Majesty's Government, a fact fixed and immovable. So it was last year. We were told last year in the Speech from the Throne not merely that a Convention had been made by Her Majesty, and that she hoped the subject matter of that Convention might receive the favourable consideration of Parliament, but Her Majesty assented to the most imperative form of communication which she ever employs in the gracious Speech from the Throne. The announcement made was that legislative provisions for executing a Convention into which she had entered for the suppression of the bounties on the export of sugar would be necessary—not expedient, nor politic, nor advisable, but necessary. What was the justification of using that expression—necessary to redeem engagements into which the Queen had entered, and in respect to which she had bound herself to Foreign Powers? But when in the course of last Session we expressed a natural and excusable curiosity as to the date when this announcement was to receive some sort of attestation by practical proposals, we were told by the Treasury Bench that there was no necessity for dealing with it last year. Somehow or other that had been overlooked when the Queen's Speech was drawn, but this Session was pointed out as a period when no doubt there would be opportunity, and when this necessity could come into full and overpowering force. This Session has arrived; we are in the year 1890. On the 1st of August, 1890, according to the 11th Article of the Convention, the Convention is to be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged in London. Not only is this to be done on the 1st of August, but the 1st of August at the latest, or sooner if possible. Surely this must be some strange act of forgetfulness, and I am pointing out an omission which only needs to be indicated in order to be supplied. I look with all the interest I felt last year, and, if possible, with an interest even quickened by the lapse of time, for such explanations as Her Majesty's Government may be disposed to give us on that subject; and with these words I will bring to a close the perhaps too lengthened remarks which I have addressed to the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I trust, Sir, the House will allow me at once to rise to make a very few observations on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. I may be permitted to say that the House has listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with the greatest possible interest and satisfaction that the old traditions which have always guided those who have held responsible office have been so signally, so completely displayed in that speech. The observations of the right hon. Gentleman as to the manner in which my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool and my noble Friend the Member for Colchester have discharged their responsible duty rightly represent the debt which the House owes to those hon. Gentlemen. I am grateful, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, to my hon. and noble Friends for the excellent manner in which they discharged that important duty, and for the skill with which they avoided topics which might have produced animosity or ill-feeling in any part of the House. The right hon. Gentleman has gone through the Queen's Speech in a manner which certainly leaves me no opportunity of complaint, and no reason whatever to find fault with the views he expressed. It was, however, only natural that he should take advantage of the

opportunity afforded him to notice the omission of topics in which he takes a lively interest, and as to which it must not be supposed that Her Majesty's Government are not themselves also intimately concerned and interested. I should like to refer to the subject of foreign affairs which the right hon. Gentleman treated with so much consideration, and with such a deep sense of the responsibility which belongs to a right hon. Gentleman who has held high office and who holds a high and responsible position in the country, and who seeks to exemplify in his own position this doctrine which has been laid down frequently—that the leader of the Opposition, a member of the Opposition, has responsibilities to this country and to the interests of this country which are only second to the responsibilities of those who for the time are intrusted with the duty of government. The right hon. Gentleman referred in the first instance, as he was bound to do, to the unfortunate difficulty between Portugal and this country. He said that the course which the Government had pursued left him only language of congratulation, rather than of censure.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: It was my fault, I think. Of course, the congratulation was not intended particularly for the Portuguese matter. I had more in my mind what follows.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not wish to strain the language of the right hon. Gentleman, but I think I am right in saying that in reference to foreign affairs generally the language which the right hon. Gentleman used was that of congratulation rather than of censure. Undoubtedly he did not congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the fact that there had been a difference between Her Majesty's Government and the Portuguese Government. We do not desire any congratulations on that ground. On the contrary, we deplore that there should have been any difference between us and a Power with which this country has been on terms of intimacy and friendship during many years. We desire earnestly that that friendship and that cordiality which have existed between the two countries may be speedily restored, and may continue to exist when the present causes of difference have passed away. But it must be known to this House from the Papers which have been published, and it will be still further known when further Papers are in the possession of hon. Members, that Her Majesty's Government have consistently and persistently informed the Government of Portugal that it would be impossible for them to recognise the claims set up to the territories which were the cause of the recent dispute. They have been informed repeatedly during the last two years that Her Majesty's Government must insist upon the free navigation of the Zambesi, that they must insist on the security of the British settlements on Lake Nyassa and in the Shiré Highlands, and that they must insist that the missionaries and the traders who have occupied that portion of Africa shall remain under the protection of the flag of Great Britain; and they must insist that those native territories which have come within the sphere of the influence of Great Britain shall not be molested by hostile expeditions, or by anything which would interfere with the full and complete development of the resources of that territory. We desire to accomplish those ends by absolutely pacific means, and we believe now that the Portuguese Government, recognising the justice of the claims we have made, will come shortly to an understanding which will render all further difficulties absolutely unnecessary. The right hon. Gentleman has criticised the language which was used by my noble Friend the Foreign Secretary. The ground on which we base our claim to the support of this House and of the country in the course which we have taken in Portugal is that we have prevented, as we hope, any hostile action whatever by a prompt, clear, and vigorous statement of the rights and limitations of this country. Nothing could have been more injurious to the Government of Portugal, nothing could have tended more certainly to deplorable incidents which every one in Portugal and in England must have deplored, than the exhibition of anything like a temporising, doubtful, or hesitating policy. It was in the interest of peace, in the interest of Portugal, and in the interest of this country that we have adopted the course with which the House is familiar. Then the right hon. Gentleman referred to the Government

of Turkey. He stated that he expected that the Government would never put a gloss on any case or attempt to make the condition of affairs more favourable than it is. He expressed a hope that we, speaking on behalf of this country, would never shrink from speaking of cruelty and tyranny in fitting terms. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that whenever a fitting occasion occurs we shall never hesitate to speak of cruelty and tyranny in fitting terms, and we should be the last persons in the world to endeavour to put a gloss on any case whatever, or to endeavour to make the state of things in any part of the world appear to be more favourable than they really are. The right hon. Gentleman paid a just tribute to the ability of our Ambassador at Constantinople. Sir William White has exhibited during the period of his service at Constantinople all the qualities which entitle him to the confidence of the country, as well as of the Government which he serves, and when I speak of the Government I speak of that which is impersonal and not party. He distinctly represents the spirit, the aims, and the objects of the Government of this country. He has given from time to time advice, he has taken measures which will enable him to obtain information as to the facts of the case: and as regards the condition of Crete and Armenia, Papers will be presented to the House which will give, not a gloss, but a statement of the facts of the case so far as they are known to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and so far as we have been able by the means at his disposal to obtain accurate information as to the facts. Then the right hon. Gentleman referred to the trial of Moussa Bey, and he trusted that that was not yet ended. I can assure him that the influence of the Ambassador at Constantinople has been exercised to endeavour in the interest of the Porte itself to secure a renewal of that trial. Justice, I suppose, will be done by the result of the trial, for I believe there is no doubt that Moussa Bey will be put upon his trial again. But it is not desirable that I should refer at any length to affairs which will be much more fully disclosed to the House and the right hon. Gentleman by the Papers which will be presented. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the condition of Crete. There, again, we shall be in a position to give information to the House as to the actual measures taken. It is undoubtedly true that there is a local government in Crete, but there are local conditions in that island which have produced great difficulties in the past and may produce great difficulties in the future. So far as we believe, there is no indication, no real ground for supposing that there will be a renewal of disturbances in Crete. I earnestly hope there will not be any. From the information we have received there is no doubt that there has been considerable exaggeration as to the nature of the events which have occurred in that island; but perhaps I should be accused of putting a gloss upon the statements made upon that subject if I sought to convey to the House the information I have received with regard to it. I prefer, therefore, to ask the House to wait until they have before them the actual statements made by our own Consul, statements which I can say, and which I think myself, may be received with confidence on all matters of fact. The right hon. Gentleman referred to events which were stated by the newspapers to have occurred in Siberia. We have no right whatever to interfere in the internal affairs of a country with which we have no Treaty rights of interference. It would therefore be a matter for very serious consideration if we were to deem it our duty to ask for information and to press for disclosures with respect to the internal Government, the exercise of authority, by the Ruler of a great Empire such as Russia. At present we have no information on the subject, and we have no means of knowing whether there is any truth in the statements which have appeared in the newspapers. With regard to South Africa, Her Majesty's Government have been mindful of the obligations which fall upon them to care for the interests which have grown up with such enormous rapidity between this country and South Africa. Our aim has been to arrive at an understanding by means of which the rights which the native population possess shall be respected, by which good government shall be secured for the country, and by which

also the interests of the English, as well as those of their Transvaal neighbours, shall be respected. We have not yet received the Report of the Commissioner, who is exceedingly well qualified for the duties he has undertaken, and therefore we cannot say whether justice has been done to the object we have in view, but we are fully conscious of our responsibility in regard to South Africa, and of the magnitude of the interests which have been developed during the last three or four years. In endeavouring to protect the interests of our fellow-subjects in that part of the Queen's Dominions, we are also conscious that we owe a debt to the aborigines of South Africa, whom we are bound to protect against the infringement of their rights and proper claims. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the suggestions to be obtained from the settlers in the Transvaal Republic. That is a question of very great importance. It may be true—I think it very likely—that the prosperity of the Transvaal, which has advanced with such strides during the last three or four years, has been due to the irruption, as it may be termed, of a vast number of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen. It is right that they should be protected in the possession of the property they have acquired in the Transvaal Republic. But the suggestion that the right hon. Gentleman makes, that the franchise should be conferred upon subjects of the Queen under another Government, is a matter which would require the greatest possible care, if it were not to give rise to greater complications. The right hon. Gentleman referred in terms which I desire to echo to the question of tithe. He said that tithe ought to be respected and preserved as national property. I also echo that sentiment, and it will be the effort of Her Majesty's Government to present a measure to that effect. While I regard tithe as national property, I do not regard it as fitting that the owner or occupier of the land should appropriate it to himself, and whatever our difficulties may be as to the application of the fund, it is our duty, and the duty of the House of Commons, to take measures that the fund itself shall remain intact. It is scarcely necessary for me to refer to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to friendly societies and savings banks. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the authority which belongs to his name, and with the object and desire to make the savings of the working classes in this country much more secure, will introduce a Bill on the subject. It is clear that some measure of this kind has become necessary, and I trust that it also will receive the unanimous support of the Members of this House. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the fact that we had omitted to include district councils for England and for Scotland in the programme of business. I had the honour to follow the right hon. Gentleman on the last occasion when the Speech from the Throne was under discussion, and he then said that we had placed before the House a larger programme than we could possibly carry through. We have a measure prepared for applying district councils to England; and a measure for applying district councils for Scotland could be rapidly produced, and there is no reason why, if the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite would give assistance in the progress of measures which have not a party or a political purpose, such measures should not become law in the course of the Session. But we have thought it right to place in the programme the measures in the order which we believe to be most pressing, and we have asked for the assistance of the House only in the cases where the pressing necessities of the questions require that we should have that assistance. The right hon. Gentleman referred to allotments. A Bill will be introduced upon that question by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) provided greater facility is given for the transaction of public business. With regard to the question of assisted education, we are not in a position to appropriate so large a portion of time to that question as it would require, feeling that it is our first duty to deal with the land question, with the question of local government in Ireland, and with those other matters included in the Speech from the Throne. The question of assisted education is one upon which public opinion has not yet fully declared itself, and there are

difficulties connected with it which the discussions which will take place with respect to it will probably remove. In the course of this year it is probable that the discussions on the subject will enlighten the community at large, and will enable those of us who are prepared to deal with it to give that consideration to the question which will put us in a position to make proposals to the House upon it on a future occasion. With regard to the Sugar Convention, if the right hon. Gentleman looks at the Papers presented to the House he will see that the action of Her Majesty's Government depends upon agreements with all the Powers who are parties to that Convention. The right hon. Gentleman is probably not aware that the agreement now is not so complete as it appeared to be at one time, and until that agreement is absolutely complete there will be no desire nor any intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to ask for legislation on the subject. Under these circumstances, while I admit that I took a great deal of interest in and derived a great deal of pleasure from this portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, I am afraid I am only able to give him cold comfort as to the opportunity which he may have for renewing the amusing remarks which he has made on the presentation of any Bill for the ratification of the engagement which Her Majesty's Government has entered into with respect to the Sugar Convention. I have now only to refer very shortly to the remarks which the right hon. Gentleman made with regard to Ireland. I certainly cannot complain, and I am sure my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary would not complain, of the tone of those remarks. It is only reasonable that the right hon. Gentleman and his friends should contend that the improvement in Ireland is not due to coercive measures. I believe the improvement which has taken place in that country is due to the confidence which now prevails there that the man who chooses to work and cultivate his holding may do so in peace and security. It is largely due also, no doubt, to the improved prices which Irishmen, in common with farmers in the rest of the United Kingdom, are getting for their produce; but even improved prices would not result in an improved condition in Ireland if there was not a vast increase in the sense of security which prevails throughout that country. Whether the improvement is due to the firm Government of my right hon. Friend or to hope I will not attempt to discuss with the right hon. Gentleman. I believe it is due largely to the confidence which prevails in the security with which industry can be carried forward there. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the Local Government Bill which is promised for Ireland, and says that if it is niggardly it will afford materials for hostile criticism. I can only say that the course which Her Majesty's Government have thought it right to pursue is to propose to this House to extend to Ireland those principles of local self-government which have already been adopted in England and Scotland, as far as they are applicable to the former country. I cannot give the right hon. Gentleman any further information on a measure which will require full explanation from my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary when it is introduced; but I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman will not find it niggardly in its provisions, even although, as has often been the case, it may afford in the view of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite new material for hostile criticism. I trust that will not be the case. I trust that the House will endeavour to deal with those questions that will be submitted to its consideration in the spirit which was so strongly advocated by my noble Friend behind me, and that it will endeavour to deal with the programme of legislation which we have ventured to lay before it with a sole desire to benefit the people whom hon. Members represent, and to forward their interests. Party conflict is unfortunately unavoidable in this House. No doubt it produces some advantages, but those who indulge in it incur a great responsibility if they do anything to prevent the development of the resources of this country, and refuse to pass into law measures which are intended for the benefit of the people at large, and if they will not as Members of the House of Commons lend their best assistance to Her Majesty's Government in their efforts to improve the condition of the people without any re-

ference to party interests. I have nothing more to say to the right hon. Gentleman than this—that I trust the spirit with which he entered on the discussion of this Address will continue throughout the Session, and that there will be a general desire to bring the House of Commons into useful co-operation with the Government of the day in matters which are not political, but which are of social and pressing importance. If the hon. Gentleman will exercise his influence in endeavouring to secure to the House of Commons its liberty of action and power to discharge its duties to the State, I am sure we shall recognise once more the great services which he has rendered to the State, and his great ability to continue those services.

* MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I think the House may be congratulated upon the excellent tone and temper which have characterised the debate so far. They are worthy of the best traditions of the House, and one may venture to hope that to-day's discussion will be an augury of a practical and useful Session, and that there will be none of that waste of time caused by mutual recrimination and party bitterness which we have had to regret in former Sessions. Many of us who rarely speak in the House feel that the value of the House would be doubled if Members would address themselves to the subject before them with the same fairness and candour which have been shown by the leader of the House and the leader of the Opposition to-day. I do not desire to interfere with the harmony which has hitherto prevailed when I call attention to certain omissions from the Royal Speech; but I feel obliged to call attention to the absence of any reference to the subject of education. The air has been thick with rumours of the intentions of the Government. The present state of elementary education causes great dissatisfaction, and there is a widespread expectation of sweeping changes. I confess, therefore, to a feeling of disappointment that the question has been passed over in utter silence. For two or three years we have had the Report of the Royal Commission, which sat for two years and took an immense quantity of evidence, lying on the table of the House. That Report is of great value, being full of wise recommendations which have not been acted upon to any appreciable extent. This question is a very pressing one. Some half million children annually pass through the elementary schools of this country, and in a vast number of cases they have no subsequent opportunity of improving their minds. I earnestly hope the attention of the House and the country will be given to these recommendations of the Commissioners, and that the Government will give effect to some of them during the present Session. Every one is aware that the system of payment by results has been condemned by all educationalists, and this system has in our country been pushed to an extreme which greatly impairs the usefulness of our schools, and greatly harasses and hampers the teachers. The Commission was unanimously in favour of a relaxation of this system. There was, indeed, a movement in that direction in the Code of last year; but that Code was withdrawn. The Commission was also unanimously of opinion that attendance should be made obligatory up to 13 years, and that the age for half-time should be raised from 10 to 11. These recommendations are most necessary. In this country children are withdrawn from school at far too early an age—at an earlier age, in fact, than those of any of the more enlightened nations of Europe. There is a third subject on which the Commission was absolutely unanimous, namely, the necessity of establishing a system of continuation schools. We have had a vast body of evidence taken on this subject, and we have a strong recommendation on the part of the Commissioners, and something should be done to attract children to these schools. Nothing has been done in this direction. I had the pleasure last session of introducing a discussion on Continuation Schools, and I think the House was almost unanimous that the establishment of Continuation Schools was necessary. I am glad to say we had from the Minister of Education a very favourable response, and an indication that the Government would be prepared

on an early day to grapple with the question. I was in hopes that in the Speech from the Throne to-day we should have had some allusion to the subject, and I still remain in hope that during the course of the Session some opportunity will be found for the introduction of the Continuation School System. The fact is there is no question connected with the social welfare of the people of more importance than this of continuing the education of our children till a later age. I attribute the terrible poverty and degradation prevailing in our large towns mainly to the fact that the children leave school so early in life. In France, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, there is nothing like the same moral degradation. The average age at which British children leave school is under 12 years, and only too many of them grow up without learning any useful industry, and become frequenters of the public house, the music hall, and other debasing resorts. Not more than 3 or 4 per cent. of British children continue education after 12 years of age. Contrast that with what takes place in other countries of Europe. In Switzerland, from which country I have just returned, I had an opportunity of examining several schools, and I had the pleasure of going through the primary schools at Lausanne, and the marvellous completeness of the educational system there surprised me. The children are kept at school compulsorily until the age of 15, and then the youths are sent to Continuation Schools in winter, where they remain until 19 years old, and where they learn their civic duties. The moral and physical training of the rising population is carefully provided for, and to this system is to be attributed the orderly, law-abiding character of the Swiss community. You have to deal in Switzerland with an educated people, and there you find an almost total absence of squalor and beggary. When I came home from Switzerland I was deeply impressed with the inferiority of our social system. It does not approach to the ideal with which alone any citizen of the country ought to be satisfied. We allow our children to leave school two or three years too early, and we make no provision for their security from moral contamination in after years. I must express my regret that there is no allusion in the Speech from the Throne to the great question of Education. We had expected to have an allusion in some direction or another, and I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has this afternoon elicited from the Leader of the House a reply on the subject of what is generally called Free Education. We were led to believe from the many speeches made in the Recess by the Leaders of the Government that a great scheme was being prepared of Free Education. I think I may say that on this side of the House such a scheme would, upon the whole, be received with favour. Upon the general principle of gratuitous education in elementary schools the Liberal Party has virtually made up its mind, and the time cannot be very far distant when the country will insist that such a scheme shall be carried into effect. Before sitting down I desire to refer for a moment to the Tithe Question. As a Welsh Member, I may be allowed to say that the part of the United Kingdom most interested in the Tithe Question is the Principality of Wales. But for the action of the Principality the Tithe Question would not be brought before Parliament at the present time; now we are led to believe we shall have a large and comprehensive measure dealing with tithe. I do not doubt that so far as England is concerned a fair settlement may be arrived at, but I wish, as a Welsh Member, to protest against any settlement of the Tithe Question being looked upon as permanent or satisfactory which is not connected with the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales. It is a vain thing to attempt to settle this question in Wales without going to the root of the evil, and that root lies in the fact that you have forced on the Welsh people a Church that is repugnant to the great mass of them, that is, virtually an alien Church. All the arguments that weighed in favour of Disestablishment in Ireland hold equally good for Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. The position the Welsh people take up is perfectly well defined, 25 out of 28 Members voted last year for Disestablishment in Wales. A more complete manifestation of public opinion it would be

impossible to have. There is no chance of the position being reversed. The mind of the people is entirely made up, and nothing but Disestablishment will lead to peace and contentment amongst the Welsh population. I thank the House for the indulgence with which they have listened to me, and I hope the Session on which we have entered will be one marked by the passing of really valuable social legislation, for the benefit of the great mass of the people.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I desire to make a few remarks in regard to our dispute with Portugal, and in regard to our dealings with the country known as Nyassaland. The paragraph in the Queen's Speech has been limited almost entirely to what may be known as the Major Serpa Pinto incident. We have taken strong measures with Portugal, insisting upon the withdrawal of Major Serpa Pinto and his force from the position taken up by them. I think that the demands Her Majesty's Government made were just demands, and demands which will meet with the general support of public opinion in this House and in the country. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has said that we have consistently and persistently informed the Portuguese Government of our views, that we have made our case quite clear to the Portuguese Government. That is just the point on which I think the House desires to be assured. Of course, so far as official statements have hitherto gone, we cannot satisfy ourselves that from the beginning Portugal has been made aware continuously of what we considered to be our just demands with regard to boundaries and the keeping open of the navigation of the Zambesi. For the past three years and more Her Majesty's Government have been made fully aware of what the designs and aims of Portugal are in that part of Africa, and we have yet to learn that Her Majesty's Government took care that it was clearly and positively known to the Portuguese Government what we considered to be our just rights. I should be exceedingly rejoiced if we discover from the Papers that the assurance of the First Lord of the Treasury is justifiable. We have always very great difficulty in dealing with a power like Portugal, and it is only by making it perfectly clear in the very beginning, and from time to time, what we consider our absolute demands are that we can possibly expect to get satisfaction. Otherwise the feeling gets abroad that we are making use of our strength to enforce our demands. I think we have great reason to complain of the way in which we in the House of Commons have been kept in the dark with regard to these negotiations. Upon the first night of the last Session I called attention to the subject of our dispute with Portugal, and we were promised by the First Lord of the Treasury that with regard to South-East African affairs Papers should be laid on the Table of the House. No such Papers were laid on the Table, and in May we were told that the promise had been forgotten, and that there were no Papers to present. The day after the Adjournment the Papers were presented, but they only dealt with the Zanzibar part of the question. There is one other point I wish to urge on the Government. Yesterday, in the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury said that the Government would see that the country of Nyassaland, over which we have assumed a protectorate, shall be put under some kind of permanent regulation or government. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury seemed to me to use somewhat vague language, because he used the expression "sphere of influence," in relation to that country. So far as I understand what has taken place is that we have established an actual protectorate in that country. We must be perfectly sure that our position is made clear and unmistakeable in the eyes not merely of Portugal, but of every foreign Power. Let us take care now that the whole subject is before the country that we settle it thoroughly and completely so that these disputes cannot arise in the future.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Howorth.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH: It was understood that about this time we should adjourn the debate in order to afford hon. Members the opportunity of bringing in the Bills of which notice has been given, but I should have been glad if a few minutes more had been occupied, because I think hon. Members may have left last night under the impression that the adjournment would be shortly after half-past 3, and it may be a little hard on some hon. Gentlemen that they should lose their chance through not being present exactly at half-past 3. I do not know, Sir, if you can refrain from calling the Notices for two or three minutes to allow of Members being here. I assent to the adjournment.

Question put, and agreed to.

MOTIONS.

—o—

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Colonel Hill, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Forrest Fulton, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 1.]

RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Bill to remove the disabilities of Roman Catholics to hold the offices of Lord Chancellor of Great Britain and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, Mr. John Morley, Sir Horace Davy, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 2.]

TENURE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Commins, Bill for the Amendment of the Law relating to the Tenure and Occupation of Land in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Commins, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Corbet, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Crilly, Mr. O'Hea, and Mr. Hayden.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 3.]

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Fox, Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Labourers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Fox, Mr. Parnell, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. Timothy Harrington, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 4.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cameron Corbett, Bill to alter and amend the Law in Scotland as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Lord Elcho, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Thomas Sutherland, and Mr. Shiress Will.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 5.]

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Winterbotham, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Rating of Machinery, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Winterbotham, Sir Bernard Samuelson, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Frederick Mappin, and Mr. Mowbray.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 6.]

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Johnston, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland on Saturday and Sunday, and for other purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Johnston, Mr. Lea, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Biggar, Sir James Corry, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Mahony, Mr. De Cobain, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 7.]

CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Rathbone, Bill to amend the Law relating to Charitable Trusts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rathbone, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Viscount Wolmer, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Howorth, and Mr. Bryce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 8.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Clark, Bill to amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Clark, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. M'Ewan, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Sir John Kinloch, and Mr. Caldwell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 9.]

OXFORD UNIVERSITY COMMISSION STATUTE AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. David Thomas, Bill to alter and amend the Oxford University Commission Statute concerning the Meyricke Endowment, which received the Royal Assent 3rd May, 1882, ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 10.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL OPTION (ENGLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jacob Bright, Bill to enable ratepayers and others in towns and districts to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors within the said area, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Burt, and Sir Walter Foster.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 11.]

PRISONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Treatment of Prisoners in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Carew, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Edward Harrington, and Mr. John O'Connor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 12.]

LEASEHOLDERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Bill to amend the Law in reference to Leaseholders in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. M'Cartan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 13.]

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (LOCAL VETO) (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to enable the ratepayers of any locality to veto the issue of Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Johnston, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. De Cobain, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 14.]

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Neville, Bill to amend "The Commissioners for Oaths Act, 1889," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Neville, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 15.]

LAND TENURE (WALES) BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Stuart Rendel, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land in Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. John Roberts, Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 16.]

POST CARD ADHESIVE STAMP BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cochrane-Baillie, Bill to amend the Regulations respecting Post Cards, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cockrane-Baillie, Mr. Bentley, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 17.]

SOLDIERS AND SAILORS DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Young, Bill to remove certain Disabilities attaching to Soldiers and Sailors in respect of the franchise, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Young, Sir John H. Kennaway, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Moss, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 18.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gardner, Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collins, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Oldroyd, and Mr. Kelly.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 19.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to secure to the public the right of Access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Donald Crawford, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Leng, and Sir Henry Roscoe.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 20.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stuart, Bill to provide for the Better Housing of the Working Classes in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Lawson, and Mr. Octavius V. Morgan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 21.]

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Foley, Bill to amend the Law relating to Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Foley, Mr. Harris, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. Gill, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 22.]

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to alter and amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 23.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stack, Bill to amend the Law relating to the position and salaries of National School Teachers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stack, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Conway and Mr. Corbet.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 24.]

SHERIFF COURTS (SCOTLAND) EXTRACTS BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Caldwell, Bill to simplify the forms of Extracts of Decrees in the Sheriff Courts of Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Caldwell, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Mackintosh, and Mr. M'Lagan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 25.]

METROPOLIS WATER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Bill for enabling the County Council of London to introduce new supplies of water into the Metropolis, and to acquire the rights of existing Water Companies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Beaufoy,

Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 26.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION CONTINUATION SCHOOLS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Samuel Smith, Bill to amend the Elementary Education Acts and to provide Continuation Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Samuel Smith, Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir John Lubbock, Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir John Puleston, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Cyril Flower, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Picton, Mr. James William Lowther, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 27.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baumann, Bill to amend "The Factory and Workshop Act, 1878," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Baumann, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, and Mr. Cuninghame Graham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 28.]

MIDWIVES REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fell Pease, Bill to provide for the Registration of Midwives, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fell Pease, General Fitz Wygram, Sir Roper Lethbridge, Sir Walter Foster, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Rathbone.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 29.]

PERSONAL PROPERTY EXEMPTION BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to provide for the Exemption of Personal Property (to a limited value) from seizure and sale under legal process, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Picton, Mr. M'Ewan, and Mr. Leng.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 30.]

JURY LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kilbride, Bill to amend the Law relating to Jurors in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kilbride, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 31.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Hanlon, Bill to amend the Law relating to University Education in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Hanlon, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Flynn, Dr. Fox.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 32.]

GUARDIANS OF THE POOR (ELECTION) BILL.

On Motion of Captain Verney, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Election of Guardians of the Poor, ordered to be brought in by Captain Verney, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Jesse Collings.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 33.]

HARES (CLOSE TIME) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bonsor, Bill to create a close time for Hares, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. Richard Power, and Mr. Jarvis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 34.]

LICENSING ACTS (APPEALS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Sinclair, Bill to amend the Law of Appeal in cases arising in boroughs under the Licensing Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Sinclair, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Birrell, and Mr. James Stevenson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 35.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cremer, Bill to amend the Law for the Registration of Parliamentary Voters; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cremer, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Pickard, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 36.]

FOOTPATHS AND ROADSIDE WASTES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Bill for the better protection of Footpaths and Roadside Wastes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Bryce, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 37.]

MARKETS AND FAIRS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Fairs and Markets in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Lane, and Mr. John Redmond.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 38.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Boord, Bill to amend the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, 1878 and 1884, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Boord, Mr. Darling, and Mr. Baumann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 39.]

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hayden, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Piers and Harbours in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hayden, Mr. William Corbett, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Murphy, Colonel Nolan, and Mr. Clancy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 40.]

COLONIAL MARRIAGES LEGALISATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seager Hunt, Bill for the Legalisation of certain Colonial Marriages, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, Sir Edward Grey, and Sir John Puleston.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 41.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP (ACQUISITION OF SITES) (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Williams, Bill for giving further facilities for the Acquisition of Sites for Places of Worship in Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, and Mr. Samuel Smith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 42.]

FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William O'Brien, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Murphy, Colonel Nolan, and Mr. Timothy Harrington.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 43.]

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) HOURS OF SALE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Biggar, Bill to limit the hours for sale of intoxicating drinks in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Biggar, Mr. Johnston, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Lane, and Mr. Blane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 44.]

WEEKLY WAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fenwick, Bill to provide for the payment of wages weekly, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, Mr. David Thomas, and Mr. De Cobain.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 45.]

PARISH COUNCILS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cobb, Bill to reform Parish Vestries, and to enable them to elect Parish Councils, with powers as to allotments, charities, the restriction of the sale of intoxicating liquors, outdoor relief of the poor, the management of elementary schools, and other matters, and to amend "The Allotments Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Searle-Hayne, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Francis Stevenson, and Captain Verney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 46.]

RETIRED OFFICERS' CIVIL EMPLOYMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Flynn, Bill to debar Retired Naval and Military Officers from accepting employment as stipendary magistrates in Ireland, or in the Irish Civil Service Establishments, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Flynn, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Crilly, and Mr. Conway.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 47.]

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Campbell, Bill to amend the Law relating to Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Finlay, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Mark Stewart, and Mr. Thorburn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 48.]

POOR LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alfred Thomas, Bill to amend the Poor Law, and to protect the property of the Poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Thomas, Mr. Warmington, Mr. Leatham Bright, and Mr. William Abraham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 49.

LEASEHOLDERS' ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to give facilities to Leaseholders for the purchase of the Fee Simple of their Holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Warmington, Sir John Puleston, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 50.]

CANAL DEVELOPMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Philip Stanhope, Bill to enable local authorities to acquire, regulate, and construct Canals, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Philip Stanhope, Mr. Robert Reid, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Brunner, and Mr. Ernest Spencer.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 51.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Captain M'Calmont, Bill to amend the Law relative to Tithe Rent-Charges in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Captain M'Calmont, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Penrose Fitz-Gerald, and Mr. Macartney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 52.]

FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Marjoribanks, Bill for the establishment of District Fishery Committees in Scotland, for the introduction of a representative element into the Scottish Fishery Board, and for the regulation and development of Scottish mussel and bait beds, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Duff, Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Malcolm, and Mr. Angus Sutherland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 53.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Charles Acland, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday in the county of Cornwall, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Bickford-Smith, Mr. M'Arthur, and Mr. Bolitho.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 54.]

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Waring, Bill to amend "The Ballot Act, 1872," ordered to be brought in by Colonel Waring, Colonel Saunderson, and Mr. Macartney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 55.]

INDIAN COUNCILS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, Bill to make better provision for the Constitution of the Council of the Governor General of India, and for the Legislative Councils of the several Presidencies and Provinces of India, by enlarging their number, constituting them on a partially elective basis, and increasing their powers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Caine, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Picton, Mr. Hunter, and Mr. MacNeill.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 56.]

ELECTORS' QUALIFICATION AND REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stansfeld, Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Qualification and Registration of Electors at Parliamentary, municipal, and county elections in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers, and Sir Charles Russell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 57.]

CORPORATE ASSOCIATIONS' PROPERTY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill for the better securing their property to Corporate Associations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Cremer, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, and Mr. Beaufoy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 58.]

INTESTATES' ESTATES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ambrose, Bill to amend the Law by making better provision for the widows of certain Intestates in the distribution of such Intestates' property, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ambrose, Mr. James, Mr. Addison, Mr. Howard, and Mr. Kelly.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 59.]

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Warmington, Bill to amend the Law relating to the liability of Directors and others for statements in prospectuses, and other documents soliciting applications for shares or debentures, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Warmington, Mr. David Thomas, and Mr. Neville.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 60.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Lockwood.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 61.]

BAKERIES (IRELAND) (SUNDAY LABOUR) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Nolan, Bill to amend the Law relating to Sunday Labour in Bakeries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Nolan, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Conway, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. Provand.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 62.]

OCCUPYING TENANTS ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL

On Motion of Mr. Bartley, Bill to enable Occupying Tenants of houses and places of business to purchase the fee simple of their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bartley, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Major General Goldsworthy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 63.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. M'Lagan, Bill to enable owners and occupiers in burghs, wards of burghs, parishes, and districts in Scotland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the Drink Traffic within such areas, ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Lyell, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Clark, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 64.]

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to give facilities for the creation of Small Holdings of Land, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Broadhurst, Colonel Cotton, Mr. Flower, Mr. Pitt-Lewis, and Mr. Newnes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 110.]

VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADES (EXEMPTION FROM JURIES) BILL.

On Motion of Viscount Curzon, Bill to exempt certain members of the Volunteer Fire Brigades from Service on Juries, ordered to be brought in by Viscount Curzon, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Francis Maclean, Mr. Gully, Mr. Baird, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 65.]

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' DISABILITIES REMOVAL (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jeffreys, Bill to remove the Disabilities of Soldiers and Sailors to be registered as Voters at Parliamentary Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jeffreys, Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Cornwallis, General Fraser, Mr. Howard Vincent, and Mr. Whitmore.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 66.]

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Philipps, Bill to restrict labour in Mines to Eight Hours per Day, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Philipps, Mr. Cuninghame Graham, Mr. Pickard, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Randall, Sir Walter Foster, and Earl Compton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 67.]

JURORS' DETENTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Detention of Jurors on

the trial of felonies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Howard Vincent, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 68.]

TENANCIES RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to divide Rates between Landlord and Tenant, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Handel Cossham, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Halley Stewart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 69.]

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Tanner, Bill to encourage the planting of Trees and Osiers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Tanner, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Leamy, and Mr. Flynn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 70.]

TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Roscoe, Bill to provide Technical Education in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr Rathbone, and Mr. James Campbell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 71.]

FOREIGN GOODS (MARK OF ORIGIN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill to provide for the placing of a mark of origin upon Foreign goods, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Gray, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Morris, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Farquharson, Mr. Byron Reed, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Dixon Hartland, and Mr. Baumann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 72.]

RAILWAY SHAREHOLDERS (LICENSING SESSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maclure, Bill to relieve Shareholders in Railway and other Companies from the disqualification penalties for acting as Justices of Licensing Sessions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Maclure, Mr. Hermon-Hodge, Mr. Fielden, Mr. Grotrian, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 73.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (SCOTLAND) (ACQUISITION OF LANDS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Munro Ferguson, Bill to enable Municipal Authorities and County Councils in Scotland to acquire Building Lands compulsorily, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Munro Ferguson and Mr. Haldane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 74.]

POISONED FLESH PROHIBITION ACT, 1864, AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Stevenson, Bill to amend "The Poisoned Flesh Prohibition Act, 1864," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Newnes, and Mr. Sydney Buxton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 75.]

POLLEN FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill for the better preservation of Pollen Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney and Mr. O'Neill.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 76.]

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Milvain, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Corporal Punishment, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Milvain, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Sir George Russell, Sir Joseph Pease, and Mr. Wharton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 77.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON ELECTIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Blundell Maple, Bill to alter the divisions of London for the election of the School Board, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Blundell Maple, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, and Mr. Baumann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 78.]

POLICE (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Rowlands, Bill for placing the Police of the Metropolis under the control of the ratepayers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Causton, Mr. Lawson, and Mr. Beaufoy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 79.]

INFECTIOUS DISEASE (PREVENTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Knowles, Bill to prevent the spread of Infectious Disease, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Knowles, Sir Archibald Campbell, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Edward Hardcastle, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Powell, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Wharton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 80.]

EAST INDIA (LOCAL COUNCILS) BILL

On Motion of Sir William Plowden, Bill to amend and extend the existing Local Councils in India, ordered to be brought in by Sir William Plowden, Mr. Beaufoy, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 81.]

HANDLOOM WEAVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Saunderson, Bill to amend the Law relating to Handloom Weavers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Saunderson, Colonel Waring, Mr. O'Neill, and Mr. Macartney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 82.]

CRIMINAL CASES APPEALS BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry James, Bill to establish a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases, ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry James and Mr. Asquith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 8.

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON SUPERANNUATIONS BILL.

On Motion of Richard Temple, Bill to enable the School Board for London to grant Superannuation Allowances, ordered to be brought in by Sir Richard Temple, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Mundella, and Mr. Lafone.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 84.]

DRAINAGE SEPARATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stephens, Bill to enable the Local Authorities to deal separately with the Sewage and the Drainage of their District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stephens, Mr. Hastings, Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Ambrose, and Mr. Tatton Egerton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 85.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shiress Will, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Qualification and Registration of Parliamentary Voters and to Parliametary Elections in Scotland, and for other purposes in relation thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Donald Crawford, and Dr. Farquharson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 86.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

On Motion of Mr. James Stevenson, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. James, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Octavius V. Morgon.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 87.]

BURIALS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Osborne Morgan, Bill further to amend the Burial Laws, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Channing, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Morton, and Mr. Woodall.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 88.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Powell, Bill to amend the Law relating to Elementary Education, and to exempt elementary schools in the receipt of Parliamentary Grants from the payment of Rates, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Heneage, Mr. de Lisle, Mr. Harry Davenport, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. Howorth, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Jasper More, Mr. Byron Reed, and Mr. J. Talbot.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 89.]

TRIBUNALS OF COMMERCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jacoby, Bill to establish Tribunals of Commerce, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jacoby, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. James Maclean, and Mr. Montagu.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 90.]

METROPOLIS RATING GROUND VALUES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Montagu, Bill to provide for amendment of rating in respect of permanent improvements in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Montagu, Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. H. L. W. Lawson, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 91.]

BEER ADULTERATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Quilter, Bill for better securing purity of Beer, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Quilter, Mr. Heneage, Viscount Wolmer, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr Gurdon, Colonel Lloyd Anstruther, and Mr. Llewellyn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 92

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Bill to enable owners and occupiers in Wales to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Alfred Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Bryn Roberts.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 93.]

BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Neill, Bill to amend "The Building Societies Act, 1874," ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Neill, Colonel Saunderson, and Colonel Waring.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 94.]

CRIMINAL LAW PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, Bill to amend the practice of the Criminal Law in certain particulars, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Addison, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, and Mr. Warmington.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 95.]

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Powell, Bill to amend the Public Health Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Hastings, Sir Albert Rollit, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Edward Hardcastle, and Mr. Wharton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 96.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Clark, Bill to amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Clark, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Dr. M'Donald, and Mr. Mackintosh.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 97.]

STEAM ENGINES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fenwick, Bill to provide for certificates to persons in charge of Steam Engines and Boilers on land, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. William Crawford, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 98.]

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maclure, Bill to enable practising Solicitors of the High Court of Justice to act as Justices in the county where they practise, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Maclure, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 99.]

SCHOOL BOARDS ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shiress Will, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Election of School Boards in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Lyell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 100.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Atherley-Jones, Bill to prohibit employers from insuring against liability under the Employers' Liability Act, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. William Crawford, and Mr. David Thomas.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 101]

TRADING (REGISTRATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill for the more effectual prevention of fraudulent Trading, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Addison, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Atherley-Jones.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 102.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts relating to load-line, &c., ordered to be brought in by Mr Broadhurst, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Burt Mr. Howell, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Heneage, and Sir Edward Reed.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 103.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Bernard Coleridge, Mr. Fenwick, and Mr. Jacoby.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 104.]

QUARRIES REGULATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill for the Regulation of Quarries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Childers, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Rathbone.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 105.]

FISHING IN RIVERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend and declare the Law relating to Fishing in Rivers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, and Mr. Bernard Coleridge.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 106

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill to provide for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Warmington, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 107.]

BEER ADULTERATION (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, ordered to be brought in by Sir Edward Birkbeck, Baron Dimsdale, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Round, Mr. Fellowes, and Mr. Swetenham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 108.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seymour Keay, Bill to extend and amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seymour Keay, Dr. Farquharson, Dr. Clark, Mr. Cuninghame Graham, and Mr. Hunter.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 109.

MERCHANDISE MARKS (PROSECUTIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mundella, Bill to provide for Prosecutions under "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mundella, Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Bernard Coleridge, Sir Frederick Mappin, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 111.]

House adjourned at Five o'clock

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 13th February, 1890.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Petition of Charles William Earl Mount Cashell, &c., in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

THE DUKE OF FIFE.

The Right Honourable Alexander William George Earl of Fife, K.T., having been created Marquess of Macduff, in the county of Banff, and Duke of Fife—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR SCOTLAND.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland,

Minutes of the election of the Viscount Strathallan and the Lord Saltoun as two of the sixteen Peers of Scotland, 6th January last, in room of Alexander Earl of Leven and Melville, and George William Hamilton, Earl of Orkney, deceased; and

Separate Return by the Lord Clerk Register of certain Titles of Peerage called at the said election, in right of which respectively no vote had been received and counted at any election for fifty years then last past (pursuant to Act 14th and 15th Vict., chap. 87.):

Ordered that the said Minutes of Election, &c. be printed. (No. 7.)

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL BILL (No. 12.)

A Bill to amend the existing statutory provisions respecting the canonries, prebends, and other ecclesiastical offices of the cathedral church of Lichfield: And

PRESENTATION TO BENEFICES BILL (No. 13.)

A Bill to make better provision for the exercise of the right of presentation to benefices in cases where the right is now exerciseable by parishioners or others forming a numerous class:

Were presented by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield; read 1ª; and to be printed.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL (No. 14.)

A Bill to provide for making statutes respecting deans and chapters and cathedral churches in England; and for other purposes relating thereto: And

REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 15.)

A Bill to amend the Act of the fifty-second year of King George the Third, chapter one hundred and forty-six, for the better regulating and preserving parish and other registers of births, baptisms, marriages, and burials in England:

Were presented by the Lord Bishop of Carlisle; read 1ª; and to be printed.

SERVITUDES REDEMPTION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

A Bill to enable proprietors of land in Scotland to redeem certain servitude rights—Was presented by the Lord Watson (for the Lord Meldrum [*M. Huntly*]); read 1ª; and to be printed. No. (16.)

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 13th February, 1890.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Mr. Speaker, I have to lay on the Table of the House the Report and Appendices of the Commissioners under the Special Commission Act of 1888. It may be convenient to hon. Members if I inform them that copies will be procurable to-night, but not before 10 o'clock, I am afraid, in the Sale Office.

QUESTIONS.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING COMMISSION.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Report of the Sunday Closing Commission (Wales) will be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that the Commissioners will conclude their Report probably before the end of this month. It will be laid upon the Table of the House as soon as possible after that; but some little delay may arise in the publication, as it has been decided to issue the Report in the Welsh as well as in the English language.

THE POLICE AND THE DOCK STRIKE.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the reason why, during the Dock Strike, the Chief Commissioner refused to give the services of the police inside the docks, on the ground that the docks were private property, and the reasons why a similar course was not followed during the strike of the gas stokers; whether the Chief Commissioner provided an escort of police to vans loaded with meat, and to the dock strikers who perambulated the streets, but refused to give the necessary police protection to those men anxious to obtain work at the dock gates, who were daily subjected to intimidation; whether he approved the action of the Chief Commissioner in throwing the whole responsibility for the maintenance of order and the enforcement of the law upon the District Superintendents; if he approves the statement of the Chief Commissioner as to the duties of the Metropolitan Police being subject to the judgment of public opinion, as conveyed in his letter of 19th September last to the Chairman of the London and India Docks Joint Committee; and, if he can give any assurance that in future such action will be taken as to ensure the same treatment to unionists and non-unionists alike, and that every man shall have the same liberty, freedom and protection to seek work as others to refuse it?

*MR. SPEAKER: In the fourth paragraph of the hon. Member's question there is an irregularity, inasmuch as he asks the Minister for an opinion. Owing to the hurry attending the opening of the Session the irregularity escaped notice.

MR. MATTHEWS: I hope the House will give me its indulgence if I answer this question at a somewhat greater length than is usual. The general rule of the police is not to patrol or watch inside private premises, to which their statutory powers and duties do not extend, unless some breach of the law or some public mischief has arisen or is likely to arise therein. This rule was especially applicable to the docks. The Dock Companies, by a series of statutes, have large powers of appointing constables of their own, with the fullest privileges of apprehending offenders and preserving the peace. The information before the Commissioner led him to believe that the danger of disturbance and disorder during the dock strike was not inside the dock premises, but in the streets outside. Accordingly he stationed at the gates sufficient reserves of police to keep order there, and in the neighbouring streets, and to enter at a moment's notice if the dock constables had need of assistance, and this help was given on the few occasions when the necessity arose. In the case of the gas strike there was a likelihood of disorder and public mischief inside the works, owing to possibly hostile action of men who were going out on strike, but whose notices had not expired, and who would have to work at the same time as new hands in the immediate vicinity of retort houses and gasometers, injury to which might have caused serious and possibly fatal mischief. The Gas Company had no statutory powers to appoint constables. The Commissioner consequently gave inside the gas works that exceptional protection which he would also have given at the docks if similar dangers had existed there. On one occasion meat vans were escorted by the police because their progress was obstructed by a crowd who refused to let them pass. In the case of all processions passing through the street the police escort them in order to prevent breaches of the peace, either by or against the processionists, and this policy was followed in the case of processions of dock strikers. The Commissioner informs me that police protection was not refused to any bodies of men anxious to obtain work at the dock gates. He knows of no case in which it was denied, but of many in which it was given. The Commissioner settled the line of action to be followed by the police, which was based on strict impartiality and observance of the law. He issued to the police the orders necessary for carrying

out that line of action. It was only the execution of those orders which was left, and necessarily left, to the superintendents, under the personal supervision and control of a chief constable. The Commissioner's letter of September 19 is not correctly interpreted by my hon. Friend. The Commissioner was answering a letter from the dock directors of September 18, which concluded with the threat that if the Commissioner did not alter his conduct they would

"confidently appeal to public opinion as to whether the forces of law and order have been effectively used."

It was in answer to this passage that the Commissioner said—

"He was quite prepared to leave the action of the police to be judged by his superiors and the public."

The Commissioner is of opinion, as I am, that the duties of the Metropolitan Police are determined, not by public opinion, but by the law. The action that will be taken in future will insure the same treatment to unionists and non-unionists, to those who seek work and to those who refuse it, and the Commissioner's orders throughout both the strikes were carefully and judiciously framed so as to secure this uniformity and impartiality of treatment.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, in reference to the fifth paragraph of the question, whether his attention has been directed to the arrest of Mr. Tom Mann?

MR. MATTHEWS: Who?

MR. C. GRAHAM: Mr. Tom Mann, the well-known political agitator; and whether he approves of the action of the Inspector of police on that occasion?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member must give notice of that question in the usual way. It is not one that arises out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Then I beg to give notice that I will repeat the question on a future day.

THE CARDIFF SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is a fact that the trustees of the Cardiff Savings Bank have signified their willingness to pay the depositors of that bank in full; and, if so, whether he will inform the House as to the terms of the arrangement; and, if not true, whether he can state what progress has been made in the liquidation of the affairs of the bank?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square.): No. The trustees of the Cardiff Savings Bank have not intimated their willingness to pay the depositors in full, although indefinite suggestions have been made to the Treasury with a view to a settlement. The liquidation is proceeding, and on the application of the Attorney General the hearing to determine important questions as to the extent of the liabilities of trustees and managers has been expedited, and will be heard in the Chancery Division next Tuesday, the 18th inst. If no settlement is come to, the liabilities of the trustees and managers will have to be enforced by further legal proceedings.

IRELAND—REVISION OF JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the articles of produce, the prices of which were taken as a basis for the revision of judicial rents in Ireland for 1889; whether these prices were prepared or forwarded to the Land Commission by independent scrutineers appointed for the purpose or by what officials were they prepared; and, whether the Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were asked to furnish any information regarding the prices of stock or produce, and how this information was obtained by them?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that the articles of produce, the prices of which were taken as a basis for the revision of judicial rents for 1889, are as follows:—Crops.—Wheat per cwt., oats per cwt., barley per cwt., flax per stone, potatoes per cwt., hay per cwt., butter per cwt., beef per cwt., mutton per cwt., pork (fresh) per cwt., wool per lb. Cattle.—First-class one year old, first-class two years old, first-class three years old, first-class springers; second-class one year old, second-class two years old, second-class three years old, second-class

springers; third-class one year old, third-class two years old, third-class three years old, third-class springers. Average prices of the above three classes of cattle. —One year old, two years old, three years old, springers. Lambs.—First, second, and third classes together. The prices were obtained through the Inland Revenue officers stationed at the principal towns throughout Ireland, who furnished weekly returns founded on actual sales of the various products mentioned on the forms supplied to them; while as regards the prices of stock, gentlemen were appointed to attend the principal fairs and to furnish reports of sales at each fair. The members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were not asked to furnish any information in the matter.

INDIA—COOLIES IN ASSAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Government of India has, by Despatch of 22nd January, 1889, declared that the condition of the coolies in the Assam Tea Gardens is on the whole satisfactory, and that the working of Act 1 of 1882 is beneficial to immigrants; whether he is aware that the death-rate amongt Act labourers has been for the past six years very largely in excess of the death-rate prevailing amongst non-Act labourers, and was so reported by the Chief Commissioner of Assam in 1887; whether he is aware that since 1883 Act labourers have received a lower rate of wages than non-Act labourers; whether the average rate of wages in several districts in 1887 was reported for men at Rs.3 14 9 per month, and for women at Rs.2 14 0; and whether the Secretary of State will recommend the Government of India to make further inquiries as to the condition of Act labourers and free labourers in Assam?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The facts are as stated in the first four paragraphs of the question, and appear in Papers laid before Parliament last Session. The rates of wages, according to the last Report, are—For men, under the Act, Rs.4 6 6 per mensem; for men, not under the Act, Rs.4 11 2; for women, under the Act, Rs.3 10 0; and for women, not under the Act, Rs.3 10 6. The Government of India has been for some time, under the direction of the Secretary of State, making the inquiries suggested.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the death-rate of late years amongst the Act labourers has been largely in excess of the death-rate prevailing amongst non-Act labourers, and if so, whether he considers that such a state of things is satisfactory?

SIR J. GORST: That would involve an argumentative question, which it would be contrary to the ruling of Mr. Speaker to enter into.

THE CRAWFORD CASE.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State is aware that Memorials have been received by the Bombay Government from European officers of the Bombay Civil Service with reference to the Crawford case, and the action taken by the Government against the incriminated Mamlutdars, and whether he can state the purport of such Memorials; whether the Secretary of State has also received communications from Lord Reay on the same points, and objecting to the course decided on by the Secretary of State, and whether the Government will lay such Memorials and Communications upon the Table, together with any replies thereto; and, whether the Secretary of State will afford this House an opportunity of discussing the conduct of the Government of India in this matter, in order that reasons may be given why the Secretary of State should exercise his power of disallowing the Act of Indemnity promulgated by the Governor General in Council on October 14th last?

SIR J. GORST: The reply to the first paragraph of the question of the hon. Member is in the negative. In answer to the second paragraph, I have to say that many communications have passed between Lord Reay and the Secretary of State on the subject. Some of these are published in the Papers on the Crawford case which were laid on the Table last Session, and others can be laid on the Table if moved for. In answer to the third paragraph of the question, I may inform the hon. Member that the Secretary of State, having already expressed

his approval of the Act of Indemnity, cannot now disallow it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Has the Secretary of State presented copies of such memorials as have already been forwarded to him?

SIR J. GORST: My answer to the first question of the hon. Member was in the negative. The Secretary of State is not aware of any such communications having been made to the Government of Bombay. I have not seen them, and consequently cannot give any information about them.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will afford an opportunity for discussing the action of the Government of India in reference to the Mamlutdars incriminated in the Crawford case, before the expiry of the ordinary period limited for the disallowance of the Indian Indemnity Act of the 14th October last?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): The hon. Gentleman has already been informed by my right hon. Friend, the Under Secretary for India, that the Secretary of State has allowed the Indian Indemnity Act, and therefore, as it is the Law it cannot now be disturbed except by an Act repealing the Indian Indemnity Act. Under these circumstances it will be seen that it would give him no advantage to afford him an opportunity for discussing the action of the Government of India, and I am not in a position to say that an opportunity will be afforded.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, under sections 21 and 23 of the India Council Act, statutes passed by the Governor General in Council or ordinances in cases of emergency have force only if not disallowed in six months, and there is no further provision. Would not that provision meet the case of the Indian Indemnity Act?

SIR J. GORST: I think that a question of that kind had better be put to the Attorney General or some Law Officer of the Crown. If it is desired to repeal the Act it would have to be repealed by a special statute.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I will put a further question on the subject to the right hon. Gentleman himself on Monday.

THE CHIN LUSHAI EXPEDITION.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he can now make any statement to the House as to the serious report of the condition of the troops engaged in the Chin Lushai expedition?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State has telegraphed to India for more detailed information on this subject.

ROYAL YACHTS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state the cost of repairs ordered for the *Vivid* to fit that vessel for temporary use as a Royal Yacht; whether it is true that the *Vivid* is not likely to be required on more than some half dozen occasions; and whether the Royal Yacht *Victoria and Albert* is in a fit state to perform the services required from the *Vivid*; and whether the Royal Yacht *Alberta* is now undergoing repairs, and if he can state the estimated cost of such repairs.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The actual expenditure on the *Vivid*, which has been found necessary, was £2,246, including additions and alterations to the amount of £1,215. The *Vivid* is in constant employment while the Court is at Osborne, and the same service could not be performed by the *Victoria and Albert*, owing to the deep draught of this vessel, and the great expenditure of coal which her use would necessitate. The *Alberta* is at the present time undergoing repairs estimated to cost about £9,000.

ENGLISH CLERKS IN PORTUGAL.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Lord Salisbury, in his capacity of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has been called to the following statement of the Lisbon correspondent of the *Daily News*, which appeared in that paper on February 3rd, 1890:—

"Wealthy Englishmen trading with Portugal can smilingly look on at the rage of the Portuguese, but the English clerks settled in this country are really victims of the quarrel. Forty of them who have just been discharged here are absolutely destitute. They have asked the Consul to send them home, but indeed he has no funds for that purpose. If their dis-

tress were known in England something would doubtless be done for them. Many of the clerks have families, and if they were dying of want no neighbour would throw them a crust."

And whether the Government intend to take any and what steps to give suitable employment to men who, by reason of their British nationality, have been deprived of the means of earning subsistence?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): No report has been received at the Foreign Office to the effect stated in the hon. Member's question.

IRELAND—THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many tenants of holdings in the county of Donegal applied to the Land Commission before the 1st November, 1887, to have fair rents fixed under the provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Act? How many of these applications are as yet unheard by a Court of first instance, and in how many cases have appeals been lodged against the decisions of such Courts which are still unheard? How many tenants in the county of Donegal who applied to the Land Commission before the 1st November, 1887, to fix the fair rent of their holdings have subsequently accepted judicial leases at a rent agreed upon by landlord and tenant, without adjudication by the Land Commission? And, do the agreements so entered into between landlords and tenants of Court owe, in many cases, their origin to the delay of the Land Commission in hearing applications to have fair rents fixed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that the total number of tenants of holdings in the County Donegal who applied to the Land Commission before November 1, 1887, to have fair rents fixed was 12,027; of these 2,103 applications remain unheard, which includes 1,494 cases not yet listed and 609 cases which have been already listed but not yet finally disposed of. In 215 cases notices of Appeal have been lodged against the decisions of the Sub-Commissions of the County Donegal, which are still unheard. The Commissioners are unable to say without considerable investigation what number of tenants in the County Donegal who applied to the Land Commission before November 1, 1887, subsequently agreed to the amount of the judicial rent without adjudication of the Land Commission. Nor are they able to say whether agreements so entered into between landlords and tenants out of Court owe, in many cases, their origin to the delay of the Land Commission in hearing applications to have fair rents fixed.

BECHUANALAND.

MR. ALEXANDER MCARTHUR (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when correspondence respecting the affairs of Bechuanaland and adjacent territories, in continuation of Blue Book C, 5524, will be presented to this House; and whether that correspondence will furnish details as to the arrangements made by the High Commissioner in South Africa for operations by the British South African Company in Lobengula's territory and other districts "within the British sphere of influence"?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth: The correspondence was presented on Tuesday, and is in type, so that it will be in Members' hands very shortly. It will contain all the details of the proceedings of the British South Africa Company since the issue of the Royal Charter, which up to the present time have been sanctioned.

ZULULAND—TREATMENT OF NATIVE CHIEFS.

MR. ALEXANDER M'ARTHUR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government has received confirmation of the telegraphic report in the newspapers that the condemned Zulu Chiefs Dinuzulu, Indabuko, and Ishingana were embarked from Durban on February 7 for transportation to St. Helena; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government has sanctioned this aggravation of the sentences of imprisonment passed upon them at Etshowe on April 27, 1889?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government have been informed that the Zulu prisoners embarked on the 7th inst. for St. Helena, whither they are sent

by the direction of Her Majesty's Government. This transfer is a material mitigation of their sentences, inasmuch as if they had been kept in Zululand they must have been strictly confined and not allowed to communicate with their wives or children except occasionally and under certain conditions, whereas in St. Helena they will have comparative freedom in an excellent climate and the company of their wives.

H.M.S. *BARRACOUTA.*

MR. LEATHAM BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the engines of H.M.S. *Barracouta* are paid for; whether the engines and boilers were built to Government specification; whether the usual method of forced draught was adopted; and, whether, in view of the many unfortunate circumstances in connection with this ship, the Government will appoint a Committee of Investigation composed of practical engineers holding appointments in the Mercantile Marine, to report to this House?

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): Perhaps the noble Lord will also answer at the same time the question on which I have given notice, namely, whether he can furnish the House with the details and cause of the explosion of the furnaces of the new cruiser *Barracouta;* and whether the Admiralty exercise any systematic technical supervision over the construction and completion on board Her Majesty's ships of machinery and boilers, whether supplied from the dockyards or by private contractors?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The regrettable accident on board the *Barracouta* occurred during the trials of the engines and boilers by the contractors. The final payment on engines and boilers is not made until these trials are successfully concluded. As a coroner's inquest is now proceeding, and the Admiralty, as well as outside experts, will there give evidence, I must, pending this inquiry, decline to answer further questions on the subject. The *Barracouta* is one of a new class of vessels, four in number. One of them, the *Barrosa*, engined by the same firm, has recently passed with success her steam trials.

WORKING MENS' TRAINS.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade has, since the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes was presented, made any inquiries under "The Cheap Trains Act, 1883," respecting the manner in which railways carrying passengers from and to London and other centres of population, have performed their obligations of providing workmen's trains

> "for workmen going to and returning to their work, at such fares, and at such times, between 6 o'clock in the evening and 8 o'clock in the morning, as appears to the Board of Trade to be reasonable;"

and, whether any Railway Companies have been slow or have altogether neglected to provide workmen's trains?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have in several instances made inquiries respecting the manner in which the railways carrying passengers to and from London have performed their obligations as regards working men's trains, and they have recently addressed a Circular to 12 companies having termini in London asking them for detailed statements made up to date. When these statements have been received copies will be presented to Parliament.

THE GERMAN LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. BROADHURST: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government has received any communication from Germany with regard to the Conference on the hours and conditions of labour, recently suggested by the Emperor; and, if so, whether the Government propose to take part in it; and, whether he can lay upon the Table any Papers relating to the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No communication on the subject has been received from the German Government.

THE HOURS OF RAILWAY SERVANTS.

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade has obtained from the Railway Companies any Returns of the hours worked by

railway servants under the powers given to the Board by the Regulation of Railways Act of last Session?

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: As so short a time has elapsed since a Return relating to the hours worked by railway servants was presented to Parliament, namely, in March, 1889, I have not considered it necessary yet to ask for further Returns, but I propose to do so shortly.

CRUELTY TO PONIES IN MINES.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to certain alleged cases of gross cruelty to ponies in the South Wales coal pits, mentioned in the *Labour Tribune*; and if he would take into consideration a plan whereby a list of the horses in any pit should be obliged to be submitted to the Inspector of Mines at his request, and that special facilities be given for the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals officially to have access to the ponies employed in mines?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this matter, and I have recently issued a Circular to all the Chief Inspectors of Mines calling their attention to the allegations that have been made in the Press in respect of the treatment of horses and ponies in mines, and instructing them to watch for and report specially to the Secretary of State any case of ill-usage that comes to their notice. I hope that by this means I shall be able effectually to put a stop to any cruel practices that may at present exist.

THE GOLD COAST.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Correspondence respecting the Affairs of the Gold Coast, in continuation of Blue Book C, 5615, will be presented to the House; and (2) whether that Correspondence will furnish information as to the imprisonment of Bella Cobbinah and two others in Elmina Castle on a charge of murdering Mr. Dalrymple, although two of them had been acquitted after trial at Accra, and the third had never been brought up for trial?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government have no present intention of presenting further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of the Gold Coast. 2. The circumstances attending the imprisonment of Bella Cobbinah and two others were explained by me in answer to my hon. Friend the Member for the City of London, on the 11th of April last, and I then stated that it was undesirable to publish the Papers.

MR. PICTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman say that no such Correspondence exists?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I did not say so. I said that I am unable to publish the Correspondence.

THE NIGER TERRITORIES.

MR. PICTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Major Macdonald's Report as to the state of affairs in the Niger territories has been received, and when it will be presented to the House; and whether Her Majesty's Government has received proposals for the constitution of a chartered company to take charge of the Oil Rivers district, and applications from King Ja Ja of Opobo, and others, for his re-instatement; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government has taken action thereon?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Major Macdonald's Report has been received, but it is confidential, and not intended for publication. Proposals have been received for the constitution of a chartered company to administer the Oil Rivers district, and also representations against such an arrangement. The question is under consideration, and I am authorised to say that whatever is intended to be done will be made known to the House, so that opportunity will be afforded for objections to be expressed. Ja Ja has applied to be allowed to return to Opobo, but it has not been thought expedient to permit him to do so.

MR. PICTON: I wish to know whether the Report of Major Macdonald was not intended for the information of Parliament, or whether it is only a private Report?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I stated last year that the Report would be confidential.

SIERRA LEONE—CASE OF MR. COPELAND CRAWFORD.

MR. PICTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Mr. Copeland Crawford, who last July was sentenced at Sierra Leone to 12 months' imprisonment for having caused one of his black servants to be flogged to death, and was thereupon allowed to come to England for the benefit of his health, is now undergoing his punishment; and, if so, where?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Mr. Crawford was not "allowed to come to England for the benefit of his health." He was removed to the United Kingdom under the Colonial Prisoners' Removal Act, 1884, to undergo the remainder of his sentence of imprisonment because his life would be endangered by further imprisonment in Sierra Leone. On his arrival at Liverpool he was examined by a Medical Board, who reported that further confinement in prison would endanger his life, and he was thereupon released in accordance with the ordinary practice in similar cases.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): May I ask who nominated the Board? Was it the Colonial Office?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I cannot answer that question. The right hon. Gentleman must give notice of it.

THE LLANERCH COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

MR. PICKARD (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has had his attention drawn to the following paragraph which appears in Tuesday's *Daily News*, with regard to the persons still supposed to be in the Llanerch Mine, Monmouthshire, namely:

"More bodies have been brought out of the colliery, making a total of 174. One other body is known to be in the pit, and some fancy that there may be two or three others, strangers who went down looking for work;"

and, whether he will make inquiry into this matter as to strangers being allowed to enter mines for the purpose of seeking work unknown to the manager of the mine?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Inspector that the manager is confident that one boy only is now missing, and that all the persons in the mine had been duly employed. The banksman in charge of the top shaft also informed the Inspector that his instructions and practice always had been to prevent all persons not employed in the mine from entering without due permission. The Special Rules also provide that the banksman shall not allow any person except those employed about the mine to descend or remain on the pit bank.

DOCK ACCOMMODATION AT GIBRALTAR.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverford west): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to authorise the construction of a dock at Gibraltar?

LORD G. HAMILTON: A dock at Gibraltar would be of great service, not only to the Navy, but also to the Mercantile Marine. The Admiralty are considering how its construction can best be expedited.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there has been a large increase in the Metropolitan Police Force; and, if so, what is the number of men of all ranks that has been added; and whether the cost of these can be defrayed within the limits of the present ninepenny Police Rate?

MR. MATTHEWS: In the month of December I received urgent representations from the Commissioner of Police as to the insufficiency of the Force for the duties demanded of them, and, after careful inquiry, satisfied myself that an augmentation of 1,000 men was necessary. Accordingly I authorised the proper step to be taken for the purpose; but the augmentation cannot proceed at a faster rate than about 100 men per month. When the Metropolitan Police accounts for the year are settled I shall be able to state definitely how far the cost of this augmentation can be defrayed within the limits of the present ninepenny rate, and the attention of Parliament will be called to the subject.

INCOME TAX COLLECTION.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if there is any truth in the

statements that have recently been publicly made, that Surveyors of Taxes are in any way paid or receive poundage or commission on the sum raised as Income Tax in their respective districts; whether they receive anything more than the official salary, as fixed by the Treasury; and whether they benefit at all by the raising of any Schedule D or other Income Tax assessments?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: The answer to the first and third Questions of the hon. Member is no; as regards the second Question, under Section 162 of the Act of 1842 Surveyors were allowed to receive additional payments in certain cases under Rules to be framed by the Treasury. These Rules have never been framed, and the Section has remained a dead letter, while special grants which used occasionally to be made to Surveyors have been discontinued for some years, so that in no case can a Surveyor receive more than his official salary.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): May I ask if it is the fact that Collectors and Clerks to the Commissioners are still paid by poundage?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not see that that is a question which arises out of my answer, but, as the hon. Member is aware, the Collectors and Assessors are still paid by poundage. Efforts have been made by various Governments to get rid of that anomaly, but so far they have not been successful. I propose to make another attempt this Session to abolish the system of payment by poundage.

IRELAND—CASE OF MR. JOHN SLATTERY.

Mr. O'HEA (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached him that Mr. John Slattery, an extensive cattle trader in Cork, has, for a considerable time past, been persistently followed through the various fairs in the South of Ireland to which his business takes him, and his trade transactions pryed into by policemen, and that during the past week policemen have been in the habit of watching his house at night and following him in the daytime through the streets of Cork in so open a manner as to collect large crowds and cause great annoyance at the places where Mr. Slattery has to call; and if there is any reason for this conduct of the police?

Mr. LANE (Cork County, E.): I have also to ask whether complaints have reached him that Mr. John Slattery, President of the Cork Cattle Trade Association, has been followed day and night by policemen for many weeks past, who stand between him and every person he speaks to in the course of his business; that they followed him into church during Divine Service on last Sunday, and disturbed the whole congregation; whether he is aware that the streets of Cork have been blocked several times during the last week by crowds following these policemen and Mr. Slattery; and has Mr. Slattery committed any crime; and, if not, what is the reason for this action on the part of the police?

Dr. TANNER (Cork, Mid.) also put the following question: Whether the Chief Secretary is aware that Mr. John Slattery, the President of the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association, has been followed for some time past by two armed policemen who, whenever Mr. Slattery converses with friends or acquaintances, immediately come up and remain within earshot; whether it is true that such behaviour on their part, in particular at fairs and markets, has been repeatedly complained of by Mr. Slattery as seriously damaging his business as a cattle dealer; whether it is correct that, although he has asked again and again of the police why he is thus followed, no answer has been vouchsafed; and if he will give some explanation to the House on the matter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that John Slattery is the organisser of the boycotting of the sale of cattle belonging to persons who have rendered themselves obnoxious by taking evicted farms, or belonging to persons who hold communication of any kind with these so-called "land grabbers. To prevent this illegal action, the public have closely watched Slattery. It is not the case that the streets have been several times blocked; but a temporary block did occur on one occasion.

Dr. TANNER: What legal evidence has been offered to any Court or given to the public that Mr. Slattery had at any

time a cognisance of the boycotting of cattle? Is it not the fact that Mr. Slattery asked again and again, in my presence, what was the reason why the police followed him about? Have the police been told deliberately, wilfully, and wantonly to go up to that gentleman when he has been engaged in conversing with ordinary acquaintances in the City of Cork?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: So far as I am aware no orders of the kind indicated by the hon. Member have been given. I am not aware that any legal evidence was required to justify the action of the police.

DR. TANNER: Then may I ask whether this course has been pursued without any legal inquiry having been made, and why the police have refused to give Mr. Slattery any information as to why he has been thus dogged and cruelly persecuted?

MR. P. O'BRIEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of the action of the police? Is he not aware that the Corporation of Cork have instituted proceedings against the police for having blocked the thoroughfares while in the pursuit of Mr. Slattery?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not aware of anything of the kind, and I should not have answered the question if I had known that it was *sub judice*.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of the police entering a church and interrupting divine service in pursuit of Mr. Slattery?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

H.M.S. *VICTORIA.*

MR. GOURLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how long it is since the ironclad *Victoria* was commissioned for sea service, and when the defective gun is expected to be repaired and tested; whether it is correct that the vessel is to be sent to join the Mediterranean Squadron with a borrowed gun, and without a proper examination of either the three remaining original guns or the gun belonging to another ship; and whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint an Ordnance Committee, or a Committee of the House of Commons, for the purpose of ascertaining how far the existing type of big gun is suitable for naval warfare?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The *Victoria* was to have been commissioned last summer, but was delayed by the long series of proof trials through which her second big gun was put. This gun, in passing this ordeal, showed some defects, which, although they did not render the gun unsafe or unserviceable, prevented its being accepted as a perfect gun, and it has been returned to the makers. A strengthened gun, as I stated on the 29th of November last, was supplied within three weeks, and has taken the place of the rejected gun. The statement in question No. 3 is untrue, as the *Victoria* will be sent to the Mediterranean with guns which have been satisfactorily tested in accordance with the service regulations, and a proper examination of the guns has been also carried out. The guns in the *Victoria* will remain appropriated to her. The armament of the various ships in the new programme was settled after an exhaustive inquiry, and is fixed by an Act of Parliament, and I have no intention of altering it or of appointing a Committee to inquire into the conclusions then deliberately arrived at.

BOYCOTTING.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of two men named Bellew and Fitzgerald, who were convicted at Liverpool at the last Assizes held there for the offence of boycotting, charged as a conspiracy at common law to injure the trade of a farmer Frizell; whether he is aware that they were sentenced by Mr. Justice Grantham to three months' imprisonment with hard labour; whether that sentence is now being carried out, and they are undergoing hard labour at Walton Gaol, Liverpool; and whether it is lawful to impose a sentence of hard labour for a conspiracy at Common Law, and under what statute or other authority can such a sentence be imposed?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; these men were convicted under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875, and the sentence of three months with hard labour imposed by the Judge is in accordance with the provisions of that statute. This sentence is now being carried out at Walton Gaol.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERY RIGHTS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position of the negociations that have been pending with the French Government relating to the question of the rights of French fishermen on the coast of Newfoundland: and whether it is intended to present to Parliament any Papers relating to the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Negotiations are in progress for the settlement of the question in difference between the two Governments relating to the rights under Treaty, and I hope that a *modus vivendi* will be arranged to subsist during the approaching season in case that no conclusion shall have been arrived at. It would not be conducive to the public interest that Papers should be presented at this stage.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CABMEN'S GRIEVANCES.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of a speech which was delivered at a meeting of London cabmen on the 6th instant by Mr. John Burns, a member of the London County Council, and which represents him to have said that—

"The London cabmen had real grievances against the police, who tyrannised against poor 'cabby,' if the latter could not 'tip' them enough;"

and whether there is any foundation for the charge of corruption which Mr. John Burns has thus brought against the Metropolitan Police?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that there is no foundation whatever for the allegation contained in the hon. Member's question.

COUNTY COUNCILS AND URBAN MAIN ROADS.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that great difficulties have arisen between the county councils and the urban authorities claiming to maintain their main roads owing to the ambiguous language of Section 11, Sub-section 2, of "The Local Government Act, 1888," in reference to the payment to be made by the county councils; and whether, in order to avoid the necessity for numerous arbitrations, the Local Government Board will issue a circular letter explaining the principles on which the payment towards the costs of maintenance and repair of urban main roads by county councils ought to be made?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. Georges): I am not aware that great difficulties have arisen between the county councils and the urban authorities claiming to maintain their main roads under Section 11, Sub-section 2, of the Local Government Act in reference to the payment to be made by the county councils. Up to the present time no actual submissions for arbitrations by the Local Government Board have been made. The Board have had addressed to them certain inquiries on the subject, and they have replied to the effect that the terms of the sub-section do not render it necessary that the county council should repay the whole of the cost of the maintenance and repair of a main road to the urban authority who claim to retain the powers and duties of maintaining and repairing such road, and that the Board are of opinion that the section contemplates that the urban authority shall receive from the county council an annual payment (to be determined as provided by Sub-section 3) towards the expenditure on the road, the urban authority undertaking, if they deem it desirable, any additional expenditure at their own cost. It does not appear to me that at the present time the Board can with advantage issue a circular letter as suggested.

THE YORK COMMERCIAL SCHOOL.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the attention of the Education Department has been called to the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Yorkshire Herald* of 8th February, 1890, in reference to the school to be opened by the Kilburn Sisters:—

"York Commercial High School, 15, Castlegate. Opened 20th January, 1890.
"A Church of England Day School. Annual Examination by Her Majesty's Inspectors.

"Subjects of Instruction. The Holy Scriptures, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, Composition, History, Geography, Drawing, Needlework, Singing, Kindergarten, Calisthenics, French.

"* Extra Subjects. Instrumental Music, 15s. per term; Domestic Economy and Cooking, 10s. per term; Book Keeping, 12s. per term.

"* For Girls desirous of taking the extra subjects only special arrangements may be made.

"Terms (15 weeks). Christmas to Easter, Easter to Midsummer, September to Christmas.

"Fees. Girls 1s. per week or 12s. 6d. per term; Children under eight, 6d. per week or 6s. per term.

"Hours of Instruction. Morning 9—12 15. Afternoon 2—4.30.

"Scholars prepared for College of Preceptors and for Cambridge Local Examinations;"

whether the Education Department proposes to recognise this school in substitution of some of the accommodation which the Department in its letter of 26th April, 1889, stated it would be the duty of the School Board for York to provide; and whether the Education Department is of opinion that a school in which a 1s. fee is charged to scholars eight years of age and 6d. to scholars under eight years of age, and in which a further charge of 10s. per term is to be made for the Code subjects of domestic economy and cookery, is a suitable school and entitled to receive grants, and one which can be fairly considered as taking the place of accommodation which the Board would have had to supply for boys as well as girls, where the fee would have required to have been sanctioned by the Department, and could not in any case have exceeded 9d. a week for all the subjects of instruction?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I have seen the advertisement referred to, but the Department have no information of the school in question, nor has any application for annual grant been made on its behalf. Looking to the description given in the advertisement, and pending further inquiry, in my opinion, such a school could not be accepted as supplying any part of the deficiency mentioned in the notice.

MR. MUNDELLA: When may we assume that the York School Board will be ordered to supply the deficiency forthwith?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The right hon. Gentleman must give notice of that question.

SCOTCH LEGISLATION—BURGH POLICE BILL AND PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is his intention to introduce the Burgh Police and Public Health Bill during the present Session?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): This Bill consists of 571 clauses, and involves a great amount of detail. If the Scotch Members were practically unanimous in desiring that the Bill, which has already been very fully discussed, should pass through this House in the form in which it left the Select Committee of 1888, the Government would be most willing to effectuate this desire. But, unless upon a definite understanding to this effect, the Government cannot undertake to find time for the Bill during this Session, and it would not serve any good purpose to introduce it.

DR. CLARK: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of bringing in the Public Health Clauses Continuation Bill this Session?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give notice of that question.

IRELAND—LAND PURCHASE RETURNS.

MR. JOHN E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government assent to the Notice of Motion for (continuation) Return Land Purchase (Ireland), on the Paper to-day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners represent that the preparation of Special Returns interferes materially with the discharge of their ordinary duties. They suggest that possibly the Parliamentary Return C. 5879 of completed sales for six months ended 30 June, 1889, together with the further Return for the six months to 31 December, 1889, which will be ready for presentation in about a week, would meet the requirements of the hon. Member. The Return referred to by the Commissioners gives: Names of Vendors, Num-

ber of Sales, Amount of Advance, with a summary of the total advanced in each County and Province.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will add to the Return a complete Return for the whole time. The Return mentioned only gives two periods of six months.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will inquire whether that request can be complied with.

AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Minister for Agriculture whether the Government intend to carry out the recommendation contained in the Report of the Departmental Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools, which was printed and distributed in February, 1888, that a Central Normal School of Agriculture, provided and maintained by the State, should be established in the neighbourhood of Rugby?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Yes, Sir; undoubtedly the Government propose to take steps to promote technical education in agriculture, in dairy farming, I may say, and some of the minor branches of agricultural industry in particular, which would seem to present a considerable opening for the development of agricultural education. I regret, however, that owing to the press of many other matters awaiting the attention of a new Department, the Board has been unable to formulate, and I am not in a position to lay before the hon. Member a complete scheme upon the subject which is now under our attentive consideration. He is doubtless aware that we have at our disposal at present a grant of £5,000 a year. That grant has hitherto been distributed on the principle of helping schools which have shown a disposition to help themselves in the matter of agricultural education, and the Reports which I receive of the results are so satisfactory and encouraging, that it is to the increase and development of that system that I look at present, rather than to the provision of schools of our own provided and maintained by the State. With regard to the question of a central State school, I have carefully considered the Report of the Departmental Committee so ably presided over by my hon. Friend the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset. It is deserving of every attention; but, for the reasons I have stated, we do not at the present moment contemplate the establishment of a central normal school of agriculture provided and maintained by the State.

THE RECENT EPIDEMIC OF INFLUENZA.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether an official inquiry has been held, or evidence collected, as to the causes of the recent epidemic of influenza; and whether the Local Government Board possess reliable materials for drawing up an official statement, and instructions for treatment, so as to prevent much suffering, and to allay public alarm in the event of a similar epidemic breaking out?

*MR. RITCHIE: An inquiry is now being conducted, and evidence collected, by officers of the Board's Medical Department as to the causes of the recent epidemic of influenza. The Board are not at present in a position to draw up such an official statement as is suggested, and they have no intention to give instructions for medical treatment.

IRELAND—CONDUCT OF POLICE.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact, as stated in the Cork papers of Tuesday the 11th, that on Sunday last, the 9th inst, the funeral of a little child belonging to Mr. Daniel Kelly, T.C., Tipperary, which left the town at 3 o'clock in the afternoon for the burial ground at Kilpatrick, was followed by five armed policemen, who, when the cortege had proceeded about two miles from the town, drove up at a furious pace and went even into the graveyard, and remained there while the sacred rites were proceeding; and to ask by whose orders this was done?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no information as yet upon the subject.

DR. TANNER: How soon will it suit the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman to answer the question?

[No reply.]

THE BRUSSELS ANTI-SLAVERY CONFERENCE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is a fact, as reported, that the French Government, at the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels, have insisted that the right to search vessels supposed to be carrying slaves shall be restricted to a limit of five miles from the African coast, and that Her Majesty's Government have agreed to reduce the right under existing Treaties to this limit?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I think the hon. Gentleman must see that during the sittings of the Conference it is impossible that any statements can be made concerning the attitude of any of its members.

THE CONGO FREE STATE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the enlistment at Zanzibar of slaves to work in the Congo Free State, with an advance of part of their wages, paid to the Arab masters, is not an infringement of the edicts issued against the Slave Trade by the late Sultan in 1876, and by the present Sultan in 1889; whether Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at Brussels, one of whom is understood to be a Plenipotentiary for the Sultan of Zanzibar, have received instructions from Her Majesty's Government to protest against this form of the Slave Trade; and, whether Her Majesty's Consul General at Zanzibar has received any instructions upon the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It is not clear in what the infringement is alleged to consist. Her Majesty's Government have been assured by the Government of the Congo Free State that every possible precaution is taken to prevent abuses and to make the willingness of recruits to enlist absolutely certain. There has been no reason for sending special instructions, as the assurance of the Congo State have been considered satisfactory.

THE YORKSHIRE PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether any, and what, criminal proceedings, and against whom, have been instituted by the Director of Public Prosecutions, in the matter of the Yorkshire Provident Association, pursuant to the Order of this House of 23rd July, 1889?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In answer to the hon. Member's question, I have to state that under my directions, after I had carefully considered the whole case, the Director of Public Prosecutions last autumn instituted criminal proceedings against certain directors of the Yorkshire Provident Association—namely, against Andrew Watson, Richard Martin, and Joseph Holinrake—for conspiracy in connection with the statement of accounts for 1886 and 1887, and against Andrew Watson, John Hartley, and J. H. Riley in respect of the statement of accounts for the years 1887 and 1888. All these persons were committed for trial last December, and the Grand Jury returned a true bill against all of them, but upon the application of the defendants the trial was postponed until the Leeds Assizes, which begin upon the 15th of next month.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that 18 months have elapsed since the issue of the second Report of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments; and when the Treasury Minutes dealing with the proposed re-organisation of the Civil Service will be embodied in an Order in Council?

*MR. GOSCHEN: A Treasury Minute dealing with the Lower Division clerks was laid on the Table on Tuesday, and an Order in Council giving effect to the Minute has been prepared and will be issued when passed by the next Council

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INTOXICATING LIQUORS (LICENCES).

Address for—

"Returns of the number of Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors issued under the authority of Magistrates' Certificates in each City, Municipal Borough, and Petty Sessional Division, respectively, in England and Wales, arranged as follows:—

(1.) Publicans who sell spirits;

(2.) Persons licensed to retail beer, wine, or sweets; to be consumed on the premises;

(3.) Persons licensed to retail beer, wine, sweets, or spirits, not to be consumed on the premises:"

"And, of the number of Licensed Houses for consumption on the premises for every 1,000 of the population in each City, Municipal Borough, and Petty Sessional Division respectively."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

MOTIONS.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.

On Motion of Baron Henry de Worms, Bill to enable Her Majesty to assent to a Bill for conferring a Constitution on Western Australia, ordered to be brought in by Baron Henry de Worms, Mr. Attorney General, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 112.]

COMPANIES (WINDING UP) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Winding-up of Companies in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. Attorney General.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 113.]

COMPANIES (MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bill to give further powers to Companies with respect to the alteration of their Memoranda of Association, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. Attorney General.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 114.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

The Committee of Public Accounts was nominated of,—Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Salt, Mr. Barran, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Lane, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Wodehouse.

Ordered, that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th February]—[see page 128.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I was born in Portugal, have close ties with that country, and I recently visited it for several weeks, during which I witnessed a great deal which has interested public opinion here. In these circumstances, I feel that I am justified in wishing to address the House in this debate in the hope of being able to say something which may soften the acerbity of feeling which has arisen between two countries which have long been friends and allies, and to both of which I owe some loyalty. I need not emphasise the pain which I feel, and which I am sure that every Member of this House and every sensible Englishman must have felt, at the turn which events have taken. My right hon. Friend the leader of the House, in sympathetic and appropriate terms, which were echoed by the leader of the Opposition in choice phraseology which those of us envy, most who find it most difficult to emulate it, stated this part of the case very completely. But I wish, from the peculiar position which I occupy in this matter, to press upon hon. Members of the House that, in any subsequent debate in which Portugal may come to the front, it would be advisable to be sparing of adjectives which may be misinterpreted, and to remember that in international quarrels unseemly and vituperative language is often much less easy to pardon than even overt acts which are treated as offences. Having said this, I should like to relate in the first instance what I myself saw in Lisbon, because I feel it necessary that some things which have appeared in print in this country should receive some antidote from someone who has been on the spot. The newspaper correspondents in Lisbon and Oporto seldom have an opportunity of reporting dramatic events. It is not therefore at all strange that they should have couched their despatches in somewhat semi-tropical language, and should have abandoned sometimes the ordinary restrictions of English prose in describing commonplace events. That is what has happened in the case of Portugal. I was present during the whole of these disturbances. I saw one or two excited crowds of boys carrying the national flag and shouting, "Down with the King," "Down with the Government," and "Down with England." I also saw one or two Englishmen, who ventured to put themselves in the way

of the crowd, pushed about and hustled a little. I was in Lisbon when the crowd pulled down the armorial bearings over the door of the British Consulate. But these are incidents which have happened frequently in other places with very little comment; and they looked very small, when contrasted with riots in Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square, which some of us remember. I feel bound to say this, because I think these reports ought to be corrected, and because I feel that the people among whom I was born have at least this virtue, that they are singularly courteous and chivalrous towards strangers. No man who has lived among them as I have can come back to this country without feeling that in this respect they bear a favourable comparison with great many of the Continental nations: strangers, even Englishmen, may expect everywhere to meet with those marks of courtesy it is so pleasant to receive. I go further, and support my own experience with that of a friend resident in Portugal, from whom I received a letter yesterday, one who knows the Portuguese probably as well as any member of the English colony there. He refers to a paragraph which appeared in the newspapers a short time ago, headed "Destitute Englishmen in Portugal," and which stated that a number of English clerks in Lisbon had been discharged by their employers, and were on the point of starvation, and that there had been 40 applications from Englishmen to their Consul to be sent home, but that he had no funds available for the purpose. My friend writes:—

"I was astounded at reading this, and felt sure that it could not be true, for such a state of things could not exist without it being generally known. I made inquiries of various friends, but no one knows an instance of an Englishman having been dismissed. I then went to Mr. Macdonald, the acting Consul, and he is not aware of any such discharges or applications for relief from distress. The statement that 40 English clerks applied to the Consul to be sent home is a pure fabrication."

I think the facts should be made known by statements in some public place, for it seems to me that newspapers anxious for sensational items of news have done much to excite a serious quarrel between two peoples who ought never to have quarrelled at all. I must say that at Oporto things are a little strained, and some of that strain is attributable to the indiscreet conduct of the English Consul there. He is a distinguished scholar, and he has written admirable books about Portugal, but I confess in this matter he has shown some lack of discretion by the use of expressions addressed to the students. In that country, as elsewhere, lads in excited times do not obey the restraints that men acknowledge, and for Portuguese lads to be told by a Consul that if they want to insult English people they should insult men and not women, seems to me rather like an invitation to these young students to display their feelings by some act of violence to Englishmen. From my experience in the country I can say that nothing has exasperated Portuguese feeling more than seeing reproductions of some of the comic cartoons from English papers, which, however we may laugh at them at the moment, are exceedingly bitter pills for a small and sensitive nation to swallow, especially when the people are led to believe that these pictures represent the real feeling in this country. By the distribution of these cartoons through every village in the country as a sample of what the English think of the Portuguese people, the feelings of exasperation, which no doubt exist, have been fostered and fomented. While there have been numerous exaggerations as to the treatment of Englishmen in Portugal, I do not disguise the fact that the feeling is widely spread there that this little country has been treated rather harshly by England—a strong Power, an old friend and ally. That feeling, rightly or wrongly, possesses the people of Portugal; I believe wrongly, but it is a feeling we cannot and ought not to despise: it is a feeling that distinctly is not ignoble. Contempt is a luxury of the strong, and becomes itself contemptible when attempted by those who are weak. A weak people cannot, therefore, meet such treatment with contempt; and it seems to me there is nothing ignoble in the weak resenting what they consider harsh treatment openly and even excitedly. Another feature in this unfortunate business is that the Portuguese in their quarrel have more or less the sympathy of the other smaller Powers

of Europe. It has not been pleasant to read in the press of Italy and Belgium, usually so tender towards English policy, the expression of an opinion that England had not treated Portugal as she would have treated a stronger Power, when at least she would have put a slipper on her broad foot instead of a strong boot. There are cynics who measure the value of political friends and the danger from political enemies entirely by the strength of material resources, but it seems to me, and I claim to speak as an old student of history, that England at all events has had enormous moral strength in her Continental struggles in the fact that she has had the sympathy of the smaller and weaker Powers, which are necessarily neutral. They have generally welcomed the advancement of England as the advancement of freedom everywhere. It is, therefore, a painful fact that in this quarrel we have had a more or less concurrence of opinion among the smaller Powers in favour of Portugal. If I am asked whether I think this feeling justified, I must say very positively no. I have read this Blue Book carefully, and I most emphatically say that I think that every consideration that it is possible for the responsible Government of a great nation like England to exercise towards a weaker nation like Portugal has been exercised, nor can I find, except in one despatch, which is not at all important, any trace of that sharply-pointed quill to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian paid tribute yesterday, as one of the high gifts of my noble Friend and leader the Prime Minister. On the contrary, I find everywhere in this book, and I feel sure every unbiassed man will agree with me, the greatest latitude, the greatest consideration shown to all the susceptibilities of the Portuguese nation. How comes it, then, that this feeling has arisen? It is an important and a proper matter for discussion. In the first place, this question in Portugal has not been treated as a question of foreign policy, but as a question of domestic policy. It is because it has been introduced into the faction fights of Portuguese political parties that it has become so important an element in Portuguese affairs. The Government in Portugal which had the conduct of the negotiations exists no longer; it has disappeared, utterly discredited. It was a Government whose individual Members were open to charges of malversation of every sort, and it had lost all moral influence in the country. In this matter that Government did not scruple to use every kind of effort to exasperate the feeling of the Portuguese, not for patriotic reasons, but simply to further its own ends. You cannot read these Despatches of Senhor Barros Gomes without feeling that he was actuated by motives of the most sinister kind. Here we have from the very beginning a Minister writing in one sense to the English Government, while his officials in Africa are directly traversing the answer given to Lord Salisbury. When things have progressed somewhat, we find the Portuguese Government selecting as their agent in these African affairs a Portuguese traveller, one who has been a politician, and who has distinguished himself by vituperation of England, although England and the Geographical Society here treated him with honour and hospitality when the Portuguese Press denounced him as an imposter. This man, who afterwards used the position he gained to vilify England, was the instrument selected by Mr. Barros Gomes while he was writing his friendly Despatches, to go to Africa and take charge of a question full of tangled difficulties, and in which it was absolutely certain he would introduce himself as a firebrand, and would intensify, instead of quieting, the condition of things then existing. We are told this traveller was proceeding on a scientific expedition. But a scientific expedition does not need Gatling guns and hundreds of troops. I am not now speaking of the material issues between the two countries, but of the way in which the Portuguese Government conducted the controversy, a way in which, if these Blue Books are read, will reflect small credit on the late Government of Portugal. If this be so, how is it that this was not exposed long ago? How is it that some Portuguese politician did not expose all this tergiversation? Was there no Portuguese prototype of the hon. Member for Northampton, who from a neutral attitude could denounce the conduct of the Portuguese Government, whatever its political creed? The answer to these questions is to be found in the political conditions

in Portugal. The fact of the matter is, the Portuguese Government makes its own public opinion. It is never in a minority in the House of Representatives. It never appeals to the country until it has appointed all the Civil Governors in the various districts in Portugal, and these return the Representatives; therefore the Government always has a majority in the House of Representatives. It has absolute control over the publication of any document, and consequently, when a question arises, the documents which are absolutely essential for the understanding of the question, are hidden and withheld from the public, no one but a Member of the Government having access to them. When I was in Lisbon the other day, a White Book was published, giving Despatches up to January, 1889. Despatches of that date are surely matters of ancient history. Few Portuguese outside the Government had any cognisance of the controversy, except of the concluding chapter, when the famous Despatch of Lord Salisbury was received and interpreted as an insult by the whole nation. The Press also is feeble and afraid of public opinion, and will publish nothing. One of my distinguished friends there, a highly educated, chivalrous man, who has a high stake in Portugal, wrote a letter to the papers explaining the position of the English Government, but his letter was refused admission into the Portuguese papers. The only grievance among the English colony in Lisbon—and I confess it is not, perhaps, a substantial one—is that the English Minister should have failed to communicate to the Portuguese papers what was substantially the English case in this matter; and especially the despatch of Consul Churchill, showing that while despatches were being sent to Lord Salisbury the Governor of Mozambique had issued a Proclamation in the Official Journal ordering the disputed territory to be occupied, treating it, in fact, as Portuguese territory. This lack of knowledge is the main reason why the people have been so much misled in the controversy, and the reason why a feeling of exasperation against us has been excited. It seems to me it is a reason to which we ought to attach some value in measuring the situation. It will help us to discriminate between the doings of the Portuguese Government and the feelings and attitude of the nation—To proceed, however. Why, it is asked, should Portugal covet these vast and valueless tracts of African territory? Here, again, we ought to measure the position of Portugal more equitably than we are apt to do. Portugal, like many other small Powers, lives on its traditions. Portugal has great traditions. Before Philip the Second of Spain conquered Portugal, and trod out all the seeds of national progress there, Portugal had created a very distinguished historic name. It was Prince Henry of Portugal, the navigator, who sent ships that discovered the whole seaboard of Africa, and all along the coast line you distinguish Portuguese names, from the extreme west, opposite the Canary Islands, to the north of Zanzibar. The Portuguese were the first to round the Cape of Good Hope, and the name of Vasco de Gama is used as a rhetorical flourish whenever Portuguese orators speak of the glorious days of Portugal. On the west coast, and on the east, they founded considerable settlements. It is perfectly true that the Portuguese are bad colonists; it is true they have no genuine colonisation. It is true Portuguese settlers are doing well in Brazil, and in the Sandwich Islands; but in their own colonies they have failed to make prosperous communities; and these African colonies, since the slave trade was destroyed, have shrunk and diminished, and are slowly drifting back to barbarism. This is as true as it is deplorable, but it hardly justifies some Pharasaic comments in this country. It is a point of rhetoric often to refer to the misdoings of Portugal, and we are told the Portuguese are slave dealers, and that wherever they set their feet nothing will grow, nothing will prosper, but we here at all events should be a little careful in making such charges. I have been lately amused, and a little ashamed, of seeing in the Portuguese papers these moral declamations as to Portuguese doings contrasted with English actions as lately as 1840; and it seems to me this Pecksniffian attitude is an unfortunate one for a great country like England to adopt when discussing a matter with a small country like Portugal. I admit, however, they are bad colonists. I admit that the steamers to South East Africa take many convicts, troops and officials, but

very few colonists. This being so, I also admit that it would be intolerable that Portugal should take a large continent like Africa and deliberately paint across the map in pink colour a huge stripe, claiming this tract as Portuguese simply because it connects one set of settlements with another. All this is perfectly true, but, nevertheless, we must remember that the Portuguese people, many of whom are very ignorant, have been fed on this kind of romance for many years. In their school maps they have been taught to believe that the Portuguese flag flies over these vast tracts of African territory, and it is a little cruel and hard to be suddenly reminded that England, at all events, will not permit this stagnating influence to be exercised over such wide portions of Central Africa—that England, in fact, will not allow great stretches of territory to intervene between our settlements in South and Central Africa and involving the peculiar Portuguese *régime*, which means the closing of roads and the imposition of taxes at every point, and preventing that which we desire to see in Africa, the distribution of commerce and whatever advantages flow from trade. Of course it causes a painful revulsion of feeling to the Portuguese people when they suddenly find themselves reminded that at least it is an open question as to whom these territories belong, and we must attribute blame to the Portuguese Government, which ought to have instructed its people upon the merits of the question, and to have pointed out the nature of the English claim, a claim which we have made from the beginning, never having diverged from it from first to last. In conclusion, what is to be done to remove this feeling? For I take it there is no man but must regret its existence. We cannot help feeling a great deal of real affection for this little country, and more especially is that so with those who have studied its history. It was an English band of crusaders who originally founded Portugal; it was an English bishop who founded the first cathedral in Lisbon. English capital assisted Portugal all through the last century, and largely assisted that country in its revival from the terrible effects of the Portuguese earthquake. In the great French war we stood side by side with Portugal; and, although it is said that we went to Portugal to assist that country against Napoleon, we must remember there is another side to this history. We were fighting England's battles and not Portugal's battles, and when Wellington chose the strategical position at Torres Vedras he had to devastate a third of Portugal to make his policy at all practicable. We left the country free from the French invaders, and we left a certain number of individuals enriched by army contracts; but a great deal of suffering was the result to the people of Portugal from that war; and, though it was the scene of the strife, the fighting there was really for our own benefit, and it is not quite fair to put that as a substantial claim for gratitude from Portugal. These are facts that I think should be remembered. On the other hand, the Portuguese Royal Family was put on the throne by Englishmen; we are the fathers, in fact, of Constitutional Government in Portugal, and various periods of our history are entwined with that little country. It, therefore, makes it impossible for some of us to feel anything but sentiments of affection for it. Those who have lived there, and have travelled among the people, will bear me out when I say that personal intercourse with the Portuguese has always been of the most pleasant and gratifying character. The people are thrifty, prosperous, civil, and courteous to everybody; and in my travels in that country I have had reason to feel nothing but pride in my connection with it. If it were possible for the English Government in any way to meet the sentimental aspirations of the Portuguese without sacrificing English dignity or interest—if they could do anything to satisfy those romantic aspirations of Portugal—it would give a great deal of satisfaction, and go far to soften the asperities which the recent conflict has raised. I believe that the present Government of Portugal ought to have our strong sympathy and support. It is in marked contrast with the Government that has disappeared. The individual members of it have a high character in the country. Their policy and principles are admirable. There is, on the other hand, no doubt, a Republican agitation in the country.

Their old tie with South America has been broken by the revolution in Brazil, and if we do not take care I am afraid we shall give much impetus to the Republican Party in Portugal—a party which in name is Republican, but which is, in fact, anarchical. I hope every Englishman will exercise some restraint on the adjectives he uses, and that the Government will endeavour to find some way to meet the patriotic aspirations of these old friends of ours. While I feel that my duty as an English Member of Parliament compels me, in this controversy, to substantial agreement with the English Government and its policy, I cannot, at the same time, sit down without expressing in a Portuguese phrase from my place here what I feel about the country of my birth, and say, *Viva Portugal.*

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not interrupt the hon. Member who has just sat down because he was not out of order in referring to Portugal in the general discussion on the Address; but I wish to point out the inconvenience which arises in the present case. There is an Amendment down on the Paper on the specific subject of Portugal. If there is to be a general preliminary discussion on Portugal, and then a subsequent discussion on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton, it illustrates the inconvenience of that course of proceeding. If the hon. Member for Northampton had risen and spoken he would not have been allowed to put his own Amendment. I hope the House will acquit me of any other desire than to promote the convenience and orderly character of our debates, and I would suggest very respectfully to the House that if a discussion on Portugal were to take place on the Amendment it would be more convenient, although I cannot say it is out of order on the general question.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I put down the Amendment in order to focus the discussion, and I confess I did not intend to ask the House to divide upon it. If you, Sir, will allow me to speak on the general question, I will do so without moving my Amendment; in fact, I will withdraw it. I rather agree with the hon. Gentleman with regard to the attitude to be assumed by the Government towards Portugal, but I confess I do so, not because I am in any particular dread that if we maintain our present attitude Portugal will have a Republic instead of a Monarchy. That is a matter for the Portuguese; but I dare say they would get on just as well with a Republic as with a Monarchy. Before going into the question of Portugal, I will deal with another matter connected with foreign affairs. The House will remember that some time ago certain negotiations took place between Prince Bismarck and certain Foreign Powers with reference to the Triple Alliance, which was, practically, a Triple Alliance against France. In order to induce Italy to join that Alliance, we did in some sort of way interfere, and make some sort of communications to Italy, and Italy, in consequence of the communications we made, and probably because of some assurances we gave, did join the Triple Alliance. At that time I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State whether he would communicate to the House what had taken place, and the right hon. Gentleman said he could not do so then. Since then I have frequently asked questions on the subject, and have received what I suppose I should call diplomatic answers; in fact, I have known nothing more after the answers about what has taken place than I knew before. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see the compliment I am paying him as Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. It is, I think, time the House should know what did take place. Are they ashamed of what occurred? Are they afraid that if they communicate the information to the House some Foreign Power will be displeased? I think Foreign Governments ought to know what assurances we have given Italy in regard to this matter. For my part, I hold that it is no part of the duty of an English Minister to aid and abet Prince Bismarck in inducing Italy to join in an Alliance against France. I should be sorry if there should be any European war; but if such a war should take place, and France should try to take back Alsace and Lorraine, my sympathies would be with France rather than with Germany. Italy has no concern with the quarrels of Germany and Austria; and if Italy joins those countries in attacks upon France, it is not for us to guarantee she shall suffer no penalty if

things go against the Triple Alliance. Still less is it our business to interfere. Our business in connection with a war between Foreign European Powers is to keep clear of the matter altogether. We ought to keep clear of every species of engagement and entanglement. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consent to lay on the table a Blue Book giving the despatches which passed between Sir E. Malet and Prince Bismarck, also the instructions sent to our Ambassadors, and, finally, I think we ought to have the despatch which, no doubt, Prince Bismarck sent to this Government thanking Lord Salisbury for dragging his chesnuts out of the fire. And now I come to the subject of my Amendment, which, however, I do not propose to move. I admit that the circumstances under which Lord Salisbury had to act were most difficult. That arose from the fact that all the great European Powers are struggling like a lot of Ahabs for what is looked upon as a huge Naboth's vineyard. All agree that it does not belong to Naboth, but all are fighting for it, and for the privilege of sending shoddy goods there. We call it civilisation, but give it what name you will, earth-hunger has, no doubt, much to do with it. Now, in the particular dispute which led to the crisis with Portugal no doubt we think ourselves in the right, but it is equally the fact that the Portuguese also think they are in the right. It is really very difficult for any one to be a judge in his own cause, and it is therefore impossible for either us or Portugal to say which is in the right. All I will point out is that both France and Spain, which are independent countries, and may be supposed to take an independent view, think we are entirely in the wrong and Portugal entirely in the right. It may be said there is ill-feeling on the part of France. Then let us put France aside and take Spain. There is certainly no love lost between Spain and Portugal, who may be said to be almost hereditary enemies. Yet the Spanish in this case think we are in the wrong. By the Berlin Convention it was sought to map out Africa in certain spheres of influence. But in that Convention the sphere of influence of Portugal was not mapped out. In 1886 Germany and France made Treaties with Portugal defining specifically what was the line of delimitation of their respective influences and the sphere of influence of Portugal. I think it is a great pity that this country did not take part in that delimitation, because had we done so this present difficulty would not have occurred. I suppose that the House knows something of the Zambesi River. Below the Zambesi there is Matabeleland, which is admitted to be within our sphere of influence. But when we declared it to be within our sphere of influence we included Mashonaland, because it had been conquered by Lobengula, the Ruler of Matabeleland; and here we come into contact with Portugal, because Portugal does not make any claim to Matabeleland, but to certain districts which we assert are included in Mashonaland. I do not propose to deal with the question of Mashonaland and Matabeleland, because they are not the immediate cause of the crisis. There is only one point I wish to advert to. Last Session I called attention to a concession that had been given to a Mr. Rhodes of the whole of Matabeleland by Lobengula. I asked several questions regarding it, and was told by the Under Secretary for the Colonies that England could in no sort of way support any claims of Mr. Rhodes owing to this concession, but that we could not prevent Lobengula from giving a concession, because he was, as far as the interior of the country was concerned, an independent monarch. I observe in the Blue Book that on the 12th of June M. D'Antas wrote a despatch to Her Majesty's Government complaining that a charter was about to be given which would include the whole of Matabeleland and the whole of Mashonaland. I certainly did not know of this charter at that time, and I think that the House of Commons ought to have heard that such a charter was about to be granted. The charter was granted after the House of Commons had ceased to sit. I think that all these charters ought to be laid on the table of the House. There ought to be some kind of discussion on the subject before a charter of this kind is definitely given. I find from this charter that any person who enters the district conceded has to pay one-half of the profits of a certain kind, such as from mines. How far the charter extends in point of territory I do not know, and I should be glad if the Under Secre

tary for the Colonies will explain. But who are the principal people to whom this charter was given? The Duke of Abercorn and the Duke of Fife. The charter was given to a company which had been formed, but in which there was no public allotment of shares. No doubt those noble Dukes have a good many shares in the company, and those shares have risen to a premium. I thought that the House of Commons had made, in an indirect fashion, a handsome provision for the Duke of Fife. We know also that by Lord Ashbourne's Act we have made a handsome provision for the Duke of Abercorn; and I do not, therefore, understand why we should single out those noble Dukes, who are Liberal Unionists and everything respectable that can be imagined, in order to make them a present of a vast sum of money. It is a great advantage to those who got the charter, and I wish to know why the Duke of Fife should reap this advantage, while, for example, my hon. Friends around me are not to have a share in it? What right had we to interfere to give to the Duke of Fife and the Duke of Abercorn all that was worth having in the country of Lobengula; and why should I or anyone else who enters that territory to find or work a mine have to pay this huge rent to the Duke of Fife and the Duke of Abercorn and their confederates? We object to mining rents in England; why should we encourage them in Africa? I now propose to confine myself to what took place in the Shiré district. This comprises a vast tract of land, the north of which runs into Nyassaland, and is bounded by the River Rovuma. On the south there is the Zambesi, on the east the Portuguese coast, and on the west the Shiré river. The Portuguese have for a considerable number of years claimed the district as their own, owing to the rights of discovery. I do not attach much importance to those rights of discovery; but unquestionably our Consuls have asked on one particular occasion for the interference of the Portuguese authorities in the Shiré district, in order to prevent certain action being taken against British subjects, and this to a certain extent seems to me to be a recognition on the part of this country of the rights of the Portuguese in that country. In 1889 Mr. Consul Johnston went to Lisbon, and proposed an arrangement by which the whole of this district from the Ruo River should be given up entirely to Portugal. This arrangement fell through because Lord Salisbury did not approve it. Still, it is important as showing that Consul Johnston was of opinion that the Portuguese had such a right to this district, and that we, in consideration for advantages elsewhere, should recognise the Portuguese as the full possessors of this territory in the sense of being under Portuguese influence. On the other hand, however, our contention is that we have a missionary colony at Blantyre, situated in this district, and that the Portuguese there are not in sufficient numbers to establish a right to the district. I imagine, however, that there are as many Portuguese in the interior of this district as there are Germans in that which we recognise to be under German influence, or as many as there are English in Pongoland. Therefore that argument cannot hold good. The coast-line is entirely in their hands, and this coast-line, generally in Africa, carries some portion of country behind it. In the midst of this No Man's Land there is a large tract of land inhabited by the Makololo, whose system of government is tribal, and in the midst of the Makololo country are the Scottish missionaries at Blantyre. I wish to speak with the greatest respect of those missionaries. If I did not I know that I should have the whole of Scotland up in arms against me. I have no doubt, also, that they are doing their duty their. No doubt they are respectable and estimable men and perform a great deal of good work. Still, I cannot help pointing out that if hon. Members look at the Blue Book they will find that about two-thirds of its contents contain Despatches from our Consuls to our Government, insisting that cartridges, powder, and guns should be sent up to those Scottish missionaries. This is a somewhat new phase of missionary labour, especially when it is borne in mind that this is the land of Livingstone. I never heard of Livingstone demanding guns and powder and cartridges. In 1888 the Portuguese sent an expedition through the Shiré direct to Nyassaland in order to establish some kind of fort on Lake Nyassa. Treaties were made with

some of the surrounding tribes. But when Consul Johnston's scheme fell through, the Portuguese sent up Major Serpa Pinto, as was then stated, with an expedition to survey the country for a railroad. It is asserted that that was not his real object. All I can say is that he says it was. It is said it could not have been because he went up with guns to protect him ; but then people generally do travel with guns for purposes of protection when they are travelling in Africa. I have pointed out what the missionaries did, and how many guns they wanted, and I would also refer to the case of Mr. Stanley, according to whose own account there were plenty of guns for protection. It is not, therefore, proved that this was a hostile expedition because Major Serpa Pinto was accompanied by an armed force. I have no doubt he was not sorry to have that armed force, not merely for the immediate purposes of protection, but in order to shew the native tribes what a great Power that of Portugal was. Indeed, Major Serpa Pinto seems to have admitted, in a conversation he had with Consul Johnston, that he did intend to make treaties with the African tribes ; so that his expedition could hardly be termed a mere railroad survey expedition. No doubt it was intended to have a railroad, and that was the reason why Major Serpa Pinto went there ; but he thought he might kill two or three birds with one stone, and make any treaty he could with the native tribes in order to increase the influence of Portugal in that part of Africa. Well, Major Serpa Pinto started in June, and it was known that he was about to do so, because the fact was announced, both in the English and Portuguese newspapers, and in scientific circles a good deal was said about the scientific aspects of the expedition. On the 23rd of July, Mr. Johnston, having previously returned to Mozambique, where he was Consul, started for Nyassa in a steam launch, proceeding up the Zambesi and the Shiré River. Mr. Consul Johnston, as will be seen from the Blue Book, wrote some remarkable letters. He asked for letters from the Governor of Mozambique to the Portuguese Authorities, and letters were consequently given to him, recommending him to the Portuguese officials. If they had had the idea that Consul Johnston was going up the country to annex large tracts of land to the British dominions, or to interfere in any way with Major Serpa Pinto, those letters would not have been given to him. Indeed, it seems to me to be very questionable whether it was proper for Mr. Johnston to have asked for, or to have accepted, those letters from the Governor of Mozambique. However, he got them, and he started on the 23rd of July. On the 8th of August he came up with Major Serpa Pinto, who was slowly pursuing his way up the country towards Nyassa. Did he tell Major Serpa Pinto what his intention was ? No ; but his intention was obvious ; it was to outrun Major Serpa Pinto, so as to get first into Makolololand, and prevent Major Serpa Pinto from getting into that territory. However, he told Major Serpa Pinto nothing of the sort. He said the Makololo would object to an armed force going there ; but nothing whatever was said by him about any extension of territory ; he merely told Major Serpa Pinto that under the circumstances it would be better for him to pursue another route. Well, Mr. Johnston pushed on, and when he got to the Makololo country he pulled out a number of flags which he had carried with him, and probably, a similar number of treaties. At any rate, he began making treaties with the Makololo tribe and gave them British flags, the acceptance of which was to be a recognition on their part of our influence, and a gage that that they would not make treaties with any other Power. There he met Mr. Acting Consul Buchanan. I have not been able to make out precisely wher Mr. Buchanan is acting as Consul.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON : On the lakes.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Well, the Portuguese themselves state, that they never recognised him, and from whom he obtained his exequatur I do not know. However, Mr. Acting Consul Buchanan and Mr. Consul Johnston, having made these treaties and given these flags to the natives, sent down to Major Serpa Pinto to tell him that he must not pass through the Makololo country, and on the 28th August, Major Serpa Pinto was at a place called M'patsa. That place is not in Makolololand proper, but in a district lying adjacent ; probably inhabited by some tribe not absolutely recognised as belonging to the Makololo country, but at the same time, having some connection

with the Makololo people. On the day named, the 28th August, Major Serpa Pinto was attacked by these people. He did not attack them; it was they who attacked him; this being admitted on both sides. The natives came forward waving the British flag, and, as far as I can ascertain, Major Serpa Pinto repelled the attack and took away the British flag. This is said to have been an insult to the British flag, but I should say that when a man comes with a British flag in one hand and a gun in the other, none of us would be inclined to say, "I respect the British flag, and will allow myself to be shot." Well, after this, Mr. Buchanan, who was, as a matter of course, highly indignant, issued a Proclamation. Here it is: It is dated the 21st of Sept., and Mr. Buchanan says—

"I hereby declare that the Makololo, Yao and Machinga countries, within the limits cited below, are, with the consent and at the desire of their chiefs and people, placed under the protection of Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, Defender of the Faith, &c."

This was sent to Major Serpa Pinto, who was informed that he was not to think of entering the territory that had been taken under British protection. Now, I ask, did any hon. Member of this House ever hear of any Consul acting in this way without first of all appealing to his particular Government? This was done while Major Serpa Pinto was proceeding up to that district, and it was done with the object of letting him know "This is part and parcel of the British territory; I therefore dare you to come on." I do not think that any one will assert that Proclamations of this kind, issued by such persons, can be regarded as valid, unless they have been confirmed by the Government at home. I was under the impression that such Proclamations had to be signed by Her Majesty herself; but, certainly by her responsible Minister or adviser. Well, let us just look at the position we are placed in if we are to allow any Consul in Africa to announce that he has annexed territory to the British Empire and that any one passing through it in a hostile fashion will be met by the whole might of the Empire. When he received that Proclamation Major Serpa Pinto was at M'patsa. The tribes were hostile and threatened to attack him. He went down for reinforcements and came back with them to his fortified position. On the 8th of November he was again attacked by the native tribes. There is no question as to this, because Acting Consul Buchanan and Consul Johnston entered into lengthy explanations to show that they protested with the Makololo against these attacks, and that the Makololo made them against their advice. The difficulty with these Makololo seems to have had the effect of bringing them to the conclusion that it was the best game to be on the side of the Portuguese rather than on that of the English. Major Serpa Pinto declares that these unfortunate Makololo, who had been called British subjects, were received back into the Portuguese fold, and became Portuguese subjects; and that if they afterwards interfered with him they would be declared rebels. I think that that was wrong, considering the difficulties of the position; but, at the same time, Major Serpa Pinto did not do one whit more than Mr. Buchanan had done; indeed, he told the people that Mr. Buchanan had gone a step further, because he had suddenly taken the people into the British Empire and declared them to be British subjects. It can hardly be contended that Major Serpa Pinto engaged in hostilities; he merely defended himself. He had fortified himself at M'patsa, and before any account of the last attack on the 8th November reached Europe Lord Salisbury sent a categorical Note to Lisbon to the effect that Portugal should not interfere with British settlements in Shiré or Makolololand, or any other territory under British protection, and that they should withdraw their troops from Makolololand, Matebeleland, and Mashonaland. He proceeded on an assumption, which was an extraordinary one, namely, that a Consul has a perfect right to annex any portion of Africa to the British dominions if he thinks it right to do so. Then there was a second demand made in a very peremptory manner, and at the same time it was announced that our fleet was proceeding in the direction of Delagoa Bay. It was reported in Lisbon that armed cruisers were approaching the Tagus. I do not know whether they were or not, but the sting was in the end of the second demand, which was that

Mr. Petre was to withdraw. That was what was called the ultimatum. He was withdrawn. The Portuguese appealed to the Berlin Treaty, and they proposed arbitration. Lord Salisbury replied that they had no right to appeal to the 12th article of the Berlin Convention, because Free Trade does not exist in the Shiré district, and the Convention only applies to countries where Free Trade exists. I think that is a little like special pleading. But Lord Salisbury gave another reason. He said that this article in the Convention was in order to avoid any appeal to arms on the part of the contracting parties, or any hostile demonstrations towards the Africans. Then he pointed out to the Portuguese that Major Serpa Pinto had appealed to arms. I hardly think that is borne out by fact. Our present position is that we have got hold of the entire Shiré district: a very questionable step I am inclined to think. We have got hold of this Mashonaland, to which the Portuguese made certain claims. On the other hand, the Portuguese did retain the rights of the Shiré district: they had the Zambesi river, and they had a perfect right if they chose to forbid our using of them for a commercial purpose unless we pay dues. Portugal is undoubtedly a very old ally of ours—I believe the most ancent we have, but there is no doubt that at the present moment Portugal thinks she has been unfairly treated, and thinks that her rights have no been recognised. She has given in because we appealed not to argument but to force. I am not saying whether Portugal is right or wrong. Considering that we have practically obtained the Shiré district, I do think that we ought to refer this question to some sort of arbitration. For it seems to me that there never was a case in which it was more desirable than in this. We ought to show ourselves perfectly ready to meet Portugal in these matters, and have them fairly decided. Judging from the despatches of the Portuguese Minister, there would be some chance of success in applying to the Zambesi river the rule now applicable to almost any one of these great rivers, which pass from one country into another country. I am not one of those who say that in every single case that can possibly occur, arbitration is possible. If the Germans came to England and captured Kent, we would not allow arbitration as to whether Kent belonged to Germany or not. But in Africa it is very difficult to say who is right or who is wrong. It was so fully recognised that the Great European Powers in the general scramble to get hold of bits of Africa might fall to loggerheads amongst themselves, that the Berlin Convention was held, and it was conceded by Germany and France that, with respect to Portugal, there should be special treaties, but unfortunately that was not done. In this country, especially among the artisan classes, there is a very strong feeling in favour of arbitration. I contend that we ought always, when it is proposed by any country with which we have a dispute, to accept it, if the country making it is a feeble country; and if it is a choice between arbitration and absolutely laying down the law ourselves, every time we do admit this principle we confirm it as an international mode of settling disputes; and when we do not admit it we weaken the use of the principle of arbitration, and tend to perpetuate the use of arms by other countries, who will follow our example. I think the House will see that we have made no sort of attack upon Her Majesty's Government in this matter. I might, as was pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) have referred to the sarcastic language of Lord Salisbury's despatches. I think it is a pity that Lord Salisbury did not keep his sarcastic language for the House of Lords. We admire from a literary point of view Lord Salisbury's sarcastic powers. We have not the slightest objection to the sarcasms he levels at the heads of his opponents. But the Portuguese have not the advantage of knowing that sarcasm is the speciality of Lord Salisbury, and they were naturally somewhat put out by the sarcastic vein in which Lord Salisbury dealt with their claims. I think our Consul and agents were somewhat reckless, and I think there is uncommonly little to choose between acting-Consul Buchanan and Major Serpa Pinto. They appear to be very zealous and energetic gentlemen, but I think their zeal and their energy have rather outrun their discretion in these matters. I should be very sorry

to think that our relations with a country like Portugal should be in any way weakened by anything that was done either by Major Serpa Pinto, or acting-Consul Buchanan. No one can read the Blue Books without seeing that there was a good deal of sharp practice on both sides. They seem to have been like the two American gentlemen who were gamblers, and who played a game in which the advantage was on both sides. I should be sorry to say one is right or one is wrong; but I do urge that, assuming that Portugal may have been more in the wrong than we were, we should deal generously with that country, and do our best to have some sort of arbitration. We have large commercial connections with Portugal, and it is most desirable that this feeling of irritation should be allayed in Portugal. We are the stronger; it is for us at present to make the first advance. Portugal did ask for arbitration. She had to withdraw her troops, and recognise our claims. She was forced to do so. Surely now we should offer some fair mode of arbitration to decide what are our rights and what are Portuguese rights in Africa. I cannot see that we should lose anything by doing so. If we are right, arbitration should go in our favour; if we are wrong, we ought to recognise fully that we are wrong, and accept that view from the arbitration. We ought not to put ourselves in the position of saying, "Right or wrong, we are the strongest Power, and we will stick to what we have done," in regard to these very doubtful, very difficult, very questionable claims on the part of both countries to those great districts which are inhabited by people whose earnest wish, I have not the slightest doubt, is that neither Portuguese, French, nor British should go into their territory. As I said, I shall not move my Amendment, but I hope we shall have some declaration from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that he will act upon the view which has been urged, not only on this, but on both sides of the House.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith): A large proportion of the Speech is occupied by foreign affairs, but perhaps it might have gone further and been directed to the questions of the Newfoundland Fisheries and the Behring Sea. I have no inclination to enter into any discussion of them, but I would point out that it would have been of greater interest to have had some declaration upon these points than a clause relating to the old theme of the Convention of Samoa, and the Extradition Treaty with the United States, which have been heralded so conspicuously as triumphs of Lord Salisbury. The Blue Book of last year was not calculated to shew that the Government exercised influence in the Pacific. The Samoa Convention might very well be described as concluded between the United States of America and Germany, and acquiesced in by Her Majesty's Government. The situation was clearly put by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) when he said:—

> "That in Samoa we had to play the second fiddle, while the United States of America, in maintaining their interests in Samoa, had maintained ours."

Then there is the well-known topic of the Extradition Treaty of America, which still awaits the ratification of the Senate. That Treaty is the same as that which was agreed upon during the last Administration, with the omission of the clause relating to explosives. The Convention was signed in London in June, 1886. I hope that, acting in conjunction with the President of the South African Republic, some further and fuller consideration will be given to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman (the Member for Mid Lothian), to the effect that the question of the status of British subjects entering into the Transvaal for the purpose of settling there is one upon which Her Majesty's Government will be able to make some representation. It is desirable that emigrants and settlers in these regions should be able to enjoy the rights of citizenship in the South African Republic. I must congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the protection they have been able to afford to British subjects settling in those territories within our sphere of influence lately in dispute with Portugal. I am not referring particularly to the territory of the South African Company. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in that part of the world, where Scottish missionaries and traders have done so much in rescuing the people from barbarism, is watched in Scotland with the closest interest. The hon. Member for Northampton will admit that if powder has

been wanted in Nyassaland, it has been wanted not for the natives, but for the Arabs, who have left their homes for the purpose of carrying on pursuits of a much more questionable character than those of the Scottish missionaries. I regret that definite action was so long delayed in the matter, and that the tone of at least one of our despatches on the Portuguese question left so much to be desired. If the Foreign Secretary had saved a little of the two years which are said to have been occupied in negotiations—and I must say I heard with surprise that the Government had held any definite policy with regard to these districts over so long a period—and if he had been able to economise his witticisms, it is possible that our relations with Portugal would not have been subjected to so great a strain, and that we should not have seen a section of the English press adopting the undignified and bullying tone towards our ancient ally, which has been so well commented on to-night by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Howorth). The principle of arbitration has been raised. Those who support it are entitled, I think, to all our sympathy, but in putting that principle into practice, we must take care that the dice are not loaded. Although arbitration has been known as a substitute for war, a good deal, I am afraid, is likely to happen before that civilised method of settling disputes can become general. Those responsible for the external affairs of the country must be the best judges in cases of emergency as to whether the national interests can admit of such mediation. I trust that all trace of this quarrel with a friendly State will rapidly vanish, and that Portugal will again appreciate the unexhausted good-will borne towards her by this country, which so earnestly desires her continued welfare.

*Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I desire only to speak for a few moments in order to draw attention to an apparent omission from the Address, namely, the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte in the Highlands of Armenia. The claims of this population upon the House and the country cannot be over-estimated. The published papers tend to confirm the reports which have been current of outrages and misrule among these people, and some mention ought to have been made in the Speech from the Throne both of Crete and Armenia' especially as, with regard to the latter country, our own Government is under a double obligation. It cannot in the first place be forgotten that we are bound, in common with the other signatory Powers, by the 61st section of the Berlin Treaty, and even more stringently by the 1st Article of the Anglo-Turkish Convention. We are especially bound under the latter document to remonstrate with Turkey on the non-fulfilment of her undertaking to introduce reforms into the Administration of Armenia. Of course, if the representatives of this country know that the old system of oppression is being continued, and that reforms are not being carried out, it appears to me that the section of the Convention to to which I have referred will have disappeared. We are face to face with this alternative, either that the Anglo-Turkish Convention is in force, in which case Turkey is bound to carry out reforms in Armenia, or else, if the Porte does not carry out its part of the agreement, it is not necessary that our share of the agreement should be carried out. What is the state of affairs at the present time? The attention of Europe has been called to the infamous trial at Constantinople of Moussa Bey, and no one can believe that that is to be the final phase of the action taken by Turkey in regard to the recent Armenian disturbances. There is no guarantee that the reign of plunder and outrage among the Armenians will not be renewed unless a conspicuous example is made. In No. 85 of the Papers on Armenia issued in August last a description will be found of the state of things in that unhappy country. There is, in fact, what may be termed an organised system of maladministration, supported by an organised system of plunder by Kurds and Circassians. It is not merely that the people have suffered grievous wrongs at the hands of Moussa Bey, but that all claims for redress are systematically ignored by the Porte. Commissions, no doubt, are appointed, but nothing is done, and the administration of justice is as bad as can possibly be imagined. The officials are in many cases in league with the Kurds and Circassians, and there is no sense of public security; and the exactions of the tithe farmers and of the nomadic tribes who come to inflict out

rages not only on the tithe paying cultivators of the soil, but to collect in some cases feudal dues to which they have no claim, are as monstrous as they were shown to be 15 years ago in the Balkan Peninsula, and as they are at the present time in Crete. A very serious element in the case is the impossibility of obtaining adequate information; the country is broken up into too many vilayets. If a number of vilayets could be merged into one, and greater uniformity introduced into the administration, improvement might be hoped for. I hold that we ought not to be content with making a mere academic protest against the state of things in Armenia. The relations between the Porte and the Porte's Christian subjects are critical, and in the interests of the latter very great pressure ought to be brought to bear upon the Sultan, with a view to the introduction of beneficial reforms.

*MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): The hon. Member for Northampton must have been as well aware as any one in the House of the absurdity of describing the charter of the British South African Company as having been granted to the Duke of Fife and the Duke of Abercorn. The charter, as is well known, was granted to a powerful company possessing a large capital, and having as its master spirit Mr. Cecil Rhodes—the greatest South African statesman I believe living; and the career of the company, I do not doubt, will be as exciting, as lucrative, and I hope more honourable than that of the East India Company. The fact is the hon. Member for Northampton merely mentioned *ad invidiam* the names of those two dukes who happened to be on the board of directors. In my opinion, the Government have done well in granting this charter, and thus providing a new field for British enterprise in one of the richest parts of South Africa. Another branch of the South African question to which I wish to allude is the subject of Swaziland, with reference to which Sir Francis De Winton has just presented a report to Lord Knutsford. Two things appear to be perfectly clear in connection with the Swaziland difficulty; one is that the independence of Swaziland has been guaranteed by the Transvaal and ourselves in the Convention of London, and the other is that that independence cannot now be preserved. These two things are clearer in this case than they are in connection with most other South African questions. The late King sold so many concessions to European adventurers that there is now in Swaziland, if not a large, at any rate an influential white population, and this makes the maintenance of a native Swazi Government practically impossible. Therefore either England or the Transvaal Government must take, over Swaziland. Now, there appear to be very grave objections to the assumption by England of the government of that territory. President Krüger has set his heart upon getting to the sea, and Swaziland lies between the sea and him. If England were to take over the government of Swaziland, we should rekindle the flames of Dutch animosity and revive the enmity which is just beginning to die out, and then we should only be able to reach our new possession through what would be the hostile territory of the Transvaal. Therefore, this new possession would be costly to our Treasury and dangerous to the peace of South Africa. If, on the other hand, we were to allow the Government of the Transvaal to take over Swaziland, we should secure the friendship of the Dutch race, with whom after all we have to live for better or worse in South Africa, and should provide an outlet for the Boer farmer from the pressure of English immigration. To surround the Transvaal with a ring fence of British Colonists, to say to the Dutch Government, "You shall neither go north, nor south, nor east, nor west," and then to pour over that ring fence a steady stream of young Englishmen, is a certain way to provoke war, a war in which the Dutch population of the Cape Colony would most likely take the side of the Dutch Government. I trust, therefore, that after the Colonial Secretary has considered Sir Francis De Winton's Report, the difficulty will be settled by allowing the Government of the Transvaal to take Swaziland. I regret greatly that no mention is made in the Speech from the Throne of the Labour Question, the question that is exciting the interest of the labouring classes all over the world. It appears from the answer given to me by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs yesterday that the Swiss

Government, in postponing the Labour Conference until next May, have issued a fresh invitation to the European Powers. The Government have, therefore, an admirable opportunity of extricating themselves from the thoroughly false position in which they placed themselves last summer by sending our delegate to the Conference with his hands tied, and tied with respect to the discussion of the one question which, above all others, interests the working classes of all countries. I earnestly hope that the Prime Minister will allow the representative of England to enter the Conference in May with as full liberty to discuss any question relating to labour as will be possessed by the representatives of other European Powers. As a Metropolitan Member, I am sorry to see that the Speech from the Throne contains no reference to the "sweating" question. Bearing in mind the evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Lords—evidence which has shocked and horrified the public of this country—I cannot but regret that no promise is given of legislation on this subject. Are we really to remain contented with a provision of only 55 Factory Inspectors in a population of 35 millions? Is no attempt to be made to bring the sweating dens of our large towns under the inspection of Her Majesty's officers? It has certainly been my hope that the Home Secretary would introduce a measure to amend the laws relating to factories and workshops. I can only express my earnest hope and wish that in the course of the coming Session, if the progress of public business should allow of it, the Government will introduce some measure both to increase the number of Inspectors and to rearrange their districts, and also to bring the sweating dens for sanitary purposes within the purview of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I need hardly say that we on this side of the House cordially agree with the hon. Gentleman in regretting that Her Majesty's Government do not, so far as we know, propose to take any action on labour questions this Session. Nor have they told us what they are going to do with reference to the Labour Conference at Berne. I think the debate which took place last Session, both as to the Laws of Labour and the Wages of Labour, showed there was a strong desire on the part of all sections of the House that Her Majesty's representative at the Conference should go there untrammelled. But I wish in the few words I intend to address to the House to confine myself to one question, which has received mention in the Queen's Speech, but on which I should be glad if the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs would give us a little more information—I mean the question of the Conference which is now sitting at Brussels in reference to the Slave Trade. We must all feel that the Conference, if it is successful in its efforts, will bring great benefit to the unfortunate natives of Central, the West, and the East of Africa; but that if it is not successful in its efforts, if on any account the different Governments are unable to agree on really stringent measures for the suppression of the Slave Trade, the calling of the Conference will really have done more harm than good, because it will have shown there is great difference of opinion amongst the European nations, and the Arabs and Slave Traders will take advantage of the difference. Many of us are getting somewhat anxious with reference to the great delay which is taking place in regard to the Conference, and we are afraid that questions which ought to be the primary questions before the Conference, namely, those which directly affect the Slave Trade, are somewhat falling into the background, while matters of great importance, though not directly connected with the Slave Trade, are receiving a somewhat undue meed of attention. The primary object of the Conference was to secure mutual rights of search, to declare the Slave Trade piracy, and if possible to abolish the status of slavery. But we are informed on many sides that the Conference, instead of discussing questions directly affecting the Slave Trade with the interest they ought to show, are discussing more at length such questions as the prohibition of the importation of arms into Africa, and the diminution or prohibition of the importation of intoxicating liquors into that country. No one will desire to palliate the evils arising from both the importation of arms and of intoxicating liquors, but I do not think they should be regarded as primary to the question of slavery. We

think that, at all events, the Liquor Trade ought not, until all the other questions have been settled, be brought up before the Conference. Broadly speaking, the question of the Liquor Trade is one affecting the West Coast of Africa, whereas the question of the Slave Trade is one affecting the East Coast. There is a wide geographical difference between the two; while the question is one directly affecting the interests of different nations. All I want to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs now, is whether he is able to give us some assurance that the primary object for which the Conference was appointed, namely, the direct suppression of the Slave Trade by sea, shall not be lost sight of. I think no one will regret the tone in which the question of the Portuguese difficulty has been discussed this afternoon. The discussion, which has been carried on without the use of those adjectives to which the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Howorth) referred, will do something to smooth the ruffled, and the justly ruffled, plumes of our Portuguese allies. As the hon. Member for Salford pointed out, however right Her Majesty's Government may have been in the matter the question came upon the Portuguese with the utmost possible surprise. All the information, as far as they were concerned, had been suppressed until the moment when it appeared their Government had been forced by the English Government to give way on what the Portuguese considered a vital point. Anything that can be done to re-unite in a bond of friendship the two countries will be of the greatest service not only to us in Europe, but still more so in Africa, because in Africa, Portugal has a great opportunity either of co-operating in or of thwarting our good work.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I recognise to the full the advantage of a continual bond of friendship with Portugal, but the affairs of Portugal and those of South Africa with which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. S. Buxton) has just alluded, important as they may be to this country, are in my judgment not nearly so overwhelming as the great social questions which are now before the country. I thoroughly agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. Baumann) that it would have been an advantage if some of these subjects had been mentioned in the Queen's Gracious Speech. A number of questions of great interest to the people at large are mentioned. There is the question of Savings Banks, which I naturally look to with great interest. I am extremely glad to hear that the labour of our Committee last year is to bear fruit, and that we are to have introduced a measure to put these most useful institutions on a better and safer basis. But the question which seems to me to overshadow nearly all others at the present time is the relation between capital and labour and the position of the country as a working country in connection therewith. No more beneficial work could be done by us this Session than to bring somehow or other these two great factors in the State into better unison than they are at present. We may safely and fairly say that during the last generation or two the great mass of the people have developed and have approached much nearer to one another. The increased educational facilities have brought the working classes much nearer to those who are better off than themselves. We have been levelling up the whole mass of the community in a manner which was never dreamt of a generation or two ago. This is a matter of great congratulation to the country, but what has been done does tend to awaken the agitator and the socialist to increase his efforts to make the people think it is possible by a very rapid and simple process to place them in a position of extraordinary comfort as to hours of work and so on. No account is taken of the consequences of too rapid a step in this direction upon the commerce and trade of the country at home and abroad. We, the Metropolitan Members, ought to distinctly state our views upon this great question which concerns us so closely. The question is the most important we can consider, not only for the sake of the welfare of the employer, but for the sake of the welfare of the working classes themselves. We know what has taken place during the last six months. Those of us who work amongst the people cannot help seeing the enormous growth of the population is tending to make people more and more exacting in the amount of work required in the Metropolis. No one grudges the wages

men receive, but the thing which must strike everybody is the growing difficulty of finding sufficient employment for the ever-increasing population of this great City. The difficulty is continually made more serious by the sending away of certain industries to other parts of the country. The other day I received a Report concerning the cost of unloading and the time of unloading a ship in London and in a port in the North of England. It was shown in the Report that in the North the ship was unloaded in four days at a cost of something like £220, while in London it was unloaded in 12 days at a cost of something like £400 or £500. I do not know whether the Report is absolutely true, but the fact remains that the cost of labour in London is growing, and that in itself is a very serious matter for consideration. It may be that the growth of cost is an advantage to the working man, and in the case I have referred to a great part of the extra cost goes to him, but if you increase the cost of work you will, at the same time, do away with a large amount of work in London, and that is a serious matter for the working man himself. It is very desirable that we should, if we can by any means, increase the wages of the poor dock labourers and others like them, but we must realise the fact that unless we are extremely careful we shall drive the trade away from London, which can only end, not only to the loss and ruin to a great number of employers, but to the very extreme hardship of tens of thousands of our poorer brethren. This is a question which deals not only with the happiness and comfort of London, but with our very existence as a trading port. Some people hail with satisfaction the idea that the Emperor of Germany is about to take part in the solution of labour questions, but my view is that we can look to these matters ourselves better than foreigners. No arbitration or conciliation of the sort suggested is likely to lead to any good permanent result. The only proper course seems to me to make the interests of labour and capital more alike; that you should put the two, not inopposite camps, but induce all trades in some way or other to adopt a system by which the labourer receives not only payment by way of wages, but some payment by way of the interest he has in the concern itself. I think the South Metropolitan Gas Company have made a great step in the right direction. They have said to all the persons in their employ that in addition to the wages they receive they shall receive one per cent on their wages for every one penny per thousand feet of gas that the price can be reduced. This plan has been attacked by certain persons, but to my mind it does contain the germ of a solution of the labour difficulty. It has been adopted by many Co-operative Societies and other institutions, and amounts to this, that the labourer receives a certain payment as the result of his work, if that work is also successful to his employer. It would be most useful if during this Session we could have a Committee or Commission to inquire into the various ways in which labour and capital work together in this respect. We hear that the great cure of all our social evils is to be the federation of labour. I don't exactly know what federation of labour may be in the opinion of some persons, but I can judge from what happened during the Dock Strike, and from what I heard at a meeting in Hyde Park in connection with the Gas Strike. The federation of labour I there heard is a scheme by which the working classes of all nations should combine so that they can strike universally against any employers, and so secure the object desired. This must lead ultimately to the practical ruin of the working classes themselves. Supposing the gas stokers had succeeded in bringing out the coal porters. The result would have been that London would have had no coal, in addition to being in complete darkness during the winter nights. Although the loss to the employers of labour would have been enormous, the loss to the employed would have been absolutely ruinous. If we have universal strikes, in London alone tens of thousands of men, with their wives and children, will be put in the most extreme positions of privation and hardship, and therefore I think we are bound to do our utmost to bring about some scheme by which labour and capital should be federated and worked together. I am sure that some such scheme can be framed. The framing of such a scheme would be most useful work for this Session of Parliament. I feel convinced that the adoption of

such a scheme would be fraught with the happiest results. There is one obvious way in which the scheme I suggest can be commenced. The State is the largest employer of labour in the country: the State receives, by Local and Imperial taxation, something like 150 millions sterling a year: an enormous part of this is paid in wages: surely it would not be unreasonable that some effort should be made to give to the men employed by the State some interest in the work they have, in addition to the wages they receive, and that is to my mind the only way in which you can possibly federate capital and labour. Many people may say that this is a Utopian idea, and that it has been tried over and over again and failed. Many things have been tried over and over again and ultimately succeeded. This system of combining the interests of labour and capital is certainly a thing which is not beneath the dignity of this House, and not beneath the importance of the country to consider, and I am sure that if we can only bring it about it will be the only permanent way of putting a stop to those great labour strikes which, if continued, will be the ruin of the country.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): I will not detain the House more than a few minutes; indeed, I only wish to urge the Government to consider the very wise advice of the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) in regard to South African affairs. It seems to me that the mania for land-grabbing in Africa is one of the greatest dangers by which this country has ever been threatened. People often refer us to India and Australia, but they forget that the circumstances are entirely different. In India there is a population who have been accustomed for centuries to be governed by others, and in Australia there is a population who die away before civilisation. You have just the opposite state of things to deal with in Africa. The Zulus and the Dutch are more numerous than your own people out there, and they increase much more rapidly than you. You have to deal with governing and conquering races, and when you talk about making another East India Company in Africa, I should like to know whether you find it very easy to fill the constant vacancies in your armies in India. Where are you going to get the men necessary for the creation of an empire in Africa? You have a constantly-increasing danger of collision; and, while we have hitherto been unable to fulfil our duties and satisfy the responsibilities we have undertaken over large tracts of country we attempt to govern, we now attempt to widen the area of our influence, and, unless Governments exercise some control over this tendency, it will not be many years before we find that we have attempted more than we are able to perform, and are doing very badly that which we are really able to accomplish.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I think it will conduce to the convenience of the House and to the regularity of debate if I now rise to reply to the various remarks made upon foreign affairs before the debate travels into other branches of the discussion. First, I may say that I believe all will respond to the appeal made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian yesterday when he spoke of the general reticence and caution which has been exercised by the Opposition, particularly in reference to foreign affairs. In the questions which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to the Government on particular points, he clearly asked for no more than it is the duty of the Government to give in order to justify their action. The right hon. Gentleman, in regard to the late unfortunate difference with the Portuguese Government, said that, as far as the circumstances were known to him, he had no exception to take to the acts of Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for Northampton has addressed himself to-night to the same question in terms of censure and complaint, and I think it is due to the right hon. Gentleman, to the hon. Member, and to the House, that I should say a few words as to the particular grounds upon which we rely as the basis of our declaration that we have given due warning to the Portuguese Government of our claim to certain districts, and our objection to the Portuguese occupying them. It is evident that if, as has been said outside the House, Her Majesty's Government had done the right thing in the wrong way, if they had kept the Portu-

guese Government at all in the dark as to their estimate of their rights and of the dangers that would result from the advance of an armed force into that country, they would have exposed themselves to well-founded complaint, especially if we at the last moment had peremptorily demanded the retirement of the Portuguese troops from their advanced position; but I hope, without detaining the House long, and by reference to the Papers, I shall be able to show that it is absolutely without foundation to say that the Portuguese Government was not made fully aware of the views of Her Majesty's Government on this point. So long ago as August, 1887, as will be seen from page 7 of the Blue Book, a despatch was addressed to Mr. Petre, in which it was pointed out that in the district to which Portugal appeared to lay a preferential claim, as the result of negotiations carried on with Germany and France, and in which, except near the sea coast and on portions of the Zambesi river, there was not a sign of Portuguese jurisdiction or authority, "there are British settlements, and others in which Great Britain takes an exceptional interest," and that Her Majesty's subjects had occupied this district for years past, and that any disturbance of their peaceful work could not be viewed by Her Majesty's Government with indifference. It was pointed out that the communications with the Governments of France and Germany only showed that the district was removed from the sphere of influence of these countries. On the 17th of May, 1888, I made in the House of Commons a positive declaration on the subject which attracted some notice in Portugal, and this declaration was the subject of some diplomatic correspondence, which will be found in the Blue Book. It will be observed that Lord Salisbury fully adopted the statement I made, which was that the Government did not recognise any unlimited claims of Portugal in the interior of Africa. The limitations of the spheres of influence of the respective European Powers were perfectly understood. That influence was not recognised except where settlements had taken place, and where a Power possessed the means of maintaining order, of protecting foreigners, and of controlling natives. Portugal had made no advance in the settlement of the interior, and had obtained no position which rendered her capable of fulfilling international duties, and therefore we could not recognise any such material claim to territory as would entitle her to deny us the freedom of commerce; and, in particular, as I said, Her Majesty's Government could not for a moment admit her right to stop the free passage of the Zambesi. Through the enterprise of our countrymen considerable progress had been made, and it was a matter of regret if this commerce was hindered by heavy charges; but when no international obligations interposed it was in the power of Portugal to levy such as she might impose within her own territories. Then on July 24 of the same year it was distinctly notified that—

"Khama's country and Matabeleland are within the sphere of British influence."

On the 8th of September in the same year Her Majesty's Government, in a Memorandum communicated to the Portuguese Government, said—

"Without going further into detail, they content themselves for the present by observing, with regard to the argument of prior discovery, that it is not improbable that the Portuguese subjects settled in the Colony of Mozambique had obtained some general information as to the neighbouring districts. The Memorandum of Senhor Barros Gomes, however, in their opinion, only confirms the fact that Dr. Livingstone was for all practical purposes the discoverer of Lake Nyassa, and that it was owing to him that the districts surrounding it were settled, and have since been continuously occupied exclusively by British subjects."

Further, in the month of October we called the attention of the Portuguese Government to the fact that Her Majesty's Government had never admitted the claim of Portugal to Lake Nyassa. On the 5th of January, 1889, we complained of the advance of the Portuguese force as inimical to our trading interests, and likely to lead to disturbance. Questions were asked of the Portuguese Government as to their intentions, and in several following Despatches we maintained that Mashonaland was distinctly under British protection. The hon. Member for Northampton has spoken of the Portuguese force as a mere surveying expedition, but such an expedition does not generally march with thousands of men with repeating rifles, accompanied by machine

guns. I will only further refer to the despatch of November 21, in which Her Majesty's Government protested against the decrees including within the sphere of Portuguese influence, and indeed placing under Portuguese administration, a large territory in the interior of Africa to the north and south of the Zambesi river—a district which appeared to comprise a great part of Mashonaland and an immense tract to the northward, approaching the frontiers of the Congo Free State and the watershed of Lake Nyassa, and including a part of the very district which had been proclaimed as within the British protectorate and within the sphere of British influence. It is scarcely necessary to go further to show that Her Majesty's Government fully warned the Portuguese Government against aggression in that region, and as to our interests there. But it has been said the ultimatum was premature, and that it was under the pressure of an English naval force that the Portuguese Government was induced to promise to withdraw from its advanced position. Well, in the correspondence which has been presented to Parliament I will venture to say there is almost to the last an entire absence of menace; and in the despatches to the Portuguese Government the only passage that can bear the description of "sarcasm," which has been complained of, is a reply to what the Portuguese Government had said about "ancient monuments." The reply to that allusion is that, whatever antiquarian interest these ancient monuments might possess for the Portuguese, they could not be recognised as proofs of actual possession. In all the other despatches there is not a single line that can be described as sarcastic. In Portugal there is certainly just now a strong national feeling, which we may admire, although we cannot agree that it is founded altogether on a sound judgment as to the rights of that country. While we sympathise with the feeling, we can well afford to abstain from using any language which may wound the susceptibilities of the people, and from anything which might wear the appearance of ridicule of a necessarily difficult position. I join with my hon. Friend (Mr. Howarth) in regret that some writers and limners in the public Press should have excited this feeling of ridicule in criticizing the action of a spirited nation with which, for the first time in a long series of years, we have had the misfortune to have a difference. We can respect a nation with glorious traditions standing out for what it believes to be its rights; and I believe that when the papers which give our side of the question come to be studied in Portugal a different view will be taken by the Portuguese people of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. I have been told by a Member of the House who has recently visited Portugal that he had not seen in a Portuguese newspaper a statement of the English case. If that be so, we need not wonder at the feeling which has been excited by this regrettable incident. We have no ground of complaint in respect of the efforts made by the Portuguese Government to protect British subjects, to whom I hope no serious harm has been done, and who have long lived on terms of friendship with the Portuguese people. It is to be regretted that they have received personal discourtesy, but they will know how to make allowance for the feelings of the people. The hon. Member for Northampton has referred to the recent practice of giving Charters to Mercantile Companies without the knowledge of Parliament. I have had the opportunity of defending that policy. It seems to me we have to choose between the old fashion of allowing our subjects to make their way without control in new countries far removed from English law and control, and where, perhaps, many unpleasant occurrences have taken place before English dominion was established, and the granting of Charters affording the protection of English Law to natives and neighbouring peoples, and placing control of the territory under regulation of a Department in this country. I think probably this last is the more wholesome way of extending the British dominions than the rough and ready method of times past which, though it often led to glorious results, yet not without passing through stages of great hardship to settlers and native populations. The hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere) went on to refer to Consul Johnston's visit to Portugal, and he alleges that Mr. Johnston had come to an arrangement with the Portuguese which would have prevented the recent differ-

ence if it had not been rejected by Her Majesty's Government. Now, this is not a correct statement of what happened. As a matter of fact, Mr. Johnston was allowed to visit Portugal and to have unofficial interviews with the authorities in the hope that some arrangement might be come to. But, as the proposals made to Mr. Johnston by the Portuguese Government clearly involved bringing British settlements at Nyassa and on the Shiré under Portuguese authority, Her Majesty's Government could not accept them. The hon. Member spoke in a tone of what I may call faint praise of the missionaries at Blantyre. But it is not only the Scotch Missionary Settlement that is concerned; there are English Missionary Settlements scattered along the South-East of Lake Nyassa, and there are other stations on the Western side besides commercial companies which have for some time been trading there and doing very good work. In fact, British interests are of a far more extensive character, and are not confined to the Scotch missionaries settled at Blantyre. The hon. Member said that Mr. Johnston ought not to have asked for letters to pass him through Portuguese territory if his ultimate objects were such as the Portuguese Government would not approve; but I think, if only as a matter of courtesy, if a British official has in the discharge of his duty to pass through Portuguese territory he should ask permission from the authorities, and any attempt to pass surreptitiously would occasion suspicion. Mr. Johnston was quite right in taking the course he adopted, but there was no thought of asking Portuguese permission for what was to be done outside Portuguese territory. Then the hon. Member asks what was Mr. Buchanan's position. Mr. Buchanan held the position of Acting Consul in the Lake District, and it is usual to supply the place of an absent Consul by the temporary appointment of some resident. I believe that no more fitting substitute than Mr. Buchanan could have been found.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Did he hold an exequatur?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Mr. Buchanan was not accredited to the Portuguese Government. He was a Consul *in partibus*. In an un settled territory in which he exercised legal authority over the scattered British subjects it was no case for an exequatur from the Portuguese Government. But this is a small matter, and I pass from it to the hon. Member's remarks upon discredit to the English flag. I do not think we can afford to allow this discredit in any part of the world. In the case in question not only were British flags taken from native tribes, who had been told that they would be safe in the possession of them from aggression, but the commander of a British steamer was actually compelled to haul down the British flag on the Zambesi River, which Portugal herself, in 1885, declared should be free water. Her Majesty's Government would have incurred great responsibility and censure if they had submitted to such treatment. It is said that the Makololo were responsible for the collision with Major Serpa Pinto's force. They were the attacking party, but Pinto's force entered their dominions, and the commander had declared war on the tribe. The British Consuls did their best to persuade the chiefs not to come into collision with the Portuguese, but to fall back and leave it to Her Majesty's Government to vindicate the Protectorate declared by them over the country. Those who are responsible for the collision are those who invaded the territory of the Makololo. There are several contentions put forward that the territory in dispute is properly Portuguese, and that in any case arbitration should have been resorted to. But the Portuguese claims are either very remote or very recent. Nothing is more certain than that till after Livingstone's discoveries called attention to the opportunities for settlement in the region Portugal had not for centuries made any attempt to exercise acts of sovereignty or of protectorate over it. Its discovery and settlement are due entirely to British heroism and enterprise. I think we may claim Mr. Stanley as a son of our soil; and I do not think America will grudge us our share in his glory. There are some very remarkable proofs that Portugal has no claim to consider the territory as her own. One fact, very little mentioned, but not without its significance, is that, when in 1826 the Constitution of

Portugal was altered and the territories of His Most Christian Majesty were defined, the lands on the East and West Coast of Africa were clearly named, but no mention whatever was made of the interior of the country. Again, in the negotiations for the Congo Treaty with Portugal her representatives were willing to fix a boundary which would have been clear of the Shiré highlands. An appeal is made to the Act of Berlin, under which arbitration is to be resorted to in case of dispute between any of the signatory Powers as to territory within certain limits laid down in the 12th article of the Act of Berlin, the territory comprised within the Congo or Free Trade area. But Portugal had expressly objected to the territory now in question being included in the Free Trade area, and it is notorious that she has maintained a system of transit dues there, and latterly has imposed the full Mozambique tariff on all goods coming from the Lake District. Up to 1886, Portugal maintained a Custom House at the confluence of the Ruo and the Shiré, which is a recognition that beyond that point Portuguese authority did not extend. On no ground of treaty or possession or prescription can the region be justly called Portuguese, while on the ground of settlement, of protectorate, and of discovery, Great Britain has claims to it. With regard to the territory south of the Zambesi, there can be no question of arbitration under the Act of Berlin, because it is outside the area defined by that Act. Now I come to the main contention of the hon. Member for Northampton—that as to dealing with this dispute by arbitration. He says that wherever it is possible arbitration should be accepted, and he adds that he thinks it ought to in this case. Lord Salisbury has already pointed out this was hardly a case for arbitration, because one of the parties has already taken the law into its own hands. I venture to think that arbitration is not a universal panacea, although it is a very good expedient in certain cases, as, for instance, when a difference arises as to the details of a Treaty. We sometimes find gentlemen going about praising a particular remedy for influenza, as if it must suit every case because it suited their own. Arbitration cannot be a remedy in every national difficulty, and I submit to the House that it would not be consistent with the traditions of our country or with our national honour if we referred to arbitration a case where a Power, large or small, has sent an armed force into regions in which it has been solemnly warned we could not be indifferent to the interests of our fellow-subjects. The hon. Member for Leeds says he would like to have heard something more in the Speech with reference to the Newfoundland Fisheries. I may at once say that we are conducting negotiations with the French Government with good hopes of success; and in the meantime we have good reason to believe that a temporary arrangement will be entered into under which there will be no risk of friction or dispute. We have had in times past reason to be sensible of the conciliatory spirit of the Governments interested in this question, and I hope that the question will soon be settled on an honourable and permanent basis. I have no objection to say, as regards the Behrings Sea question, Her Majesty's Government are conducting negotiations with the Government of the United States, and there is a friendly spirit on both sides, which I hope will result in a settlement. With regard to the Extradition Treaty, it is manifest that Papers cannot be laid on the Table, and that a statement cannot be made until the Treaty has been ratified by the United States Senate. My hon. Friend suggested that all the credit for this Treaty did not belong to the present Government. We have no objection to share with the Government which held office when the negotiations were entered into the credit and satisfaction which is felt at the satisfactory settlement come to, but I think we may congratulate ourselves on having brought the matter to a conclusion. The hon. Member for Eye has complained that there is no mention of Armenia in the Queen's Speech, and that we have not presented Papers on the subject. There is a Blue Book in course of preparation on the subject of Asiatic reforms which will give all information in the possession of Her Majesty's Government as to the state of things in Armenia and the occurrences at the trial of Moussa Bey. I have laid the Papers on the Table, and they will be distributed in about a week. With reference to our obligations in Armenia the hon.

Member has fallen into an error, which I think will be recognised by many hon. Gentleman on that side of the House, in regard to our having special duties and responsibilities in that country. It is true that by the Cyprus Convention of 1878 Her Majesty's Government undertook to protect the Sultan's dominions in Asia Minor, but the Porte and Her Majesty's Government were to concert measures with Foreign Governments for the reform of the internal government of the Turkish Empire. It is well known that the Government of the Sultan has been indisposed to carry out that part of the Convention, and, consequently, that provision of the instrument has never been fulfilled. It has been recognised by all our Ministers since that we have no special responsibility or right of interference with respect to Armenia or any other Turkish province. Nevertheless, from our ancient alliance with Turkey, and our desire, both for its own sake and on behalf of its populations, that the Government of the Empire should be good and successful, and that no part of the population should be discontented, Her Majesty's Government have, from time to time, endeavoured to procure the removal of abuses and the institution of reforms. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian yesterday paid a fitting tribute to the character and capacity of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople. It is not for me to compliment the right hon. Gentleman on anything he said, but I am glad, in the interests of a great and useful public servant, that such a tribute has been paid to Sir W. White by a statesman of the authority of the right hon. Gentleman. This I know, that no endeavour has been wanting on the part of our Ambassador to remove from the Turkish Government the reproach of indifference to the interests of its subjects in Asia Minor. It should, however, be remembered in the case of another Power that there is such a thing as pushing remonstrance to the verge of impertinence and of offending its dignity, and I cannot imagine anything less likely to produce a beneficial effect than strong language and drastic measures as to matters with which we have no concern. In regard to the trial of Moussa Bey, our Ambassador did exert himself in the manner best calculated to be effectual, although, of course, not in a directly official manner, using all his influence in order to insure that Moussa Bey, who was accused of great outrages and cruelties to the Christian population in Asia Minor, should be again brought to trial and judged according to his offences. There were incidents at the trial which were not satisfactory to our Ambassador. The Sultan and his Ministers are aware of that, and I am not without hope that this man will still be tried on some of the charges which have been brought against him, and that the country in which he has exercised such terrorism will in future be freed from his presence. But it must not be forgotten that we are dealing with the Sovereign and Ministers of a Great Power, who have the same pride as we ourselves have. The right hon. Member for Poplar has directed our attention to the Brussels Conference on the Slave Trade, with the miseries of which we are all acquainted. I think that Her Majesty's Government has shown their zeal and sincerity in the matter by readily joining the Conference, and they have done a great deal lately to put down the seaboard Slave Trade, and I hope we have terminated it at Zanzibar. Unfortunately a large region still remains with which we still have to solve the problem how to stop the progress of these miserable caravans over the Dark Continent, I hope that the European Powers in Africa by united action will be able to check this most wretched of all traffic. It would be impossible for me to satisfy the hon. Member as to any of the details of the present Conference. Measures are proposed by one Power; they are met by objections from others. I believe, however, that by a reasonable adjustment of objections there is a prospect of the Conference resulting in solid reform, and in the setting up of measures which will do much to check and extinguish that horrible traffic which has been well described as the running sore of Africa; but it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to give any pledge to hon. Members that they will bring pressure to bear on the Conference to adopt either one or other of the expedients which have commended themselves to humane men as being the bounden duty of civilised nations to adopt. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian

pointedly asked me yesterday whether the Government have any intelligence with reference to some recent painful occurrences said to have taken place in Siberia. We have had no such information as would enable us from official information to confirm those reports. As the right hon. Gentleman recognised Her Majesty's Government would do wrong to concern themselves with the internal affairs of a foreign country, as we have no possible right of interference. That there were some painful occurrences happened among a party of convicts on their way to a distant part of Siberia there appears, however, to be no doubt. Our interest in such a matter must be sentimental; but as it has been referred to, I will only remark that according to the statements which have been published, and which first came from some of the convicts or their friends, it seems that the convicts possessed themselves of arms, and that those arms were in some way used in the conflict. It cannot be doubted that with regard to events in the interior of a remote country there must be often great difficulty in obtaining important information, and I am not in a position, and if I were in a position I should not venture to express any opinion as to the nature and merits of the conflict. I have only one other subject to deal with before closing. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian referred to affairs in Crete, and it would be only respectful to him to give some reply to his observations on that subject. It is greatly to be regretted that the disturbances should have occurred ih the Island, to which a most liberal constitution has been granted. It is true, as the right hon. Gentleman surmised, and as has been stated elsewhere, that the recent disturbances in that Island had their origin in Party disputes. Free as the Constitution of the Island is, it has elements in it which are not without danger, and among those the absolute power possessed by the majority cannot be without danger. The complaint made by the Christian minority was that the other section, having a large majority, and having in its hands the appointment of Judges and Magistrates, the minority were left without remedy or justice, all posts were given to the dominant party, from the highest to the lowest, and that the decisions of the Courts of Law were entirely swayed by political considerations. In the conflict which broke out between the Christians and the Mahomedans there is no doubt that the religious element came into play; but I am bound to say that, according to the testimony of our officers, Chakir Pasha, the High Officer sent by the Sultan to restore order in that Island, endeavoured to do so with the greatest possible regard to justice and the most impartial treatment of offenders, to whatever side they belonged. Chakir Pasha encouraged the British Consul and the commander of one of Her Majesty's ships to visit every part of the Island, and bring to his knowledge any cases of oppression that came under their notice; and it is acknowledged by our officers that if any misdeeds were not punished it was because they were not brought to the notice of Chakir Pasha. The Island has been largely restored to a state of peace and order. Murders and outrages, it is true, take place in some parts, and there are cases of brigandage to a small extent, and it cannot be a matter of indifference that great numbers of persons have taken refuge in Greece, and are afraid to return to the Island. I hope that, by just administration and judicious modification of the recent firman, the fear of injury to any innocent person may be removed, and that the amnesty may be as far extended as possible. I hope, too, that the Island may not again be visited by those destructive occurrences which in times past have occasioned painful scenes, and that the free constitution which it undoubtedly enjoys may result in its prosperity and peace. I have to thank the House for the tone in which this part of Her Majesty's Speech has been treated. I am glad to think that hon. Members have not seen occasion either to censure or to cavil at in any serious manner the conduct of foreign affairs by Her Majesty's Government. We have, I trust, the signs and the prospect of a year of peace. The recent prosperity of trade has not been checked or endangered by rumours of war, and may I say I think it is one of the best signs of patriotism in this House that so few things have been said in it which would endanger the peace of Europe, or which would diminish the friendship which happily exists between us and all the nations of Europe.

*Mr. CREMER (Haggerston): I very much regret that this debate should have been forced upon the House before hon. Members have had the opportunity of well digesting the Papers relative to this important subject. It is only a few hours since those Papers were issued, and, consequently, it is impossible that I or any other Member of this House could have made himself even fairly well acquainted with their contents. It may be, however, that when those Papers have been read and digested the desire of hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House will be so far gratified that we on this side may form somewhat different conclusions from those at which we may have arrived by reading the reports that have reached us through the Press, by means of correspondence from abroad, and through the medium of other unofficial sources of information. Up to the present moment I feel bound to say that I, for one, do not share the views that have been expressed with regard to the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government. Admitting to the full the difficulties which the Government have had to contend with—and no one is more inclined than I am to look with a favourable eye on their conduct—I have little sympathy with the course which they have pursued in Africa. Nor have I much sympathy with the Portuguese, who, having been in possession of an enormous tract of country for many years, have neither benefited the natives or advanced in any appreciable degree the blessings of civilisation, pursuing, in fact, a dog-in-the-manger policy. As I have said, it is difficult to approach the consideration of this question without having well mastered the contents of the Blue Book—an advantage possessed by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—who has addressed himself in a fair and amicable spirit to the question under discussion, seeing that he has been for months quite *au fait* with everything said and written on the subject. The hon. Member for Salford has delivered a speech, in the conclusions of which, I think, all of us must have concurred. He began by saying that he hoped that every Member of the House would be sparing in the use of adjectives which would be calculated to offend the susceptibilities of the gallant Portuguese, and his whole speech justified us in concluding that the hon. Member was perfectly sincere in the opinion he was expressing. I could not help thinking that if the hon. Member had been Foreign Secretary, or could have breathed his spirit into Lord Salisbury, the ascerbity of feeling and harsh language that has been employed by his Lordship in his despatches would have been spared us, and that we should also have been spared the soreness which exists in Portugal, and the discredit which attaches to this country throughout the whole Continent of Europe. ["No, no!"] I hear an hon. Member say "No;" I shall be very glad if any Member of the Government will undertake to disprove this. I shall be glad to learn that anywhere in any part of Europe any one country can be referred to where anything has been said or written—which can be regarded as coming from a serious source—in favour of the course which this country has pursued. The hon. Member for Salford said that our conduct towards Portugal has lost us the sympathy of the lesser Powers; but I go further, and assert that, judging from the general tone of the Continental Press, and from correspondence which I have received from foreign organisations and public men who have for years given practical proofs of their deep sympathy with, and admiration for, this country, I am warranted in concluding that we have not only alienated from ourselves the sympathy of the lesser, but also of the greater Powers of Europe. As the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton is not to be pressed to a Division, all we can can do is to lift up our voices in hopes that the Government will reconsider their course. I greatly regret the lampoons which have appeared in our so-called comic papers, and also the exaggerated sensational writings in the newspapers. We have witnessed the evil of this with regard to the Sister Isle. I have often been pained by the scandalous cartoons in some of our papers in reference to Ireland; and it is a regrettable thing that our newspapers, in their desire for sensational matter, often magnify news of an infinitesimally small character into a matter of the utmost importance—a

course which frequently leads to strife and bloodshed. I remember a few years ago seeing in Paris a large gathering of men in the Place d' l'Opera, the majority of whom were simply looking on wondering, like myself, what was the matter. A body of police was also present, and I was told by some onlookers there was a demonstration of Anarchists. I asked where, but no one could answer my question. Nothing took place beyond what I describe, and yet, two days afterwards, I read in the English newspapers that terrible riots had taken place in Paris on the occasion, and that shops had been broken into and sacked. This shows the way in which Continental events are magnified in the English Press. Well, I heartily endorse the expression of regret given utterance to by the hon. Member for Salford at the language which the Press has employed upon the difficulties between ourselves and Portugal. The hon. Member went on to say that he should be glad if even at the eleventh hour the Government could see their way clear to meeting the sentimental aspirations of the Portuguese. The hon. Member is an authority upon this matter. He was born in Portugal, and has lived there a great part of his life, and upon this question his opinion is entitled to serious consideration. Reading between the lines of the hon. Member's speech, I feel sure that he, like many other hon. Members amongst whom he sits, would be glad if the Government could see their way to modify the feeling which has arisen in Portugal in consequence of the language used by Lord Salisbury in some of his despatches. I think the Government could do that and relieve itself from this difficulty by referring the matter in dispute either to a friendly Power or to a body of arbitrators. It would then rid itself of the obloquy which it has incurred, and shift the responsibility for the solution of the problem from its own to other shoulders. This dispute appears to have arisen from two great causes. Those who have watched the course of events have seen from what has taken place, and what seems likely to take place for some time, that in Africa there is a race for commercial supremacy. England, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, and other European Powers, are trying to get hold of as much of the Continent of Africa as they can, each hoping to secure new markets for their manufactures. That, undoubtedly, is one source of strife, but I am not clear that even if we succeeded in getting hold of the whole of that Continent that the game would be worth the candle, and that we should not find we had possessed ourselves of another white elephant such as we have in the case of India. Then, we have another element of strife, namely, the missionaries, who have been referred to in friendly terms by the hon. Member for Northampton. I have no doubt but that, in the main, their objects are praiseworthy; but we know that they sometimes do a little trading on their own account, and here we have another element of strife. But is it possible, under the circumstances, to employ mediation to settle the disputes which have arisen? I frankly admit that there is a great deal of difficulty surrounding it, inasmuch as most of the great European Powers are engaged in this struggle, and it would, therefore, be difficult to find an impartial mediator. But admitting that difficulty, is it not possible that the differences in dispute could be settled in some other way. I agree with the hon. Member for Northampton that if ever there was a case in which arbitration should be employed it is the present dispute with Portugal. Nations, like individuals, are bad judges of their own quarrels. In this instance, I believe justice to be on the side of this country; but that, to my mind, is an additional reson why we should be magnanimous and offer to refer this dispute to arbitration. If, as Lord Salisbury said, Portugal has put herself out of court, by making war while negotiations were going on, the fact would tell against her before any body of arbitrators. There must be other reasons why Lord Salisbury declined arbitration. I asked yesterday why Her Majesty's Government declined to accept arbitration, and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, replying to me in a somewhat supercilious manner, said the Government would not accept arbitration, and a lusty cheer went up from the Benches opposite, hon. Members in that quarter of the House being evidently glad to hear that this equitable principle was not to be applied to the settlement of the ques-

tion. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary said to-night that arbitration was not to be prescribed in all cases, any more than one medicine could be applied in all cases to the cure of influenza or any other disease. It is easy for the Under Secretary to sneer at arbitration as a universal panacea, but what is the cure which Her Majesty's Government invariably prescribe for difficulties of this kind? Why, they have only one remedy which they have been prescribing for generations past — not arbitration, but force. They never attempt any other, and when they are invited to apply a more humane, economical, and God-like remedy they ridicule us and say, "You are always proposing one remedy." Let me just remind them that their universal panacea which has so disastrously failed all along the line has cost this country, since 1688, nearly 7,000,000,000 of money. I fully admit the difficulty of finding an impartial mediator, and there will always be a difficulty in improvising a peaceful tribunal after a dispute has arisen, but if the Government has any desire to refer the dispute to arbitration, the difficulty is not insurmountable, and I would suggest that such a tribunal can be founded on the lines of the Supreme Court at Washington. Whatever objection may be taken here or elsewhere on the score of corruption in the United States, and the principle of electing Magistrates, it is an extraordinary thing that you cannot find a man from one end of the continent of America to the other who has one word to say in disparagement of the Supreme Court at Washington. Is it, I ask, impossible for the statesmen of Europe to-day to imitate the example set at Washington? Could we not have a tribunal of that kind by inviting two or three of the Governments of Europe to constitute it out of the Judges of their Supreme Courts? They are men likely to be free from party prejudices and religious bigotry, or any other kind of bias, and who could be trusted to deliver a righteous verdict. I would, even at the eleventh hour, ask the Government to be magnanimous enough to admit that there are two sides to this question; and that, as Portugal thinks there is something to be said on her behalf, this country will be willing to submit the question in dispute to arbitration. In doing that, Her Majesty's Government will earn not only the gratitude of this country, but the admiration of the whole world. And now I want to refer to the speech made by the hon. Member for North Islington, in reference to an agitation which he says has been stirring up strife during the Recess and doing much mischief. I think he pointed to the small wing of the Radical Party, to which I have the honour to belong, as being the chief sinners—the vile agitators who have done so much harm. The hon. Member suggested that they should do something by way of social reform. It is extraordinary that we all seem to be catching the spirit of social reform. Agitators may be, and no doubt are, very dangerous people; but somehow the Government, or the supporters of the Government, have caught the spirit of the agitators, and are now pressing the very points they formerly denounced the agitators for. The hon. Member approves of the principle of profit sharing. We must be getting on when an hon. Member of the House who sits upon the opposite Benches denounce some of us as violent agitators and then finishes his speech by recommending the Government of Great Britain to introduce into all the Government Departments the principle of profit sharing. That is very much akin to Socialism, and if it exists on the Benches opposite what can be expected from the Radicals on this side of the House? I cannot help thinking that the speech of the hon. Member must have been delivered more from a party standpoint than from any other cause. Last year when I tried to put an end to what I have termed sweating in Government offices, the hon. Member for North Islington not only voted against me but spoke against me. His conversion, therefore, must have been exceedingly rapid. But whether it is rapid or otherwise, I congratulate the hon. Member and other hon. Members opposite upon the expressions of sympathy they have uttered in regard to the condition of the toiling masses of our country. I have not much faith in sudden conversions, but time will show whether they are sincere and likely to be lasting. In conclusion, I hope the Government will carefully weigh what I have said in regard to the

dispute with Portugal, and that they may be able to see their way clear to act in a magnanimous spirit towards that little Power—in the same spirit, for instance, in which they would have acted towards France, the United States of America, or Germany. I put it to the House whether, if the question in dispute had been between either of those countries or any other strong Power, the Government would not have listened to a proposal to have referred it to arbitration.

*MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I am exceedingly sorry that not one of the 16 or 17 Cabinet Ministers has found it convenient to be present during the important speech just delivered by my hon. Friend (Mr. Cremer). Whatever may be thought about his views on the question of peace and international arbitration, undoubtedly they are shared by an enormous mass of people throughout the country, and are therefore deserving of more respect than they received at the hands of the Government. Now the only remark I have to offer with regard to foreign affairs is that, in discussing the affairs of our African and other possessions to which missionaries have gone with the highest and noblest intentions, we should be careful if one or other missionary has committed mistakes, not to condemn that whole band of noble men on that account. The work of Dr. Livingstone, for instance, is a work unexampled in the history of the world, and I only refer to the subject in order that we may avoid as far as we can any general condemnation of such worthy and valuable citizens of our country, and one of the most remarkable examples of good work of these men is in the case of the Fiji Islands, a work of which all civilized people must be proud. I desire now to express the pleasure with which I heard the announcement in the Speech that the Government intend to apply themselves thoroughly to the solution of the difficulty connected with the employers' liability for injuries to workmen. I can promise Her Majesty's Government that if their measure turns out to have been conceived in a large and liberal spirit, and is framed upon bold and just lines, no Member of the House will give them more hearty support in passing the measure into law than myself. The hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) complained of the absence in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech of any reference to factory inspection. We are fully aware that the Report of the Sweating Commission has not yet been presented, but that is no reason why Her Majesty's Government should not have sufficiently made up their minds as to announce in the Speech that they are prepared to propose legislation on the subject during the present Session. No matter what the Report of the Commission may be, all the world knows from the evidence given before it, and from other evidence, that there is a dire necessity for an increase in the number of Factory and Workshop Inspectors, as well as for an increase in the power of such Inspectors. As regards many of the Metropolitan industries, I doubt very much whether much light has been thrown upon the subject in addition to that given from year to year by at least one of Her Majesty's Factory Inspectors, Mr. Lakeman. I hope that before the general discussion closes we may have some assurance from the Government that if they are not prepared to legislate themselves they will give such assistance to any measure brought in by a private Member as will deal effectually with the great and crying evil of sweating. I should not have addressed the House further had it not been for the extraordinary speech delivered by the hon. Member for North Islington. The hon. Member commenced a great attack upon what he called the agitator of the Metropolis, who created hopes in the minds of a great number of people, hopes which had no chance whatever of being realised, and then he himself took up the position of agitator and proposed a scheme which, if he has the intelligence which ordinary persons possess, he must know is utterly impossible of realisation. The hon. Member denounced all men who endeavour to better the position of the labouring people; then he proceeded to denounce in mild terms Her Majesty's Government because they do not propose a large scheme for division of the profit made in the Government yards. One could not help imagining

that the hon. Member was entering into a competition with some of the men he had just been denouncing. He seemed to be in favour of everything in general, but nothing in particular. He did not tell us where the profits are made, and I am unaware of any part of Government work which makes much profit except the General Post Office. The mode of agitation adopted by the hon. Member will only create hopes which can never be fulfilled, cannot be too strongly condemned by Members of this House. In conclusion, let me say I trust the Government will introduce their promised Employers' Liability Bill at such a period of the Session as to allow ample time for its consideration, and again I promise the Government that if the measure is conceived in a large and liberal spirit, I and those with whom I act will most heartily co-operate with them in passing the measure into law as rapidly as may seem expedient and just to those concerned.

*Mr. SALT (Stafford): I quite agree that debates upon Her Majesty's Gracious Speech are not very desirable, and especially when very prolonged. Therefore I shall only say a few words upon two points that I desire to raise. I think the present Gracious Speech from Her Majesty contains more matter of public interest than any Speech from the Throne that I ever remember to have heard, and I hope, therefore, the Government will be careful so to arrange the various measures and matters referred to that they may have full and careful consideration. I wish to urge on the Government the desirability of one Bill they specially and prominently mention in the Speech being passed this Session. I refer to the Tithes Bill. For two or three Sessions we have had the Tithes Bill before the House in the most inconvenient form. Last Session it was brought before the House insuch confusion and tangle that I am hardly exaggerating when I say the friends of the Ministry were asked in the afternoon to vote one way and in the evening to vote another way. I trust the Government will make up their minds what the Bill is that they ought to propose to the House, and resolutely determine to abide by their proposals. I do not speak of the subject from an ecclesiastical point of view. This is a great business matter; it concerns property and the managers of property; it concerns what is in a sense a tax upon the people, and a tax which may well be considered at this time in its form and incidence. At the present time tithe is inconvenient to those who pay and also to those who receive. Therefore it is upon pure business grounds that this matter should be resolutely and finally settled. The other day the First Lord of the Treasury stated that he considered that the tithe rent charge of this country was National property. I do not wish to go into the question at length now, but I am bound to tell the right hon. Gentleman that that is a proposition which is absolutely disputed. I do not mean to say that those who oppose his view may not fall in with a proposal for a large re-arrangement of tithe, but I hold that the statement that tithe is National property in the ordinary sense of the term is a statement which cannot be justified, either legally or historically.

*Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea): I listened to the speech of the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) with considerable interest, and I am bound to say I disagree very generally with him. But as my hon. Friends the Members for Haggerston (Mr. Cremer) and Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) have replied to the parts I disagree with, I only desire to say a word as to the point on which I agree with the hon. Gentleman. Great changes have taken place recently in the labour world, and we find that large numbers of men are dissatisfied with their condition. The working people see that, although there is a large increase in the wealth of the country, very little of it reaches their hands. I do not hide from myself the fact that these men are becoming more intelligent, as they are better educated. I do not think things can go on very long as at present, and I agree with the hon. Member for North Islington that profit sharing is the best remedy for strikes. I think we have now commenced profit sharing, but there are many difficulties in the way of its general success. Perhaps one of the

greatest difficulties is that, for one or two years when things are prosperous, men get large amounts by way of profits, and then a depression comes, the men get nothing by way of profits, and there is a great deal of heart-burning. Still, I see many advantages in profit sharing, and I do believe that at the present time too much of the profit made does go to the capitalist and too little to the labourer. The hon. Member for North Islington has recommended a Committee or a Commission of inquiry into the whole question of capital and labour, but I do not think that a Committee of the House of Commons is the best means of conducting such an inquiry. There are many men outside this House whom it would be most desirable to have taking part in such a proceeding, and I hope that at least half of the Commissioners would be representatives of labour from all parts of the United Kingdom. With a Commission so composed, I believe very valuable information could be collected, and I can speak as one who has taken a great deal of interest in the subject, and not without some success, for the last 25 years. But from a Committee exclusively composed of Members of the House of Commons I can anticipate nothing but failure in the object we seek to attain. Not that I have any distrust of the honour and honesty of Members of the House of Commons, but I doubt if they would have qualifications for the duty entrusted to them. I passed a good many hours in the Sweating Committee, and I could not help feeling it was a great misfortune that only one class of people was represented on that Committee, and I was struck with the want of knowledge some noble Lords displayed. However, we shall have the Report in a few days, with, I have no doubt, much valuable information. For my part, I attach the greatest possible importance to bringing every possible kind of manufacture under the jurisdiction of the Factory Inspector. It is among the smaller employers that the most mischief is done. You do not often find the large employers of labour using the sweating system. The hon. Member for Haggerston, with whom I generally agree on questions of International arbitration, was rather hard, I thought, upon Missionaries. Now, I have seen these men in most parts of the world, and believe that on the whole they are an exceedingly good body of men. They suffer many hardships, living, as they do, remote from civilization, or in society from which they can derive little pleasure, and I believe that nowhere in the world is such good work done by Missionaries as in Africa. In old and settled countries with a civilization older than our own, such as India and China, their efforts meet with little success. I remember once in Foo-Chow being introduced to a Church of England clergyman, and he admitted that in that town of a million men he had not made a single convert, and this he largely attributed to the wickedness of the British merchants there. I did not agree with my reverend friend on that point, for I found our merchants there as good as they are anywhere else, and, indeed, perhaps rather better. He went on to say that if I went up country I should find that Missionaries had had considerable success. But in Africa, where the natives have no kind of religion we may say, or only of a most brutalising kind, there is a good field for Missionary work, not only in teaching Christianity, but in setting good examples and spreading the blessings of civilization and education. In this connection I might mention the names of Livingstone and many other distinguished men. I hope some Member of the Government will tell us they will take into consideration the question of appointing a Capital and Labour Commission. Such an appointment might lead to very good results, and could do no possible harm, I think.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. Member for Stafford in the opinion that discussions upon the Queen's Speech should be brief, especially when, as he admits, this Speech is of a most important and interesting character. I think myself it should be carefully considered by paragraphs; and I am now going to confine myself to the paragraph having reference to our relations with Portugal. And here I must say that I do not think ministers are justified in putting into he Queen's mouth a totally in-

correct account of what has happened in Africa. The Portuguese are said to have withdrawn at the request of Her Majesty's Government; but if the correct account were given it would run somewhat thus:—"I had a trifling difference with an ancient and a faithful ally about the navigation of the Zambesi; and I, taking advantage of a collision between some armed Portuguese and some half-drunken natives, concentrated a strong naval force, overawed my ancient ally, and Portugal had to give in to my claims." That would be a truthful account of the matter. The supposed insult to the British flag has been put forward in an unfairly prominent way. Of course every civilised nation pays respect to the flag of another nation when hoisted in a proper and legitimate manner; it is a point of international propriety, and naturally the honour of a nation is touched if its flag is improperly hauled down or lightly dealt with. But the fact in this case is that the flag was forced upon some native chief, who thought it would be a protection and keep away the Portuguese. This is to be gathered from Acting-Consul Buchanan's account. The man was so ignorant that the flag was hoisted in the wrong place and left to itself, when some wandering Zulus, probably attached to the Portuguese expedition, came across the flag and took possession of it. There was a Portuguese official order that the British flag was to be treated with every respect, as no doubt it was, and it is far from the truth to say an insult was offered to the flag. It is a mere pretext, as anyone who reads the correspondence will see: the real question was the navigation of the Zambesi. I do not wish to go at length into these African rights. I understand the position to a certain extent: Portugal has ancient rights which may have lapsed in course of time because she has not gone on enforcing them, while we have taken more trouble and maintained our Protectorate over a number of drunken natives. We have it on Consular authority that on the occasion of this collision the natives were more or less under the influence of liquor, and to this, as much as any other cause, the collision was due. I do not say we have not cause for remonstrance on the question of the navigation of the Zambesi, but I say we have not taken the proper means to convince Portugal of our substantial rights. I quite understand why we should endeavour to open up this channel for our commerce. We might have had recourse to arbitration. That is a new-fangled idea, and may be valuable sometimes, though I have doubts of its efficacy in the long run. I dare say nations will sometimes submit their claims for arbitration, but I believe that if nations are dissatisfied with the award of the arbitrators they will go to war all the same. But I think, Gentlemen, means might have been used to convince Portugal. If we had had discussions here and in the Portuguese Parliament, I believe the people in five or six months would have tolerably understood the rights of the question and have arrived at a compromise. Instead of that, Lord Salisbury, intoxicated with the knowledge of the number of ships we were able to muster at the last Naval Review, took the opportunity of coercing Portugal, which, though a brave, is a much weaker Power, and had to yield. Such a course of conduct would not have been prudent had we to do with Russia or any strong Power. We punish Portugal for being our ally. Portugal has been more associated in arms with England than any other country during the last hundred years. You cannot open a chapter of Napier's History of the Peninsular War without finding the courage of the Portuguese soldiers acknowledged. They were willing to obey British officers, and fought bravely by the side of English and Irish troops, and drove Napoleon's best troops out of Spain. We have done much to forfeit the alliance. While I was in the Mediterranean, it was always accepted that though Spain was more or less our enemy, Portugal was our constant ally, and the Tagus would always be our base of operations. But now we take advantage of our first difference to upset this alliance, though I hope that when the Portuguese people find it is not the English people but the

Colonel Nolan

Government which has exhibited this violent method of enforcing commercial rights, friendly relations will be resumed. Lord Salisbury plunged into this business with a light heart, but I think it shows the inexpediency of one man combining the offices of Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, for I do not believe that two Ministers of high position would have been found in agreement in such a blunder. The Under Secretary ably expresses the views of Lord Salisbury, but I do not think he would have taken this course had he been in the Cabinet. See what a difficulty we should be in if Portugal had been in alliance with any great Power. But since 1807, when Wellesley's troops landed at Lisbon, Portugal has relied solely on the English Alliance. The fact is, this action may exercise a powerful influence in bringing about a union between Portugal and Spain. Now Lord Palmerston pointed out that it was only by maintaining Portugal in its separate existence that we could be sure of having the Tagus as a friendly instead of a hostile naval station. Every military man knows what an enormous loss we should sustain if Portugal were to become hostile to us. The whole trade of the Mediterranean would then be lost to us in the event of war. This is what Lord Salisbury is driving us to, and therefore I, in common with many Members on this side of the House, am anxious to dissociate myself from the insult to Portugal which has been perpetrated by Her Majesty's Government.

*MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Although some of my hon. Friends have criticised with some severity the action of the Government towards Portugal, there does not seem to be any substantial difference of opinion in regard to the ultimate merits of the case. I cannot, however, help joining in the expressions of regret with reference to this difference with Portugal. Portugal is a small country, proud of the glories of its past, and sensitive as to its position. Its people have many fine and attractive qualities. Having spent a considerable time among them, I can bear testimony to the friendliness which up to now has existed in the minds of the Portuguese towards England, and I entertain a warm hope that nothing further will occur to prevent a renewal of cordial relations between the two countries. When we look at the substance of this matter, the case of this country is exceedingly strong; and, in fact when the Portuguese case is looked into, it proves to be utterly unsubstantial. Consequently I do not think we have any reason in this country to feel qualms of conscience in regard to the position which we have taken up. There are really only two questions to be considered. One is what the manner of Her Majesty's Government has been in conducting the negotiations, and the other is whether we were bound to accept the arbitration which Portugal at one time suggested. It appears to me that when Her Majesty's Government, in July, 1888, received notice of departure from Portugal of an expedition, which obviously had certain ulterior designs, they ought to have lost no time in warning the Portuguese Government of the consequences which military action, or an attempt to annex, might involve. This they do not seem to have done until the following December. Since 1887 there had been a dispute between this country and Portugal as to their rights in Mashonaland. When the dispute first arose, if Portugal had proposed mediation it would have been an unfriendly act on the part of Her Majesty's Government to refuse it. But Portugal made no such proposal at that time. She seems to have endeavoured to anticipate the result of friendly negotiations by taking the law into her own hands. It was not possible for this country to acquiesce in proceedings of this kind; nor would acquiescence have been of good augury for the future, since it would have encouraged others to grasp at possession, and then try to protect their possession by invoking mediation. I listened with great interest to the speech in which my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch put his case

with great earnestness. We all respect the conscientious way in which he has continued to advocate for many years the valuable principle of arbitration, but in this case Portugal acted in a way to make the application of that principle impossible, for it was not until she had altered the *status quo* and put this country into the position of being obliged to demand the withdrawal of the troops who were carrying on hostilities in territory which we claim as subject to our influence that she made the suggestion for arbitration. I confess that, regretting as I do sincerely the excitement which has been raised in Portugal, I cannot help feeling that a firm and prompt course was probably in the end the best. We must not complain of the Government for having acted with firmness, but the case did not call for satire and scorn such as the Foreign Secretary indulged in. It is a little exasperating to a man knocked down by superior force to be also overwhelmed by the resources of satire. We all know the powers which our Foreign Secretary possesses in that line; we all know the great gifts in sarcasm of the noble Marquess, gifts which have been brought to high perfection by practice in journalism; but I cannot but regret their exercise on this occasion, and hope that in future the literary man will not forget the dignity and reserve which befit a Foreign Secretary.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*Mr. BRYCE: There is one other point to which I wish to refer. My hon. Friend the Member for Salford, in a speech with the general tenour of which I cordially agree, referred in somewhat disparaging terms to the conduct of our Consul at Oporto. I confess to thinking that my hon. Friend is entirely mistaken in the censure which I understood him to convey, and I regret he should have gone out of his way to reflect upon an official whose conduct has not deserved any criticism of the kind, and who is one of the most competent of our representatives abroad. I am glad that the Under Secretary for the Colonies proposes to lay Papers on the table with respect to the Charter granted to the South African Company. But it would be better that Papers should be presented before the grant of such a Charter rather than after, and I hope the Government will give the House an early opportunity of discussing its policy. The Under Secretary of State has passed without notice the question of Samoa. The Gracious Speech contains a congratulatory reference to the result attained: and with that result we are all well pleased. But the Government is not entitled to any credit in the matter. This question came up last Session. We appealed to the House on behalf of the people of Samoa and Malietoa the king of their choice. We pointed out how harshly and unjustly he had been treated by the representative of Germany. A very unsatisfactory defence was put forward on behalf of the Foreign Office. In point of fact, British interests in that part of the world have been neglected by the present Government, and it has been left to the United States to take up the case of Malietoa, to address effective remonstrances against the high-handed proceedings of the German Government, and to bring about the present satisfactory settlement. I will not now go fully into the case so well stated by my hon. Friend the Member for the Rye Division of Suffolk. Papers were issued last August on the subject of Armenia, and I should like to know to what later date the promised further Papers go.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The Papers go down to January 24 of the present year.

*Mr. BRYCE: We have had no Papers for the period between 1881 and 1888, which were years of great importance, and for these we must continue to press. The Papers already published amply justify the charges which have been repeatedly brought from these benches against the Turkish Government, and I hope the Foreign Office will make no attempt to minimise the gravity of the situation, which is menacing to peace, and is not unlikely to lead either to an insurrection of the suffering people or to intervention on the part of Russia. I trust the Government and the House will pay heed to the valuable Reports of

our Consuls, which fully disclose the perils of the present situation in that part of the world. Now, Mr. Speaker, a very important statement fell from the Under Secretary which, so far as I know, is quite new. He disclaimed all responsibility for the Anglo-Turkish Convention, which he described as now being a dead document.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: What I said was that the special responsibility which would have been assumed in respect of that Convention had been dormant in consequence of the non-fulfilment of the conditions attached to its performance.

*MR. BRYCE: I know that by the Convention of 1878 the Turkish Government undertook to introduce certain reforms, and that our engagements were conditional on that being done. But that was not the whole of the Convention. It also contained a provision under which this country occupies the Island of Cyprus, and it is under the Convention that we get our only title to the island I always held that the Cyprus Convention was a great mistake, and I confess I was glad to hear the important announcement the Under Secretary made. I remembered the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when the Convention was first announced, pronouncing it an "insane Covenant," and, indeed, no more reckless or misguided engagement has been contracted in our time. I am glad to hear that the liability of the country under it has lapsed.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: What I said was that Turkey not having fulfilled certain provisions, our special responsibility had not come into force.

*MR. BRYCE: The House heard what was said: and it seems to me that I have correctly stated the meaning and effect of the statement of the Under Secretary. Reference has been made to the mock trial of Moussa Bey. I shall not go into that, as the Government has assured us that there is reason to believe he will be put on his trial a second time. But the responsibility of the Government will by no means come to an end with the second trial, or even with the exile or other punishment of Moussa Bey. Crimes and outrages similar to those of which Moussa Bey was guilty are going on at this moment in Armenia. It is to be feared, unless exemplary punishment is inflicted on these ruffians, that very serious disturbances, perhaps armed insurrection, will follow. We are glad that Sir William White is exerting himself, and we trust he warns the Sultan of the consequences, which even his quondam apologists in the German Press have begun to perceive, which will follow a denial and prostitution of justice in cases like that of Moussa Bey. There is another quarter in which the peace of the East is gravely threatened. I need not now inquire into the origin of the recent conflicts in Crete; but I must indicate to the House how menacing the position has become. The Turkish soldiery in Crete have been guilty of disgraceful excesses, which have provoked reprisals from the Christian population. Feeling on both sides is very bitter; and the perverse folly of the Turkish Government by its recent firman cancelling no small part of the autonomy which Crete has enjoyed for the last 11 years, has further incensed the bulk of the Cretan population. Hostilities will probably be resumed as soon as the snow melts on the mountains; bands of sympathizing volunteers from Greece will join the bands of warlike Spaliots now preparing themselves for the conflict; and the Hellenic Government may find itself unable to restrain the ardour of its subjects. Mr. Tricoupis, who is one of the ablest and most resolute, as he is one of the most high-minded statesmen in Europe, has done his utmost to prevent the outbreak of war between his own country and the Turks. But Greek passion, and the blindness of the Sultan's advisers, may be too much for him. If the contest is renewed. Sebdin Bey is shewing himself an apt imitator of Mussa Bey in Crete; if it provokes a

war between Greece and the Turks, the whole inflammable materials in the East will be set on fire. We know very well the feeling of Crete as to re-union with the Greek State, and there is no one in this House who does not feel certain that Crete will sooner or later become a part of the Greek Kingdom. That being so, the duty of friendly Powers, and not least of Britain, is to endeavour to procure, if possible, the speedy and peaceable cession of Crete, and if that be impossible, the full restoration of Cretan autonomy and a complete amnesty to those concerned in the recent troubles. If war were to break out between Greece and Turkey—and the whole East is honeycombed with the materials for insurrection—we cannot tell how far it may spread, or who will be drawn into it. I therefore desire to impress on Her Majesty's Government the duty which devolves upon them to take measures of pacification with regard to Crete. If the Sultan does not withdraw the firman recently promulgated, there is too much reason to believe that the contest will be the prelude to a general European war. It is because in this country we have a most earnest desire to avert such a calamity that we beg the Government to use its utmost influence to awaken the Porte and its advisers to a sense of their duty.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): As several questions have been raised during this debate affecting the Department for which I am responsible, I think it would be discourteous on my part if I were not at once to answer them. The hon. Member for Northampton has said that in answering certain questions which were put to me last Session with reference to the concessions granted by Lobengula and other chiefs, that I replied that the Government were entirely adverse to these concessions and utterly disapproved of them. He seemed to imply that we had power to annul them, but we have no such power as he suggests. In answer to questions on this subject, put by the hon. Member himself on the 2nd and 5th April last, I stated that the declaration of British influence does not enable Her Majesty's Government to control the grant of concessions by the chiefs; and, further, I pointed out that they could not advise Lobengula to break any concession already granted, though they might advise him to modify it. Again, on the 2nd April, I stated that—

> "It appears to Her Majesty's Government that the best mode of putting an end to all exclusive and competing concessions in that part of South Africa which is under British influence may be by uniting all valid concessions under one control, subject to important modifications—as, for example, the supply of arms—and also to take such restrictions as may fully secure the interests of the natives and all other legitimate claims."

The concessionaires came to an agreement among themselves by which their various interests were merged into one company. It was then that they applied to the Government to grant them a charter, and it was only after Her Majesty's Government had satisfied themselves that the company so organised was really a responsible company that they consented to grant a Charter. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has said that this Charter was kept entirely secret, but that was not the case, for the House will probably remember that in the course of last Session when a question was put to me upon the subject by the hon. Baronet the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), I informed him that it was intended by the Government to grant a Charter to the company. Since then the Charter has been published in the *Gazette* in its entirety, and it will be presented to Parliament together with the Papers I am about to lay upon the Table of the House. The hon. Member for Northampton seemed to think that previous to the signing of the Charter the Government ought to have obtained the consent of Parliament; but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that there was nothing at all extraordinary in the course we adopted. This will be seen by the instance I am about to quote. In November, 1880, a charter was granted to the North Borneo Company. Parliament was not then sitting, and notwithstanding that strong remonstrances were put forward by the Government of the Netherlands,

and objection was also taken by the Governments of Spain and the United States, together with the fact that Parliament had not previously been consulted on the matter, the Charter was granted. I may add that the rights of those persons who are not concessionaires have been carefully safeguarded in the Charter by Article 2, which says—

"The Company is hereby authorized and empowered to hold, use and retain for the purposes of the Company, and on the terms of this our Charter, the full benefit of the concessions and agreements made as aforesaid, so far as they are valid or any of them, and all interests, authorities and powers comprised or referred to in the said concessions and agreements, Provided always that nothing herein contained shall prejudice or affect any other valid and subsisting concessions or agreements which may have been made by any of the chiefs or tribes aforesaid."

The hon. Baronet the Member for the Lichfield Division (Sir John Swinburne), who raised this question at the end of last Session, maintained that the Charter had been passed so rapidly that the claims of certain persons, including himself, had not been recognised; but in order that there should not be the slightest plea of injustice put forward we inserted the following provision in the Charter:—

"Nothing herein contained shall prejudice or affect certain concessions granted in and subsequent to the year 1880 relating to the territory usually known as the district of the Tati."

I should not have thought it worth while to allude to one argument urged by the hon. Member for Northampton had he not made it the ground of a somewhat strong charge. He stated that the Duke of Fife, the Duke of Abercorn, and others had very largely profited by the sale of the shares of the company. The hon. Member in making this charge must have been unaware that there has been no allotment of shares to the public, no official quotation on the Stock Exchange, and that, as I am given to understand, there is an agreement entered into by the Directors that no shares shall be sold or transferred before the expiration of two years after the granting of the Charter. Therefore it is absurd to say that any person could have derived a source of profit from speculating in these shares. The hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) has altogether deprecated the formation of these Chartered Companies. He asserted that they involved this country in great responsibilities, and that they were very prejudicial to the interests of all parties concerned. I do not think it necessary at this late hour to go through all the arguments used by the hon. Member; but I think he can hardly have studied the Charter itself, otherwise he must have seen that under that Charter the South African Company were likely to bring about results conducive to a very decided improvement in the condition of the native population. The Charter requires that the Company shall to the best of its ability discourage and, so far as might be practicable, abolish by degrees any system of slave trade or domestic servitude in its territories; that it should regulate the traffic in spirits and other intoxicating liquors, and as far as practicable prevent the sale of any spirits or other intoxicating liquor to the natives; that the company as such, and its officers as such, should not in any way interfere with the religion of the people, except so far as might be necessary in the interests of humanity; and that in the administration of justice careful regard should always be had to the native customs and laws of the tribes to which the parties respectively belong, especially with reference to the holding of land and other rights of property. I think it will be seen that these provisions afford satisfactory evidence of the enormous civilising influence which this Charter must exercise over the vast territory to be administered by the Company. Besides all this, hon. Gentlemen who have put forward objections to the Charter can hardly have been aware that the Company is at the present moment doing much to open up our portion of the South African territory; for they are spending out of their own pockets a sum of about £60,000 in the formation of a telegraph line, and are also about to construct at their own expense a railway into British Bechuanaland, many miles of which have already been made. In addition to all this they are also organising and contributing to the establishment in their midst of a body of police charged with the maintenance of law and order.

I wish, however, to state distinctly in this connection that the grant of the Charter and any proceedings under it do not involve a withdrawal of the British Protectorate which is being, and will be, fully maintained under the High Commissioner. In my opinion, and looking at the results that have been achieved by other companies through the granting of similar Charters, and the opening out of vast dominions, which have been of the greatest value to the British Empire, there is every hope that the granting of a Charter to the British South African Company will lead to equally successful consequences. A question has been addressed to me with regardto Swaziland. The House is aware that Her Majesty's Government some time ago sent out Sir Francis De Winton as a Special Commissioner for the purpose of consulting with the Transvaal Commissioners, with a view of ascertaining and suggesting what measures might best be taken for the better government of that part of the country. Sir F. De Winton has returned to England and made his Report; but although that Report may have been delivered to-day at the Colonial Office the Government have not yet had time to consider it, and it would, under those circumstances, be improper for me to offer any opinion upon the matter. I may, however, be permitted to say that from the action of the Transvaal Government we have every reason to believe that they are, to the full, as sincerely anxious as we are in the desire to arrive at an equitable settlement which shall maintain and strengthen the friendly relations which now exist between the two countries. With this assurance I think the House will for the present be satisfied. At any rate, it is impossible for me to attempt to discuss questions, the details of which, up to this moment, I have not had the opportunity of studying, and which, from the gravity and importance of the issues at stake, deserve the fullest and most serious consideration at the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I desire to offer a few observations with reference to our colonies; but in so doing I have nothing to put forward that may be regarded as being of an unfriendly character, for I am bound to acknowledge that, so far, there has constantly been evidence on the part of Lord Knutsford of a very genuine desire to promote the prosperity of the colonies. But before entering upon that portion of the subject, I should like for a few moments to refer to the question of our recent dispute with Portugal. As an Irish Member I suppose I ought to claim indulgence in referring to matters of high Imperial concern, inasmuch as the party to which I belong has been accused of holding particular views with reference to the maintenance of the Empire. I must, however, say, and I say it distinctly, that I am very glad of the decisive step that has been taken, although possibly not for the same reasons that may actuate the minds of other hon. Gentlemen. I do not take the ground that it may possibly be conducive to British interests, which may constitute high and patriotic motives in the minds of many hon. Gentlemen. In my opinion, it is a matter of great importance that England should assume the protectorate of the Shiré and Nyassaland with a view of the better carrying out the policy she has so long pursued in the direction of the abolition and suppression of the Slave Trade. It was scarcely worthy of the reputation of England to indulge, with respect to a nation that has been humiliated, in small and petty gibes and sneers. I believe, however, that had right hon. Gentlemen opposite not been in power, the step would have been taken in the same way by some other Government. But I would point out that the whole transaction was begun, continued, and ended between the 16th of December and the 1st or 2nd day of February, by Lord Salisbury alone. No Cabinet Council sat between those dates. I do hon. Gentlemen opposite the credit

though I am often in conflict with them, of believing that they would not be parties to making a subject of wit and sneers of a nation which had been trying to assert its ancient historic rights in respect of dominions which it had in the past. An observation of a somewhat singular character has been let fall in regard to missionaries. There are bad and inferior men to be found in all bodies; but, as a whole, the missionaries are a splendid class of men, displaying the highest devotion. Missionaries who have obtained the highest distinctions at the Universities, and the equal of political Ministers in attainments, have gone to Africa at a salary of £20 a year. Such men are the promoters of the prosperity of the subject race among whom they live; it is they who lay the foundations of civilisation. Wherever Christianity goes slavery ceases. Slavery is the open sore of Africa, and it has been described as the "heart disease" of that country. It is because I believe Christianity will stop slavery in Africa that I am glad the English Government is there, though I am very sorry because of the means. Well, Sir, one word, and only one word on the subject of India. I regret very much that there was no mention in the Gracious Speech of the Indian question. I saw with great gratification in a forecast given in the newspapers of the Speech that there was to be some legislation in regard to India. I hope that is so. I certainly thought that, having regard to what has taken place, that some mention might have been made, some word of sympathy spoken, to no fewer than 250,000,000 of people, in respect of whom it has been said that one single vote put into the ballot-box here is an act carrying with it more power than is possessed by the whole 250,000,000 of people. Let me present very humbly three facts—I do not wish to trespass on the time and attention of the House—which probably are well-known to the Under Secretary of State (Sir John Gorst), who will, doubtless, during the coming year take them to heart. The right hon. Gentleman knows, first af all, that the famine is a national institution, that there is a famine fund provided by the Government—famine not being an exceptional thing, but a matter about which the Government must take actual steps year by year. I ask him during his year of office to rectify such a shocking state of things. In one year alone—1877—more people died of actual hunger in India and in our dominions than the entire population of this enormous place. There are material ways in which we could assist that people. It has been computed that if you merely supplied the material to furnish one article of clothing for each of our fellow-subjects in India, it would take 100 miles of cloth to be distributed on one day during the entire year. The income of a native Indian is miserably small, and it is for the right hon. Gentleman, with his ability and power, to endeavour to rectify and remedy the condition of the inhabitants of our Indian dominions. I would like to contrast the imports of India with the imports of the Australian Federation. The imports in the Australian Federation are at the rate of from £14 to £15 per head of the population. The imports of India amount only to 1s. 6d. per head of the population. What an enormous development would take place in our industries if we could increase our exports to that portion of our Empire! I will not do more than barely touch upon these points, but the facts ought to be known. The great efforts of Lord Macaulay, 50 years ago, have done good. That agitation is now largely in progress in India. I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will not consider, during his term of office, some means of promoting the interest of the people of India by enabling them in some measure to control their own affairs, and by endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of that vast population. I was glad to see that the Speech took favourable notice of the subject of the Federation of Australasia, but I would urge upon the Colonial Office the desirability of extending the principle of self government still further amongst the colonies. Going from a Crown to a self-governing colony, one is struck by the

enormous change which is wrought by the spirit of independence. There are groups of colonies which are eminently suited for self government. In the Colony of the Falkland Islands self government would be a blessing to it, and a benefit to ourselves. The colonies under Responsible Government comprise 8½ millions, and the colonies governed by the Colonial Office comprise 7½ millions of population. The colonies under Responsible Government are of temperate climate, and the European population predominate — the great majority being English and Irish; and, of course, some Germans. The Crown Colonies comprise 7 millions, 175,000, or 2½ per cent., being Europeans. The Falkland Islands are well worthy the attention of the House. The colony now comprises 1,583 villages. I have received from some of the colonists piteous complaints of the petty despotism from which they are suffering. They have no power of helping themselves, no representative Government, and the Council of the Governor can simply do anything they choose. This state of things should not exist in an ordinary Crown Colony, much less in a colony composed of our own kith and kin, who leave this country as freemen. I hope the Government will take steps in South Africa and Eastern Africa to extirpate the curse of slavery. I trust the Under Secretary will do his best to ameliorate the condition of the millions entrusted to his charge, for his power for good or evil in this part of the world is great. Let him take into his favourable consideration the condition of the people in the Falkland Islands, so as to remove the wrong under a sense of which they are labouring.

*Sir R. N. FOWLER (City): I wish to make only one observation, and that is in regard to what fell from the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), whom I am sorry not to see in his place. I did not hear his speech, but he is reported to have said, speaking of Portugal, that Her Majesty's Government had taken advantage of a weak Power, and acted towards it in a way in which they would not have done towards a strong one. I wish to state to the House that Lord Salisbury said to a deputation on this subject which I attended very largely composed of Scotchmen, both hon. Members and others from that country that the great difficulty he was labouring under was that he could not deal with Portugal, a weak Power, in the way he would have dealt with a strong one. I rise simply to say that the hon. Members' remark was quite unjustifiable, Her Majesty's Government having arrived at their decision in regard to this Portuguese difficulty with great reluctance.

*Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N. West): There is a pleasing air of concord and agreement hanging over the first day or two of the present Session of the House of Commons. It is a little dull while it lasts and it is fortunate that it does not continue for long. Not infrequently it is my unfortunate task to break in on the concord of the House with a discordant note. I compassionate the Government on having such an indiscreet supporter as the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) has proved himself to be, for he has forced me on my feet to repel charges levelled at myself and fellow-workers in regard to our public action. He alone is to blame for any observations that may be addressed to him in reference to his speech—for I presume I am in order in following him into his somewhat discursive remarks upon the Dock Strike. Her Majesty's Government has grasped fully that something must be done in the way of labour legislation, as is proved by sub-head 15 in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech—by which I understand that Her Majesty's Government intend to introduce measures dealing with the working classes and the health of the Metropolis. In the face of this I will not comment at any length on the extreme undesirability of indulging in a

tirade against the working classes of the Metropolis in general as was done by the hon. Member for North Islington. One would think listening to the hon. Member that the dock strike was a thing which redounded greatly to the discredit of the working classes of this country, that it had been arranged and carried on by some sort of secret tribunal, that the speeches of the men who addressed large crowds on Tower Hill and at other places were calculated to disturb the peace of the Metropolis, and that the swelling of capital and the quantity of tonnage that comes into the Port of London year by year are the only questions the Government will look to in approaching these great labour and social difficulties. The hon. Member, in my opinion, made every effort to embitter the relations between capitalists and working men. In my opinion nothing is required to embitter these relations, certainly not a speech of the tenour of that we have been listening to. I believe that the interests of capitalists and labour are diametrically opposite, and the breach between them cannot be bridged over by any rosewater process of profit-sharing. Bogus schemes like that recently propounded by Mr. Livesey for the purpose of breaking up a combination of workmen never can do good. It is not for me to point out the danger of fostering a feeling among the working classes that they are being cheated and deluded by schemes of that kind. There are not wanting men who, for their own aims, are going about advocating these things every day. But in my opinion something can be done to avoid a repetition of the troubles which have lately occurred, and that is in the direction pointed out by the Emperor of Germany and the Swiss Government, that of calling an International Conference to discuss these matters from an International standpoint.

*MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a short time ago made a remark which struck me very forcibly, in which he described the magistrates and judges of Crete as "partizans." I wondered whilst the right hon. Gentleman was speaking whether he had any idea that that observation would apply equally to the position of judges and magistrates in Ireland. Everyone I am sure listened with attention to the interesting speech of the hon. Member for Salford, and I myself noticed with interest one remark he made touching the discovery by Major Serpa Pinto, of the Geographical Society of London. I doubt whether on the whole we can congratulate the Geographical Society on that discovery. But paragraph 10 of the reply to the Queen's Speech interests me more than any other paragraph in the document, for it refers to a continued improvement in the state of things in Ireland. Well, it appears to me that the most striking facts in Ireland at the present moment are to be found in the fact that part of the town of Tipperary is to-day in a heap of ruins owing to the action of a certain Member of this House; that the Olphert, Massarene, Clanricarde, Kenmare, Luggacurren, and other estates are to-day a scene of waste and desolation. We find also that there is occupation for the British troops and the Irish police at the present time in marching from village to village, carrying in their train battering rams and petroleum cans for the destruction of the houses of the people, In other countries it is understood that the duty of the Government is to protect the people, but in Ireland the one duty the Government devote themselves to is the destruction and extermination of the people. Perhaps the word "improvement" in the Address is meant to convey the success of the present policy of the Prime Minister, that it means part of the 20 years of unbridled tyranny in Ireland to carry out which policy the noble Lord sent his nephew to Ireland. We all know the first outcome of the Chief Secretary's policy was the telegram sent from Dublin Castle to the police at Youghal, ordering them "not to hesitate to shoot," and we know what has been the results of that policy. First we saw the young man O'Hanlan lose his life in Youghal, and then we know that, emboldened with the impunity with which that Act was committed, the police soon

afterwards took three lives at Mitchelstown, and I suppose that altogether eight or ten lives have been lost in Ireland in that way, no attempt having been made by the Government to bring the perpetrators of the outrages to justice. I should like to know how it is possible for some gentlemen to talk so much about "law and order" in Ireland, and how they can upbraid the people for want of respect for it, when we find that the Chief Secretary himself is mostly responsible for the murders which have taken place in Ireland through his myrmidons. We know how forged letters were published deliberately for the purpose of assisting the Government in obtaining the Coercion Act. We do not know if the Government have any responsibility for those forgeries, but we do know that they were employed in their service. We know how the pledges made by the Government when that Act was passed have been broken. We know that the Chief Secretary declared that the Act would not be used against the Press, and that it would not be used against his political opponents, and that there would be an appeal in every case. Well, what were the first uses to which the right hon. Gentleman put his Coercion Act? As regards the Press, he attacked under the Act the then Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), Mr. Walsh, Mr. Alderman Hooper, Mr. Hayden, the proprietor of the *Cork Examiner*, a gentleman associated with the *Leinster Leader*, and others, as well as several newsvendors. These attacks on the Press are going on still in face of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the Coercion Act would not be used against it. Then, the right hon. Gentleman declared that the Act would not be put in operation against his political opponents, but in face of that declaration we have the fact that the Members for North-East Cork, East Mayo, East Galway, Mid Cork, Monaghan, South Tipperary, Kildare, and Kerry, and several other Members of this House have been proceeded against, and have been sent to prison, some of them repeatedly. As to the pledge that there should be an appeal in every case, there is hardly any necessity to dwell on the point. Everybody knows how flagrantly it has been broken. Another element, probably of the improvement of Ireland, was the arrest of Father M'Fadden at Gweedore, in a way that would not, I believe, have been attempted in any other country in the world. We know what followed that outrage. We remember the trials at Maryborough and how the juries were packed. We can calculate with good certainty what would have happened if there had not been in the Court-house visitors from various parts of Great Britain. We verily believe that if these visitors had not been there several innocent men would have been hanged as a result of the packing of the juries. We know that during the hearing of the appeal in one of the Gweedore cases, the late Attorney General for Ireland was censured by Chief Justice Morris for his conduct at the trial, and we know how the whole world was astonished when, soon after, Lord Chief Justice Morris having been promoted to the House of Lords, that Attorney General Peter O'Brien was put in his place as Lord Chief Justice. If the Sultan of Turkey had sent back Moussa Bey as Governor of Armenia, the outrage on the Armenian Christians would be something like what the Chief Secretary has done in Ireland by this appointment of Peter O'Brien. A greater scandal was never perpetrated. In the face of these things the Irish people are taunted with a want of respect for the Law. How can the people of Ireland respect the administration of the law by Peter O'Brien? Another incident in the improved condition of Ireland is the invention of the famous battering-ram of the Chief Secretary, and a further evidence of the good government under which we live is the shameful way in which a funeral procession in Tipperary was proclaimed as an illegal assembly. The Removable Magistrate thereby taking to himself power to disperse it by force of arms. The Chief Secretary boasted, towards the close of last Session, that large numbers of evicted farms were being taken. The right hon. Gentleman was asked to give some particulars as to this successful part of his policy; but singularly enough he replied that it would not be safe to give information, as if, indeed, it would be

possible for evicted farms to be taken without the people in the immediate neighbourhood knowing something about it. And surely if there could be danger in the facts being known, it would be in the near neighbourhood and not at a distance. This kind of evidence is on a par with a good deal of what was said at the time coercion was required for Ireland. We all remember how, in the last Parliament, the Liberal Government were compelled to relax the coercion which prevailed in Ireland at that time owing to the pressure of the Tories, and how the Tories had not been in office more than six months when they found that according to their own calculations coercion was urgently necessary. The only deduction is that either their action in compelling the Liberals to relax their coercion was not sincere or patriotic, or that the present Government's six months of office had such an injurious effect in Ireland as to make coercion necessary. In another paragraph of the Address proposals are made for increasing, under due financial precautions, the number of occupying owners. I protest against the present system of purchase in Ireland, for we find that under it Irish tenants are compelled to pay, by threats of eviction and other means, far more than they ought justly to be called upon to pay. In another paragraph a measure of local self-government for Ireland is promised. In face of the recent action of the Government that is a promise that we must look upon as very insincere indeed. One of the latest acts of the Government has been to suppress almost the only kind of local government at present existing in Ireland. We have also proposals for improving the material welfare of the poorer districts of Ireland; but taking all the circumstances of the present Government into consideration, we are bound to say we can have no confidence in anything this Government can undertake. Throughout its career it has shown itself quite unentitled to the confidence of the Irish people; and I certainly would not entrust the Government with the outlay of any money I could possibly withhold from them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned," —(*Mr. Richard Power.*)

Motion agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till to-morrow.

MOTIONS.

PLACES OF WORSHIP (SITES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Ellis, Bill to give further facilities for the acquisition of Sites for Places of Worship, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 115.]

PARISH CHURCHES BILL.

On Motion of Earl Compton, Bill to declare and enact the Law as to the rights of parishioners in respect of their Parish Churches, ordered to be brought in by Earl Compton, Mr. Alexander Hall, Colonel Hill, Mr. Morton, and Mr. Neville.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 116.]

SANITATION OF HOUSES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Sanitation of Houses, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Mark Stewart, Admiral Field, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Atherley-Jones, and Mr. Cuninghame Graham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 117.]

ST. GILES', EDINBURGH (RESTORATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mark Stewart, Bill to amend the Act in regard to the Restoration of St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mark Stewart and Mr. James Campbell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 118.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Fitzgerald, Bill to amend the Law relating to Municipal Franchise in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Flynn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 119.]

BUILDING FEUS AND LEASES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Donald Crawford, Bill to amend the Law relating to Feus and Leases for Building in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Philipps.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 120.]

ARCHITECTS REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Noble, Bill for the Registration of Architects, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Noble, Major-General Goldsworthy, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, and Mr. Hastings.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 121.]

DISPENSARY HOUSES (IRELAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to give further facilities for providing Dispensary Houses, &c., in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Sir James Corry, and Colonel Waring.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 122.]

NON-PAUPER SCHOOL FEES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Llewellyn, Bill to amend the Law relating to the payment of School Fees of Non-Paupers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Quilter, Mr. Howell, and Mr. Alfred Thomas.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 123.]

REGISTRATION OF CLUBS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Webster, Bill to provide for the Registration of Clubs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Webster, Mr. Caine, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie, and Mr. Gainsford Bruce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 124.]

DEVOLUTION OF ESTATES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Horace Davey, Bill to amend the Law relating to the devolution of real and personal estates, ordered to be brought in by Sir Horace Davey, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, and Mr. Haldane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 125.]

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill to amend the Act of the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years of the reign of Queen Victoria, chapter ninety-one, entitled "An Act to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other Governing Bodies in certain cases," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 126.]

COUNTY COUNCILLORS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Acland, Bill to provide for the payment of the Travelling Expenses of County Councillors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Asquith, and Sir Edward Gray.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 127.]

MAINTENANCE OF DESTITUTE PARENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gainsford Bruce, Bill to amend the Law relating to the means of compelling persons to maintain their destitute parents, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gainsford Bruce, Mr. Gully, Mr. Dugdale, and Mr. Lockwood

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 128.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (IRELAND) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Bill to amend the Law with regard to Tithe Rent-Charge in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Captain M'Calmont, Mr. Smith-Barry, and Colonel Saunderson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 129.]

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill for Industrial Agricultural Education in Public Elementary Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Howell, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. George Dixon, Mr. Robert Reid, and Major Rasch.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 130.]

SHOPS (WEEKLY HALF HOLIDAY) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to enable Local Authorities to establish a Weekly Half Holiday for Shops, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 131.]

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend the Metropolis Management and Building Acts, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Earl Compton, Mr. Lawson, and Captain Verney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 132.

THEATRES (LONDON) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to make better provision for the regulation of Theatres in London, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Earl Compton, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Lawson, and Captain Verney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 133.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 14th February, 1890.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. [No. 17.]

LARCENY ACT (1861) AMENDMENT (USE OF FIREARMS) BILL.

A Bill for the further security of the persons of Her Majesty's subjects from personal violence—was presented by the Earl of Milltown; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 18.)

SWEATING SYSTEM.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, I rise to move the re-appointment of the Select Committee upon the Sweating System. Your Lordships will remember that you appointed a Committee in March, 1888, to inquire into the Sweating System in the East-End of London. The Committee sat during that Session, during the Autumn Session, and also during last Session of Parliament. Your Committee ceased to take evidence on the 16th July, and on the 15th August met to consider their Report; but owing to the late period of the Session, and the short time that had elapsed since they had ceased to take evidence, the Committee did not think it advisable then to consider their Report. I therefore ask your Lordships to re-appoint the Committee to consider their Report. As I have had many inquiries made of me on the subject, perhaps I may be allowed to add that as the whole of the evidence and the Draft Report have been before your Lordships' Committee for six months, I should think that the sittings of the Committee need not be prolonged.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the evidence relating to the Sweating System in the United Kingdom, taken during the Sessions of 1888 and 1889, and to report thereon to the House."—The Lord Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl*).

Motion agreed to.

Then the Lords following were named of the Committee:—

L. Abp. Canterbury.	L. Foxford.
D. Norfolk (*E. Marshal.*)	(*E. Limerick.*)
E. Derby.	L. Kenry. (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)
E. Brownlow.	L. Sandhurst.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)	L. Rothschild.
L. Clinton.	L. Monkswell.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.	L. Thring.
	L. Basing.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman, and to meet on Tuesday next at half-past Three o'clock.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 14th February, 1890.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members:—Mr. Barclay, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Carew, Mr. Cubitt, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Halsey, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Mowbray, Colonel Nolan, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. Whitbread were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

SELECTION.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do consist of Ten Members:—Dr. Cameron, Lord Edward Cavendish, Mr. Cubitt, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Whitbread, and the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

EAST INDIA (CRAWFORD CASE).

Address for

"Return giving Copies of, or Extracts from, Correspondence with the Governments of India and Bombay as to the Mamlutdars incriminated in the Crawford Case."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

NEW WRIT.

For West Waterford, *v.* Jasper Douglas Pyne, Esq., deceased.—(*Mr. Richard Power.*)

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

James Parker Smith, Esq., for Lanarkshire (Partick Division).

MOTIONS.

SUPERANNUATIONS (OFFICERS OF COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Norris, Bill to enable County Councils to provide a fund, by deductions from salaries and wages of officers and servants in their employment, and to grant Superannuation Allowances therefrom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Norris, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Lawson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Jennings.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 134.]

POOR RATE (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pickersgill, Bill to equalise the Poor Rate over the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Lawson, and Mr. Beaufoy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 135.]

OFFICE UNDER THE CROWN (VACATION OF SEATS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Bill to amend the Law regarding the Vacation of Seats by Members of the Commons House of Parliament accepting Office under the Crown, ordered to be brought in by Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 136.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (QUALIFYING PERIOD) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Morton, Bill to amend the Law concerning qualifying period for Parliamentary Voters in the United Kingdom; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Morton, Captain Verney, Mr. Leng, and Mr. Pinkerton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 137.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill to consolidate, simplify, and amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 138.]

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend the Criminal Law, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Mr. Gane, and Mr. Hunter.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 139.]

QUESTIONS.

THE DOG-MUZZLING ORDER.

MR. HERBERT KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (N.E. Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether there has been an authentic case of rabies in East Kent during the last 12 months; if so, would he state where; and, if not, if he will now withdraw the Dog-Muzzling Order as far as regards that district?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): If the hon. Member's question applies strictly to East Kent, there has been no case of rabies in that division of the county, but there have been 39 outbreaks of rabies in the county as a whole. The disease has, unfortunately, been spreading from West to East for some time past, and some cases have occurred in West Kent so near the boundaries as to render it extremely inadvisable to withdraw the Order applying to East Kent. I regret exceedingly to have to impose an Order involving inconvenience and annoyance to anybody, but I hope that it will be necessary to enforce it for a limited period only.

*MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to state the nearest point in West Kent to East Kent where an outbreak has occurred?

MR. CHAPLIN: As far as I am informed the nearest point was within eight or ten miles of the Eastern division of the county.

*MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: Where? Can the right hon. Gentleman give the name of the place?

MR. CHAPLIN: I think it was Yalding, but I am speaking from memory only.

*MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: That is some miles away from East Kent.

IRELAND—PRISON DISCIPLINE.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it be true that the warders in Londonderry Prison are kept 16 hours per day on duty, and to keep watch during two nights every week; if it be true that the tradesmen

warders are kept marching prisoners in a ring whilst work and repairs are given to contract; and if the General Prisons Board will remedy the matter, if true?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The General Prisons Board report that the allegations in the first paragraph of this question are not true. Warders in Londonderry Prison are on duty only nine hours and 25 minutes per week day, with 3¼ hours evening duty twice in the week. Night guard comes only every fifth night. The warder is off duty for eight hours before going on night guard, and for seven hours upon coming off that guard. The Board also report that the allegation in the second paragraph is without foundation.

THE NAVAL ESTIMATES.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, considering that Vote 13 of the Naval Estimates (Admiralty Office) has been postponed during the last two years to so late a period that reasonable and proper discussion of it was out of the question, he will arrange to have that Vote taken early in the present Session?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): At this period of the Session it is quite impossible to give any undertaking as to the order in which the Navy Votes will be taken. I will, however, make a note of my hon. Friend's request, as I remember that he has twice postponed the observations he wished to make on this Vote to facilitate public business.

CLUB HOUSE LICENCES.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in framing his coming Budget, he will consider the propriety of charging licence duty to clubs on the same scale as that charged to hotels and public-houses at present licensed for the sale of intoxicating drinks?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Looking to the near approach of the Budget, I am bound to practise as much reticence with regard to the imposition of new taxes as I am obliged to observe with regard to the remission of taxation. The subject, however, has often occupied the Inland Revenue, and their attention has been particularly directed to it in connection with the spread of so-called "bogus" clubs.

MR. BIGGAR: May I ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the propriety of limiting the hours for the sale of intoxicating drinks in clubs to the hours allowable in hotels and ordinary public-houses; and if he is prepared to support the limitation, or will he attempt to carry it out by legislation?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am not prepared to introduce or to support legislation of the kind suggested by the hon. Member in the case of *bonâ fide* clubs. The existing law has enabled prosecutions to be instituted against so-called clubs, which are really unlicensed places for the sale of intoxicating liquors.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of proposed legislation for Western Australia, he will lay upon the Table of the House the "Notes and Statistics respecting the six land divisions of Western Australia, by the Hon. John Forrest, Commissioner of Crown Lands," "The Maps of Western Australia showing in yellow colour the area leased by the Crown for pastoral purposes on 31st December, 1888," and such other Papers as explain the land policy of Western Australia during the past 60 years?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Papers mentioned are included in the collection which was presented on Tuesday, and will be circulated on a very early day.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does that include the map?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I hope so.

SWAZILAND.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Report of Sir Francis de Winton, as Special Commissioner to inquire into the

affairs of Swaziland, has yet been received by Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether an opportunity will be afforded to the House for discussing it before its recommendations are acted upon?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Sir Francis de Winton has not yet completed his Report, which will be laid on the Table with other Papers in due course; but Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to postpone action upon it until after the subject has been discussed in Parliament.

ZULULAND—NATIVE CHIEFS.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when the official Report of the proceedings before the Special Commission at Etshowe, by which the Zulu chiefs and others were tried and sentenced, and other Papers, in continuation of the Blue Book C. 5522, will be presented to the House?

BARON H. DE WORMS: A voluminous paper, in continuation of C. 5522, was presented on Tuesday, and will be found to contain much matter connected with the proceedings of the Special Commission. The full record of the judgments, and the evidence is too bulky to be included in the Parliamentary Paper, but a large number of the volumes containing it has been placed in the Library for the use of Members.

POSTAGE OF NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENTS.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether there is a rule of the Post Office (dependent upon the Act of Parliament) whereby supplements of newspapers are required to be dated, as well as to bear the title of the paper in which they appear; whether he is aware such regulation acts as a great hardship upon such papers as the *Graphic*, inasmuch as it is necessary to print fine art supplements many months before publication, when it is impossible to fix the date with any guarantee that it may not have to be altered, and as this is impracticable it renders the supplement, prepared at great expense, valueless, as under this regulation it is not permitted, unless correctly dated, to pass through the post; and whether a proposal has been made to the Post Office that details of every supplement shall, as an alternative plan, be printed in some conspicuous position on the paper, apart from the supplement, and if so whether such proposal can be accepted?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The facts are as stated by my hon. Friend, and the hardship is one which I think should be remedied. This is not, however, possible without an alteration of the law, but I hope it may be possible to deal with the matter during the present Session.

YORK SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the final notice ordering the election of a School Board for York, in the event of accommodation for at least a thousand children not being provided, was issued on the 22nd May, 1888; whether the School Board was, in consequence, elected in February, 1889; whether he is aware that a letter containing the following words was written by the Education Department to the York School Board on the 26th April, 1889—

"I am directed to state that it will now be the duty of your Board to provide schools for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of accommodation set forth in the final notice. I am to request that this matter may be taken into consideration by your Board without delay, and that their proposals with regard to the provision of schools may be submitted for their Lordships' approval.

"Plans of any new buildings should be arranged in accordance with the enclosed building rules."

Whether such a direction and statement of duty constitutes a requisition under Section 10 of the Education Act of 1870: and whether any other requisition has been sent to the York School Board from the date of its election to the present day?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The right hon. Gentleman has correctly stated the facts, but such a letter as that quoted is not and has never since the passing of the Act of 1870 been deemed a requisition within the meaning of Section 10. No requisition has been sent to the York School Board.

MR. MUNDELLA: Then a letter was sent?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Yes.

THE VICTUALLING YARD, DEPTFORD.

MR. CHARLES DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether a petition from the *employés* of the Victualling Yard, Deptford, has been brought to his notice: and whether it is possible to grant to them the increase of pay which they request?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The petition in question has, I understand, been received and is under consideration.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN BILL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he can give an assurance that sufficient opportunity will be given for explaining and discussing the West Australian Bill before the House is asked to read it a second time, and that it will not be taken late at night?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Proper notice will be given, and due time allowed for discussion; but I hope that as it has been agreed, in accordance with the promise given last Session, that the Bill shall be referred to a Select Committee, where the question of the land which has excited so much interest in the House can be thoroughly considered—a lengthened discussion on the Second Reading may be found unnecessary.

THE PORTUGUESE IN EAST AFRICA.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1.) if he can say by whose decision the Papers regarding the Anglo-Portuguese difficulty in Africa were classed among the less important Papers which are not circulated to Members till applied for; (2.) whether, looking to the absence of any map to accompany these Papers, he will make accessible to Members some kind of map showing where the recent regrettable occurrence actually occurred; (3.) whether it is true, as asserted by the Portuguese, and apparently admitted by Acting-Consul Buchanan, that the collision between the forces of Major Pinto and the natives occurred south of the confluence of the Rivers Ruo and Shiré, a chief, called "Miauli," having there attacked the Portuguese contrary to the advice of the Acting Consul; and (4.) whether it has been ascertained that Major Pinto did afterwards cross the Ruo, and occupy the territory north of that river, in the neighbourhood of the British Settlements?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): (1.) The course taken was understood to be in accordance with the wishes of the House of Commons; 250 copies being supplied to the Vote Office. (2.) A map was sent to the library of the House yesterday. (3.) All the Reports respecting this engagement received are contained in the Papers laid. In the first serious conflict Miauli is said to have taken the offensive distinctly against the advice of the Acting Consul. It is not clear whether the action took place north or south of the Ruo, but it must have been in its immediate neighbourhood. I may thus have been in error last night in saying that the Portuguese force was within Makololo territory, though we believe that it was. The date of this affair was apparently November 8. It must be remembered that this was more than a fortnight after the Portuguese commander had, on October 26th, issued his declaration of war (No. 288 Printed Papers). (4.) There is no doubt whatever as to this fact, which is admitted on both sides.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the question: did Major Pinto cross the Ruo and occupy the territory north of that river?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes, Sir. At least, some of his forces did cross the river and occupied the country in the neighbourhood of the British Settlements.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain whether the engagement did take place on the north or on the south side of the river?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I will endeavour to ascertain.

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any Correspondence has passed between the Treasury and the London County Council on the subject of the

purchase of a site for offices for that body under the Act of last year; and, if so, whether he will lay the Correspondence upon the Table before sanctioning any expenditure?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): There has been no Correspondence between the Treasury and the London County Council on the subject of the purchase of a site for offices for the Council under the Act of last Session.

THE BEHRING SEA FISHERIES.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position of the negotiations with the United States Government with reference to the claims made by the Victorian Sealers on account of the seizure of their vessels in the Behring Sea; what representations have been made to the Russian Government on account of the similar seizure of the *Araunah*; and whether it is intended to present to Parliament any Papers relating to these matters?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As I have already stated, it would not be convenient to make statements with respect to the negotiations concerning seal fishing in the Behring Sea. Representations with regard to the case of the *Araunah* have been made to the Russian Government. As the reply of that Government was not considered satisfactory, further information has been called for from Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg. The case is not sufficiently advanced to make it desirable to lay Papers on the subject.

MR. S. HILL: When may we expect any definite information upon the matter? The negotiations have now been going on for a long time.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It is quite true that the negotiations have been going on for a long time; but the hon. Member must remember that they have reference, so far as Russia is concerned, to transactions which have taken place at a very great distance, and reference has to be made to it by the Government at St. Petersburg.

MR. S. HILL: My question related more particularly to the United States, and New York is not so far from England.

THE SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate when the Scotch Education Code for 1890 will be laid upon the Table in a condition capable of being sent out to be printed?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The Scotch Code was laid upon the Table of the House on Tuesday last in a complete and final form, and was sent for printing and distribution on the same day. Any delay which may occur is due solely to the work of printing and distribution, and does not rest with the Department in any way.

METROPOLITAN POLICE AND STRIKERS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the circumstances of the arrest of Mr. Tom Mann during the gas stokers' strikes; and whether he was removed by the police whilst endeavouring to preserve the public peace?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I am aware of the circumstances referred to, which occurred at Hay's Wharf, and not in connection with the gas strikes. The police were of opinion that Mr. Mann was creating an obstruction and causing a crowd to assemble. The magistrate, upon the evidence before him, was not satisfied that the prisoner was the cause of the crowd assembling, and dismissed the charge.

CHURCH REVENUES.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can inform the House what progress has been made with the Return of Church Revenues, ordered in 1888, on the Motion of the right honourable J. G. Hubbard, and when it is likely to be laid upon the Table?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners that very considerable progress has been made with the preparation of this Return, and the first portion will be ready for presentation about 1st June next.

THE INDIAN WORKS DEPARTMENT.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to a Despatch from the Government of India, dated 28th March, 1870, and signed by Lord Mayo, Sir William Mansfield, Sir Henry Durand, Sir John Strachey, Sir Richard Temple, and Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, which was understood to contain a passage to the following effect:—

"We shall be glad to see some plan adopted by which the furlough allowances of civil engineers shall be equalised with those of military officers in the Public Works Department, and so far as practicable their advantages of pension also,"

whether any, and what, steps have been taken to carry out this recommendation; and whether this Despatch, and other Papers relating to the furlough allowances and pensions of civil engineers in the Public Works Department of India, can be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The passage quoted is a correct extract from the Despatch, which is to be found in Parliamentary Paper No. 115 of 1871, with other Papers. The steps taken to carry out the recommendation, so far as has been found practicable, are stated in the correspondence published in Parliamentary Paper No. 439 of 1888.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Arising out of that answer, will my right hon. Friend inform the House whether any steps were subsequently taken; and, if so, with what result?

SIR J. GORST: Steps have been taken, but I am afraid I am not able without notice to describe them.

DEATH OF A PRISONER IN MANCHESTER.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will institute a searching inquiry by some impartial persons, other than the Prison Authorities, into the circumstances of the death of William Henry Gatcliffe, a prisoner who died in Strangeways Gaol, Manchester, in November last, and who was found to have his breast bone and six ribs broken; injuries which the local medical examiners declared to have been sustained within 48 hours of his decease?

MR. MATTHEWS: One of the warders was tried for the manslaughter of this prisoner and was acquitted. In the course of the trial all the circumstances attending the death of Gatcliffe were laid in evidence before the Court, and since then the whole matter, and the general administration of the prison by the local officers, have been carefully investigated by the Prison Commissioners; and I am satisfied that no further light can be thrown on this melancholy occurrence by any further inquiry.

*SIR R. FOWLER: Is it a fact that Captain Wilson, who was present at the trial on behalf of the Home Office, did not examine the medical man who conducted the *post mortem* examination?

MR. MATTHEWS: My hon. Friend must give notice of that question.

THE CORK BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is true that Major Kirkwood and Mr. Burke, Vice Guardians to the Cork Union, on Tuesday last, in revising the List for Outdoor Relief, in the majority of instances reduced the amounts at a rate varying from 25 to 60 per cent, also striking a considerable number off the list, and if it is correct that a large number of the poor so dealt with were widows, whose ages, as stated in the *Cork Press*, were from 55 to 80; and, whether, in view of the great poverty and distress at present prevailing in the City of Cork among the poor, a remonstrance will be forwarded to the Vice Guardians to prevent any further cutting down of the outdoor reliefs at this inclement season of the year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is the case that the Vice Guardians of Cork Union have, in the discharge of their duty, made a considerable reduction in the outdoor relief granted, having first satisfied themselves that this could properly be done. Upon taking over the management of the affairs of the Union, they found that outdoor relief had been administered by the late Board of Guardians in a lax and extravagant manner, resulting in a considerable loss to the ratepayers, the expenditure on outdoor relief having increased from £6,000 in 1879 to £16,700

in 1889. The reduction made by the Vice Guardians averages about 18 per cent.

DR. TANNER: Is it not the fact that outdoor relief was necessitated in consequence of the relief given in evicted districts?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I do not think that that is the fact.

MR. O'HEA (Donegal, W.): Has there not been an increase in the death-rate since the relief has been cut down?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of that question.

MR. O'HEA: I will give notice, then.

THE MAYOR OF CORK.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on Tuesday last, the 11th instant, at the Cork terminus of the Great Southern Western Railway, on the arrival of the 1.30 train from Mallow, Head Constable Cummins, of the Irish Police, forcibly prevented Mr. D. Horgan, Mayor of Cork, from speaking to Mr. Thomas Barry, Poor Law Guardian of Killaraller, who arrived by the said train, under escort, being a bail prisoner; whether it is a fact that the Head Constable, on being remonstrated with by the Mayor, stated he did so by authority, those being his orders; and by what authority, and by whose orders, did the policeman in question act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that a cordon of police was drawn around the prisoner to preserve order. Mr. Horgan endeavoured to force his arm through the cordon. The Head-constable kept the prisoner back. The orders referred to by the Head-constable are the ordinary orders of the force, and the practice on such occasions.

DR. TANNER: I must ask for the serious attention of the right hon. Gentleman to this matter. A great disturbance might have occurred in the City of Cork in consequence of the arrest of the Mayor.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to re-introduce the Statute Law Revision Bill of last Session; and, if so, whether it will be laid upon the Table of the House at a sufficiently early period of the Session to enable honourable Members to make themselves acquainted with its contents; and, whether, in view of the publication of a revised edition of the Statutes, steps will be taken to ensure the passing of such a measure early in the Session?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In answer to the hon. Member, I am instructed by the Lord Chancellor to say that he intends to introduce immediately so much of the Statute Law Revision Bill of last year as covers the ground necessary to enable the volume of the Revised Statutes now prepared for publication to be issued without further delay. This Bill will appear as soon as possible in the House of Commons, and Her Majesty's Government hope that it will be generally approved. A second Bill will follow as soon as possible, covering the ground of the other volumes which it is intended to publish during the year. I am not in a position to answer the last part of the question, as I need not remind the hon. Member that it relates to a matter which can only be dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the total cost which the Government propose the public should bear of the Special Commission, 1888; and at what time and in what manner will the sanction of the House be asked for a Vote for this sum?

*MR. JACKSON: I am not able to tell the hon. Gentleman what the total expenditure in connection with the Special Commission has been, because some of the bills have not yet been examined. As soon as I can I shall be glad to tell the hon. Gentleman. The answer to the latter part of the question would necessarily depend upon the answer to the earlier part, because if the provision made in the Vote proves to be not sufficient, a Supplementary Estimate will have to be introduced.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): May I ask whether the first Vote on Account will cover a portion of this expenditure?

*MR. JACKSON: No, Sir; the first Vote on Account will not cover any portion of it, supposing the provision already made was sufficient to meet it.

MR. J. MORLEY: May I ask the Home Secretary whether the evidence to which reference is made in the Report will be accessible to Members on application?

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot say without notice and inquiry; but I believe the volumes are ready in the Library of the House.

MR. J. MORLEY: But will a Member be able to get a set on application?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will make inquiry and let you know.

MR. PARNELL (Cork City): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what action Her Majesty's Government proposes to take with reference to the Report of the Special Commission appointed to inquire into the allegations made in *Parnellism and Crime*?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Report did not come into possession of Her Majesty's Government until last evening at 10 o'clock, and they have had no opportunity of considering or determining what course they should take upon it.

THE PAROCHIAL CHARITIES OF LONDON.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Council what is the present position of the schemes for the future application and management of the parochial charities of the City of London, under the Act of 1883, that is to say, how many of these schemes have been published, how many have been sent to the Education Department, and how many more remain to be published; whether the Commissioners can state what modifications, if any, they propose to introduce into the scheme constituting the new central governing body; and whether the Commissioners propose to lay before Parliament any Papers stating the grounds on which they have proceeded in passing these schemes, or otherwise relating to these schemes or any of them, including any particulars as to the income and expenditure of the existing institutions which the schemes propose to aid, and the cost of working their various departments and the number of persons attending the classes in such departments?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The number of schemes published by the Charity Commissioners under the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883, is nine, of which one—namely, that by which general provision is made for the application of the endowments belonging to the parishes comprised in the second schedule to that Act—has been submitted to the Education Department. The approximate number of further schemes, the publication of which, in order to complete the appropriation directed by the Act, is contemplated by the Commissioners, is 16. The scheme by which the new central governing body is constituted is that which has been submitted to the Education Department; the constitution of that body in the scheme so submitted differs from that provided in the scheme as published in several particulars, as appears from the submitted scheme. The grounds upon which the Commissioners have proceeded in framing the schemes which they have thus published are fully stated in their 36th Report (for 1888), pp. 35 to 56; but they will be ready, if required to do so, to lay before Parliament copies of certain replies which they have given to objections and suggestions made to them by public bodies and others in the result of the publication of the scheme which has been submitted to the Education Department.

*MR. BRYCE: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for what he has said as to giving us information. It is an offer which we appreciate very much. As to the last part of the question, if it is not convenient to answer it now, I trust it will be open for me to repeat it on a future day.

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Certainly.

MR. MUNDELLA: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us at this moment what is the present position of the Christ's Hospital Scheme?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me notice of that question?

FAIR RENT.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many applications to fix fair rent in the counties of Down and Antrim, respectively, remained undisposed of on 1st January last; how many of these were leasehold applications, and how many in respect of present tenancies; and what number of them were served in the Land Commission prior to the 1st January, 1888?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th February.]—[See page 128.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. PARNELL: In moving the Amendment to the Address, Sir, of which I have given notice, I wish in the first place to make some comparison between the general character and nature of the coercion of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the nature of the coercion which was used by the late Government during the Viceroyalty of Lord Spencer. I also wish to compare the offences with which the late Government had to deal and the offences with which the right hon. Gentleman has to deal; and I do this not for the purpose of going back unnecessarily into bygone times, but in order to show in its true light the nature of the action of the right hon. Gentleman, the pettiness of the prosecution which the agents of his Government daily inflict upon many persons, and the utter gratuitousness of very much of the coercive action which has distinguished the administration of the present Chief Secretary. Now, Sir, it is true that the Coercion Act which was administered by Lord Spencer contained provisions directly interfering with freedom of combination, freedom of speech, and so forth, and contained many such provisions. But there are material differences between the present Crimes Act and the Crimes Act of 1882 even in this particular; because charges involving the intrepretation of the law of conspiracy were carefully kept outside the summary jurisdiction clauses of the Act of 1882. Under the Act of 1887 we find that the interpretation of the law of conspiracy has been placed solely at the disposition of the removable magistrates in Ireland, and daily and weekly we have cases in which most delicate questions of conspiracy are interpreted by men who, from their very utterances, show themselves to be absolutely incapable of such a task. That appears to me to be one of the most important differences between the Summary Jurisdiction Clauses of the Act of 1882 and those of the present Act. But there was a wide difference—and a very much larger and greater difference—in the method of administration. I do not say that Lord Spencer's Government was entirely free from all attempts to use those provisions against freedom of speech, against the right of combination, and against the freedom of the Press; but those attempts were few in number, and they were not persisted in. The times, too, were very different. Lord Spencer had then to contend with a great and dangerous secret conspiracy, which was supposed to have burrowed even under the very foundations of the Castle. He had to contend with the calendar of crime which had accumulated during the winters of 1881 and 1882 to most appalling proportions. But the present administration of the right hon. Gentleman admittedly had no such crime to contend with. If ever infringements of freedom of speech, of the liberty of the Press, and of the right of combination were justifiable, they were justifiable in the time of panic, of dismay, and of uncertainty which the executive of Ireland had to go through during that period. But the administration of the right hon. Gentleman has not been attended by any such alarming symptoms. On the contrary, he found Ireland comparatively free from crime. But, with a fatuity which is extraordinary, and which would be incredible if it were not true, almost every Act of his administration seems to have been directed to drive the Irish people into that crime and disobedience to the law from which they have happily

been to a great extent free during the last few years. Now, Sir, we found fault strenuously with the administration of Lord Spencer; and I believe that we were justified in very much of our criticism. But as I have said, the main distinction between these two administrations is that in the former the action of the law was directed against actual crime and secret conspiracy, whereas in the latter the action of the law has been directed against the right of combination, the freedom of the Press, and the freedom of speech. And the excuse for this is boycotting and intimidation. I do not contend—and I have never contended since the commencement of the year 1881—that there has not been much unjustifiable and criminal boycotting in Ireland. And I do not now say that, if the right hon. Gentleman were afraid of a revival of the kind of boycotting which existed in the years 1880, 1881, and 1882, he would not be justified in many of the measures by which he has tried to enforce the summary jurisdiction clauses of the Crimes Act. But the right hon. Gentleman cannot plead any such excuse as that. He cannot plead that the boycotting of to-day is of the same criminal character and is attended, or has been attended, with the consequence of crime which attended certainly some, and perhaps much, of the boycotting of earlier periods. Now let me go further; and I will say that there has been a wide distinction between the kind and character of the boycotting in these last years and the kind and character of the boycotting of earlier years. I think—in fact I know—that we are entitled to claim this as regards the action of the two Irish organisations—first the Land League and next the National League. While there was undoubtedly—and I said this almost in the same words at the commencement of the year 1881, so that no one can say that I am cutting my coat to suit recent events—while there was undoubtedly much in the action of the Land League of 1880 to condemn, much regret to be expressed, many things left undone that ought to have been done, yet the history of our movement from that day to this has shown that the action of our organisation has been constantly modified and moderated in recognition of the efforts of the Legislature to pass ameliorative measures for Ireland. The National League of to-day is as widely different from the Land League of 1880 as any figure of speech, expressive of utter dissimilarity, could possibly convey. It should have been the duty of a statesman, of anyone with the instinct of a statesman, to note this change, and to have seen that in his administration he did not permit a movement which had so changed in its character to be treated in the same drastic way which might have been justifiable in its earlier stage. The right hon. Gentleman has not followed that course. On the contrary, the coercion of latter years, instead of being modified in its character, has increased, and become more bitter and more exasperating. The coercive legislation of Mr. Forster did not possess the cruel, malignant, and persecuting character of that of the right hon. Gentleman; and he has consequently lost the chance which might once have been his, and he is unable to-day to boast that his administration in Ireland has been less cruel and less coercive than that of any preceding Chief Secretary. He has lost the opportunity which, if he had been a statesman, he would have been glad to seize. The comparatively good times which have come to Ireland, the increase of prices owing to the improvement in the English trade, which has raised prices higher than at any period since 1878, gave the right hon. Gentleman this opportunity—gave him the opportunity for which the late Mr. Forster would have given his eyes—of relaxing the stringency of his administration in Ireland; for it is a notorious fact that whenever the Irish peasant, by the advent of a good season, is just able to pay his rent and to keep his head above water, he becomes peaceable undoubtedly and does pay his rent as long as he can, until another period of depression comes and brings about the situation in which he is utterly unable to meet the demands of his landlord. One of the curses and one of the most terrible mistakes of the action of Parliament has been that they do not take advantage of these good seasons to bring forward measures of amelioration while there is yet time, so as to provide for the bad times which must come again some day or other, and which, when they do come, will again plunge the country

into the same confusion and trouble followed by fresh coercive legislation. If you were wise now you would take advantage of the good times in Ireland permanently to reduce rents to such a level that tenants would be able to lay by some provision for bad years, which in the regular cycle come about. Of course, you will not do that. You will probably use these good seasons for the purpose of getting off to the British taxpayer the estates of the Irish landlords at an inflated and excessive valuation. I think I have shown practically that the coercion of the right hon. Gentleman, while he has not had to cope with secret conspiracy, has been directed against combination, against freedom of speech, and against the liberty of the Press. Let us take the case of the Press prosecutions in Ireland. They have been very numerous, far more numerous than the Press prosecutions during the years from 1879 to 1885 of the late Government. The Press prosecutions during the last two years, since the passing of the Coercion Act, have been far more numerous than all the Press prosecutions put together during the greater number of years I have just quoted. They have been, in every case except one, not for editorial comments, not for incitement to boycott, or to commit personal injury, or incitements which could in any sense be construed as incitements to outrage, but for such offences as reporting meetings of suppressed branches of the League—clearly a new offence, and an offence which would not be an offence if committed in England; reports of resolutions of branches of the League, suppressed or not suppressed; the reports of correspondents from other parts of the country with regard to events which had happened, or were happening, in the district; reports of opinions expressed by other persons, by correspondents in writing letters to the newspapers; but nothing connected with the direct action of the editor himself. These Press prosecutions have taken place in several counties, and it is remarkable that the counties which have been distinguished by the greater number of these prosecutions have been counties equally distinguished during the whole period since 1879 for the absence of crime and intimidation as compared with the rest of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has selected the most peaceable counties—not only the most peaceable now, but the counties in Ireland which have been always most peaceable, always most clear of outrage and intimidation—for the purpose of enforcing this most objectionable and obnoxious action against the freedom of the Press. There have been altogether, according to my information, within the last two years 18 Press prosecutions by the right hon. Gentleman. Four of these took place in counties which I cannot claim as having been amongst the most peaceable counties, although they were not counties distinguished for crimes and intimidation. These four prosecutions took place in the counties of Cork, Kerry, and Sligo. The remaining prosecutions took place in these counties—Wexford, 2; Queen's County, 2; Carlow, 1; Tipperary, 4; Waterford, 4; and Kildare, 1. If it had been a question of drawing up a list of counties which might fairly have been left outside any Coercion Act, it would have been permissible to include in the list the name of every one of these counties which I have just read out. I was hoping that I might have in my hand a list for the last 16 years of the crime in those counties, as compared with the crime and intimidation throughout Ireland generally. But I am only able to go back for a short period in the way of preparing an absolutely perfect and correct statement. However, I have been able to obtain for the year 1881 a total for all Ireland. I find that the total, exclusive of threatening letters, was 2,248. In the county of Wexford, one of the counties I have enumerated, the number of agrarian offences, exclusive of threatening letters, was 17; in Kildare, 9; in Waterford, 55; in Carlow, 11; in Tipperary, one of the largest counties in Ireland, 150; in Sligo, 63; in Queen's County, 68; and in Limerick, 163. For the nine counties then we have a total of 536 agrarian offences, including the largest county in Ireland, which counts as four; and for all Ireland a total of 2,248 agrarian offences. Now, I have gone back to 1881 in order to take an extreme case and one that was least in favour of my argument; but even then you will see from the figures I have read that these are amongst the most peaceable of the Irish counties. If

you except the county of Tipperary, you will find that the average of these counties, where Press prosecutions have been so numerous in the present year, is remarkably low as compared with the rest of Ireland. Take the case of Wexford, where we have two Press prosecutions; in the year 1889, exclusive of threatening letters, there were only six agrarian crimes. In Kildare, where we have one Press prosecution, there were only two cases of agrarian crime. In Waterford, where there were four prosecutions, there were only four agrarian offences; in Carlow, where there was one prosecution, there was only one agrarian offence; in Sligo, where there was one prosecution, there were ten agrarian offences. Now, Sir, my argument is that the condition of the districts should be taken into account, on the one hand by speakers, and on the other hand by Her Majesty's Government—that a public speaker addressing an audience in a disturbed district which has been remarkable for the prevalence of agrarian crime ought to be far more careful of what he says and of what he does than when he addresses an audience in a district where there has been little or no agrarian crime; and that speeches and appeals which would be permissible in the one case would not be permissible or judicious in the other case. But if public speakers are required to observe these points—and they may justly be required to do so—ought not the Government on their part to admit a corresponding obligation? Ought they not to recognise that the absence of crime in certain districts and counties—not merely the absence this year, but the notorious and remarkable absence during many years—ought they not to admit that such good conduct should cause them carefully to consider before they strike any blow against those great rights and privileges to which you in this country owe the foundation of your liberties? This is what I claim for the Irish people. I claim for them nothing more than you claim for yourselves in this country. If a district is unhappily given over to crime—and outrage, if you like—prohibit public speaking there. I do not say you would be justified in doing so, but I admit that there would be some excuse for you. But in the other counties of Ireland, which have been so remarkably free from disturbance and outrage, even in the worst years of the Land League, I submit that some recognition of the fact is due from the executive authority that the same measures should not be meted out to such localities as are meted out to the blood-stained districts of Kerry and Galway. Now, the Press has been attacked for trivial offences. As I have shown, it has been attacked in districts where there was no excuse, where it could not be claimed by the greatest stretch of imagination that either crime or intimidation was likely to result. Mr. T. D. Sullivan, the venerable and respected editor of the *Irish Nation* was in the earlier stages of this movement accused of an offence, was brought before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, and the magistrates were asked to inflict imprisonment upon him as a common felon. His offence was that he had published Reports of so-called suppressed branches of the National League. I believe one of his offences was publishing Reports of meetings that had not been proved to have been held at all. The Chief Secretary of Ireland, while stating in this House that the majority of the Reports of the meetings of suppressed branches were bogus Reports, was pursuing Irish editors for publishing these bogus Reports, and was insisting by his agents, the Crown prosecutors in the Irish Law Courts, that the mere fact of the meeting being published in the newspaper was evidence that it had taken place. And here I have to make a comment on a letter from the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which contains statements of a most misleading character, to put the matter in the mildest terms, with regard to his action in reference to these Press prosecutions. The right hon. Gentleman, through his private secretary, in a letter of January 24 mentioned the case of Mr. M'Inerney, which was the only one where intimidation is said to have been used against anybody, as illustrating the action of the Government. Now, Sir, a more unfounded statement was never made by an Irish Minister. I think the right hon. gentleman will not deny that, with the exception of one other case, there was no similar case to that of Mr. M'Inerney in the whole list of these so-called Press offences. In every other case the persons accused were charged with having published reports of suppressed branches, items of news, and, in one or two cases, letters from corres-

pondents giving accounts of occurrences in another part of the county. And, so far from its being possible to hold the editors of these publications personally responsible for any design of intimidation or illegality, the nature of the evidence given at the trial in each case showed that the charge of intimidation was only sustained by the exercise of the most constructive ingenuity on the part of the Crown prosecuting officials, and the utmost pliability on the part of the movable tools of the prosecution who pass sentences. Now, the nature of these Press offences, which I repeat were of a most frivolous character, is evident to the House; but in addition it was not proved, or sought to be proved, that in any one case crime, outrage, or intimidation was prevalent in the district, or that crime or outrage had resulted, or was likely to result, from the publication. But the same spirit marks the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman and his policy all through his administration. His administration of the Coercion Act and with regard to other cases has been an administration of petty persecution, of frivolous charges, of action taken in many cases against children, in some cases against old women, in other cases against little newsboys. The great campaign of the right hon. Gentleman against the Press commenced in 1887 by an attack against the street newsboys, and winds up in 1889 with a fusillade all along the line against the unfortunate editors, marking an advance and progress in administration to which I would commend the attention of the House. Then there are those other prosecutions. What were they for? They were either for exclusive dealing or for petty constructive acts of intimidation, or such offences as hooting against the police, groaning against Balfour, or lighting bonfires in the streets to celebrate the release of political prisoners. The fact of the matter is that the right hon. Gentleman is spoiling for a fight. He has no opportunity of exhibiting his greatness and his valour. He is circumscribed, he is cabined, cribbed, and confined by the peaceable disposition of the Irish, and by the entire absence of any provocation for the use of that abominable and nefarious Crimes Act, and he is obliged to invent offences; to go about like the traditional Irishman in Donnybrook, and exclaim, "Will nobody tread upon the tail of my coat?" And when some poor little urchin takes him at his word and smiles at him from behind the street corner, he rushes at him and knocks his brains out with a bludgeon or transfixes him with a bayonet. The offences where intimidation has been charged have been offences of exclusive dealing. We—my Colleagues and I—take our stand upon this. I have already spoken of the boycotting of 1880 and the earlier years of the movement. I admit that much of it, probably a great portion of it, was unjustifiable. We heard the speeches which were delivered in those days by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, the late Mr. Forster, the late Mr. Bright, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby on those Benches, and we strongly contested the action of the Government in those days, and we contested much of the material and drift of their speeches. But, at the same time, I felt, and I believe that many of my Colleagues felt with me, that their criticism of some of our action—sins, as I have said, of omission rather than of commission—was justifiable, and I hope that I profited by the lesson which was conveyed. I believe that the Irish movement from that day to this has profited by these criticisms, and we also felt that there was much that was justifiable in their criticism on the kind of boycotting which was going on in those days. But I recollect well that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when he was defending the introduction of that most unfortunate Act of Mr. Forster's, authorising the suspension of the *habeas corpus* in Ireland, said that it was not intended that this Act should be used against exclusive dealing. That is in my memory as one of the paragraphs of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. That appeared to me to draw a distinction—a justifiable and proper distinction—between boycotting or exclusive dealing not accompanied with intimidation, and boycotting accompanied with intimidation, and I have endeavoured to keep that in my mind ever since. I think that those who are responsible for the present agrarian movement in Ireland are entitled to claim that on the one hand they have kept the movement free from crime, and on the other hand they have purged the practice of boycotting

from vices which were attendant on the old system, and that, so far as boycotting has been carried out in Ireland, it has been the harmless and permissible practice of exclusive dealing—of saying, "I refuse to deal with you; I refuse to sell you goods." Most commonly that is spoken to the police, who are perfectly well able to take care of themselves and who cannot possibly suffer in fame, fortune, or reputation, or to the emergency men, who are always able to supply themselves with the articles they demand, but make a practice of going about to ask for things they do not want for the mere purpose of getting up prosecutions against unfortunate tradesmen. I do not, and I cannot, recognise anything criminal—it may be illegal under your Coercion Act—in such a practice. I do not believe that such a practice would be held to be illegal in England. I do not believe, if for political purposes a shopkeeper declined to sell goods on the ground of politics, that that person could be prosecuted for intimidation and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour. Such prosecutions as these are of common occurrence in Ireland—they are weekly, at times every day—and in the majority of cases in districts which, as I have said, are free from crime and have always been so. But the police go into shops and ask to be supplied with drink—probably they have had quite enough drink already—the shopkeeper refuses to supply them; he is at once arrested, and marched off to the police barracks and charged with intimidation, bail being refused. He is kept all night in barracks, and brought up in a fortnight or so before two removable magistrates, and frequently sentenced to six months' imprisonment on a plank bed. The same thing occurs with regard to the alleged boycotting at fairs. The offences are not sustained by any evidence. The fact that any accused person has stood near the cattle of a boycotted person and is alleged by the police to have nodded or winked, or "smiled a humbugging kind of a smile," is considered quite sufficient to subject him to a long term of imprisonment as a common felon. The records of your Summary Jurisdiction Courts teem with such cases, and I will take one or two examples. At Dungarvan an unfortunate Mr. Feeley was bound over to give bail to keep the peace, or in default to be imprisoned for a month, because he had stood near the cattle of a man named Walsh, who had taken his farm, and "nodded and looked determinedly" at two buyers. The boycotted person was proved to have been repeatedly fined for drunkenness and assault. Let me take another case of boycotting cattle and pigs in a fair. At a Coercion Court at Carrick-on-Suir a charge was made against the president and a member of the Rathcormack branch of the Land League for conspiring to induce persons unknown not to deal with one Edward Davis, who had exposed for sale a lamb and two pigs at the fair in July last. The lambs and pigs were, in fact, sold by Davis. All that was proved or alleged against the defendants was that they "looked, peeped, and finally smiled" at Davis. In cross-examination the constable defined the smile as a hostile smile; he also said it was a "humbugging" smile, such as was apparent in the face of the solicitor for the defendants at the moment of asking the question. The case was adjourned several times, and finally in December, three months after the prosecution was initiated, the Crown agent announced that the prosecution would not be persisted in "in consequence of a technical difficulty which had arisen." Those are two examples of the system adopted with regard to alleged boycotting of the sale of cattle and pigs at fairs. I maintain, even if these things were real and if they were done ever so often, that it is perfectly permissible according to any law to point out to buyers that they are doing an injury to the public interests and the future prospects of Ireland by encouraging the taking of evicted farms and by encouraging the stealing of the tenant right which was conferred by the Act of 1881, for the first time, upon Irish tenants, that such conduct is detrimental to public interests, and that they, as patriotic Irishmen, ought not to persist in it. The fact that charges of intimidation are fabricated upon evidence of such things, which, as I have suggested, might happen with propriety, upon the mere evidence of nods and smiles and winks, shows the demoralisation to which the right hon. Gentleman has reduced the administration of the law in Ireland.

I say further, that no English Government would have attempted for a single moment to interfere with the dockers in their recent strike in the manner in which Irish farmers, evicted Irish tenants, and officials of the National League have been weekly interfered with by the agents of the Government in Ireland. The English dockers were allowed to exhort and advise the blacklegs, in the hearing and under the very eyes of the police, that they were doing an unpatriotic thing and injuring the cause of their fellow-workmen in going in to take their places in the docks; and no English newspaper, from the *Times* downwards, dared to complain of such conduct. Why is the Irish tenant farmer to be prohibited from doing these things which are perfectly permissible and are done every day in trade disputes in England? We will look now at another class of prosecutions, not for exclusive dealing, but for petty offences which were of no account whatever, and to support which no evidence was brought forward. A number of cases were set down at Youghal Petty Sessions in connection with the celebration of the release of William O'Brien from Galway Gaol on December 20 last. The town was brilliantly illuminated on that occasion and tar-barrels blazed in every street. It was in connection with the tar-barrels that the prosecutions were instituted. The charge in every case was that the defendant "did make or assist in making a fire commonly called a bonfire." The District Inspector asked the Bench to deal very severely with the cases before them. The first case was against a widow named Mary Smith, who was seen by the police to throw oil into a tar-barrel. She did not deny it, and the Bench inflicted the maximum penalty of 10s., or imprisonment in default of paying the fine. Michael Leahy, who was described as "the leading figure of the night," and John Power, who was seen by the police to stoop over a lighted tar-barrel as if to make it burn better, were also fined 10s.; Patrick Bowland, who called a constable "bloodhound" and "Balfour," was for this crime ordered to find bail for his future good behaviour or go to gaol, and he chose the latter alternative, being thereupon promptly ushered into the dock. The other defendants refused to pay the penalties, and were escorted to gaol by a large crowd. The Inspector said several of the defendants were members of the Royal Naval Reserve, and he thought the matter should be reported to the authorities with a view to having their pay stopped, and the magistrate said he would report the matter. At Tipperary a Mr. Carew was summoned for kicking a bucket belonging to a boycotted person in the public streets. The case was dismissed on the ground that the occurrence was accidental, but on a second hearing the defendant was fined 10s. and costs. In the same town Miss Mary Quain was summoned for groaning at the police. Mr. Quain, her father, an auctioneer, who was present in Court, said he would not allow his daughter to attend. I think that in this conduct he showed not only his self-respect, but his courage and manhood. The Chairman said this was a most serious thing, and ordered the clerk to take a note of what Mr. Quain said. Mr. Quain said it was no use telling a lie; he was prepared to take the consequences, and the Chairman then ordered a warrant to issue for Miss Quain's arrest. Here is another petty prosecution for intimidation. Michael Griffin, secretary of a branch of the National League, was tried for intimidating Richard Haynes. It appeared that Griffin displayed in his shop window a cartoon published in *United Ireland* in which there was a pictorial representation of land-grabbers. The police-sergeant ordered him to take it down, which he refused to do, and a constable, on a favourable opportunity, went into the shop and stole the picture. [Mr. E. HARRINGTON: Law and order.] Haynes deposed that he was intimidated on several occasions by Griffin, who called him "a low, mean, land-grabber." Griffin's defence was that he was talking about the picture. Mr. Irwin sentenced him to two months' imprisonment with hard labour, and at the expiration of that sentence to find bail or in default to go to prison for a further period of two months. An appeal was lodged. This is one of the cases in which a system of cumulative punishments for the same offence has been adopted by those magistrates in Ireland. By a recent decision of the English Court for Crown Cases Reserved, it has been held that it is illegal for any

Court to punish a person twice for the same offence; yet it is the common and constant practice of those Irish magistrates to sentence a person to a term of imprisonment, and for the same offence and on the same evidence to order him to find bail for his good behaviour on the termination of his imprisonment, or to go to gaol for a further period. We claim that under the decision which has just been given these second sentences are absolutely illegal, but we have not been able to get the Irish Courts up to the present to hold them to be illegal. We believe, however, now, that the high authority of the decision in the English case will bind, not only the Irish removables, but the higher tribunals, such as the Court of Common Pleas and the Court of Exchequer, and that this abominable scandal and this illegal practice of inflicting a succession of punishments for the same offence will be put a stop to in Ireland. Now I come to a matter which is, perhaps, one of the most contemptible and cowardly things which has happened in Ireland in the shape of intimidation—or attempted intimidation, for it did not have its effect — by a Government official. It was a case where a number of persons were brought up before the magistrates for blowing horns. At the Petty Sessions charges were brought under the old Statute of Edward III. against two men to the effect that they were not of good fame; and that complaint had been made against them, that they were justly suspected of an intention to break the public peace and to cause annoyance to certain persons, that inasmuch as they did

"Take part with certain persons unknown in disturbing the public peace by blowing a horn, and did on the 21st November, at Tullamore, unlawfully disturb the public peace by blowing a horn, with the intention of causing an annoyance."

They were commanded to appear on December 6th, 1889, and state why they should not be required to enter into bail to be of good behaviour for such a period as the Justices shall seem fit, or in default to be imprisoned for such period as the presiding Justices shall judge. At the conclusion of the first case, when the magistrates retired, Mr. Braddell declined to adjudicate. After the decision was announced a scene of great excitement ensued, whereupon District Inspector Ball ordered the Court to be cleared. One of the defendants cried "God Save Ireland; blow the horn." The horn was blown in Court as a response. The District Inspector stated that it was the habit to set the children to blow horns; and I ask the particular attention of the House to this circumstance. Colonel Turner, one of the Divisional Commissioners for that part of Ireland, directed the Inspector to announce that there was power in the Act which would be put into force whereby the children for blowing those horns could be sent to a reformatory for terms of two to five years, the parents having to bear the cost of their maintenance. A voice cried, "Have courage boys;" one of the prisoners said, "God Save Ireland; blow the horn." Outside the Court the magistrates and police were treated to a serenade by the horn-blowers, and they were accompanied a considerable distance on their way home. The prisoners accused of blowing horns were sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and in addition to this Colonel Turner had the manliness to direct that the parents of the little children who had blown the horns should be threatened with the terrible fate of the imprisonment of their children in a reformatory for five years—a terrible fate both to the children and to the parents, and a use of the Reformatory Act which was never contemplated. Those little children thought that they were doing what was for the good of their country. It will not be pretended that they blew those horns on account of the natural depravity of disposition, or because they were fit inmates for a reformatory. They were the children of honest, respectable poor people in the neighbourhood; and yet those people were threatened with the most terrible deprivation which any parent can endure —the loss of their children and the burial of them in a reformatory. They were thus threatened by an officer who bore Her Majesty's Commission in the British Army. I stigmatise that conduct on the part of Colonel Turner as a cowardly and infamous act, as an action which threw discredit on the profession to which he belongs, on the cloth which he wears. It shows the

demoralisation which falls even on brave men when they are sent over to Ireland to carry out an infamous policy. Colonel Turner probably thought of the conduct of Gessler when he made Tell shoot an arrow at an apple placed on his son's head. He imitated as well as he could in a feeble and halting way, and as far as is permissible in these days, the conduct of that historic character; he hoped under the form of law to imitate at a long distance the conduct of the tyrant Gessler. I could go on for hours giving the House examples of this kind. I have searched the records of coercion. I have failed to find, either in the Parliamentary Returns or anywhere else, that crime exists or that intimidation exists. This action on the part of the Government is gratuitous. It will defeat its own ends. You have been favoured, as I have already shown, with considerable prosperity and with the return of better times in Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman has foolishly thrown away his advantage. He has deliberately adopted the policy of petty and systematic exasperation which in itself is all sufficient to avert the heart of the Irish people from any respect for the law or its administrators. I am glad that he has not succeeded in turning back the current of Irish freedom, that the Irish people have resolutely turned away from the commission of crime and actions which could not be defended, and that they have held fast by the rights of combination, that they have stood by freedom of speech, the liberty of the Press. I say to them, "Go on and prosper in that course; by persistence in bearing unmerited suffering you will gain for yourselves and for your country the great benefits upon which all our hearts are set." To the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in his noble conduct in laying aside office, power, and emoluments, to others who have given up their political life and political career while helping to secure this great justice to the Irish people—I say to them also, let them not lose courage. They have been richly rewarded in the changed attitude of Ireland; let them continue to the end in the confident belief that their reward will be permanent, that it will be one not only of changed attitude on the part of the Irish people, but that the reconciliation between the two nations will be perfected and completed, and that the strife of so many centuries will soon have been ended for ever. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

At end of paragraph 10, after the word "us," to insert the words: "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the happy growth of peaceful and amicable relations between the peoples of Ireland and of Great Britain has been grievously impeded by the unjust, exasperating, and futile administration not only of the exceptional repressive legislation of the year 1887, but of the ordinary Criminal Code by Her Majesty's Government; that notwithstanding the long-continued tranquillity of the Country, considerable sections of the Irish people are still harassed with invasions of their liberties and alienated from the Law by the conduct and character of many of its administrators, and large bodies of Irish tenants, whose sufferings brought about the Land Act of 1887, are debarred from the benefits of that Act, deprived of the right of combination and of public meeting, and subjected to wholesale eviction in the interest of landlord combinations, despite their repeatedly-expressed readiness to submit the justice of their claims to the judgment of any Court of Arbitration.

"And we humbly regret that Your Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne contains no proposals to remedy the legitimate discontent of the Irish people in those respects."—*(Mr. Parnell.)*

Question proposed, "That these words be there inserted."

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I think any one who compares the terms of the Amendment with the speech of the hon. Member for Cork must feel that there is a certain degree of disproportion between the two. The Amendment in its terms is as grave and serious an indictment, not only of the administration of the Criminal Law, but of the entire system of government in Ireland as could well be imagined. I would ask the House what portion of the Amendment has been even approached by the speech of the hon. Member? He has amused the House by reading extracts of cases. [*Dissent.*] Has he not amused the House? I mean that he has intentionally amused the House by giving instances of cases which he describes as trivial, such as lighting tar barrels, and sounding horns. But I do not find in the speech of the hon. Member, or of any Member who has yet addressed the House, any material on which he could found a serious indictment against the adminis-

tration of the law in Ireland. The hon. Member has, no doubt, referred to the administration of the Criminal Code in Ireland, but has he said a word which has any bearing upon such an important portion of his Amendment as this?—

"That, notwithstanding the long-continued tranquillity of the country, considerable sections of the Irish people are still harassed with invasions of their liberties and alienated from the law by the conduct and character of many of its administrators, and large bodies of Irish tenants, whose sufferings brought about the Land Act of 1887, are debarred from the benefits of that Act, deprived of the right of combination and of public meeting, and subjected to wholesale eviction in the interests of landlord combinations, despite their repeatedly expressed readiness to submit the justice of their claims to the Judgment of any Court of Arbitration."

Has the hon. Member even attempted to prove that allegation? Has he not left out everything having any reference to this portion of his indictment? With regard to what in Ireland is a matter of the gravest interest—the relations between landlord and tenant—there is not one single suggestion on the part of the hon. Member that those relations are not now comparaively satisfactory.

MR. PARNELL: The hon. and learned Gentleman will hear of that before the debate closes.

*MR. MADDEN: Well, having regard to the position of the hon. Gentleman, one would have expected that this portion of his indictment against the Government would have been, at all events, opened to the House. The hon. Gentleman commenced his speech by a comparison between the administration of the Crimes Act of 1882 and the Crimes Act of 1887 in Ireland; and he used the expression that "times were very different then." Well, times were different then in some respects. The administration of the law in the hands of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Balfour), has not now what the administration of the law in those days had—the support not only of the Government, but of the Opposition. That is one serious respect in which times differ. But so far as regards the attitude of the hon. Member and his friends towards the administration of the law, there is no change. I have refreshed my memory by reference to the debate which occurred on February 26th, 1883, when the hon. Member for Cork moved an Amendment to the Address, and in his speech I find adjectives as strong applied to the administration of the Act of 1882 as he applied to the administration of the Act of 1887 by my right hon. Friend. The hon. Gentleman called it not only "malignant," but "iniquitous" and "unjust." I find that the hon. Member also in his speech referred to two particulars in which the administration of the old Act was open to his attack, and in which he draws a favourable comparison between the administration of the Act of 1882 and of the Act of 1887. I took down the words of the hon. Member, and two of the particulars were freedom of the Press and the right of public meeting. I find in the hon. Member's speech then a complaint almost in the same terms of interference with freedom of the Press and the right of public meeting as he makes now.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: And combination.

*MR. MADDEN: But the powers of the Act of 1887 bear no comparison with the Act of 1882 in respect of interference with the liberty of the Press or the right of public meeting. The Act of 1882 contained very great powers prohibiting public meetings and of seizing on newspapers. With regard to the right of public meeting, the hon. Member said, in 1883, that the Act of 1882 was so oppressive that public meetings had ceased to be held at all. Yet now the hon. Member says that one of the particulars in which the administration of the Act of 1887 compares favourably with that of the Act of 1882 is with respect to public meetings. Is it the fact that public meetings cannot be held in Ireland? I think what we see in the Press proves that they can. There is a remarkable omission in the speech of the hon. Member. He undertook to prove that the administration of the law in Ireland had been futile, by which I understand that it had not attained the result which the administration of the law must aim at, namely, the diminution and repression of crime. Has he attempted to prove that statement? Has crime in Ireland diminished under the administration of my right hon. Friend? That happens to be a matter which can be proved by statistics and by

the evidence of facts. Now, I would call attention in regard to the alleged futility of the administration of the law by my right hon. Friend to a very few figures. On June 30, 1887, before the passing of the Crimes Act, the number of persons boycotted in Ireland was 4,901. On December 31, 1889, the number was 152. Is that evidence of futility? Take again agrarian crime, excluding and including threatening notices. On June 30, 1887, the number of agrarian crimes in Ireland, exclusive of threatening notices, was 149; the total, including threatening notices, was 221. The number on December 31, 1889, exclusive of threatening notices, was 63; including them it was 93. Is that evidence of futility?

DR. TANNER: Police statistics.

*MR. MADDEN: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian suggested in his speech the other night that the improvement in the state of Ireland in regard to crime might be attributed to the influence of hope and expectation rather than to what he calls coercive legislation. That, again, is a statement which can be brought to the test of facts. I presume that the right hon. Gentleman means by "hope and expectation" that the Irish people believe that his policy will be ultimately accepted by the nation. There was a time in 1886, shortly after the right hon. Gentleman introduced what was then, at all events, his Irish policy, when the influence of hope might have been expected to have been felt. I find, however, for the quarter ending March 31, the number of agrarian offences in Ireland was 256; but at the end of the next quarter, after the introduction of the right hon. Gentleman's Irish policy, under the influence of "hope and expectation" they increased to 297. I find a further remarkable fact when I compare the influence of hope and expectation with the efforts which followed the administration by his Government of the Crimes Act of 1882. The right hon. Gentleman went through a number of considerations, in which I deem it my duty to follow him, and I must ask for the kind indulgence of the House if I have to go necessarily somewhat into matters of detail It is easy to amuse the House by referring to highly-coloured accounts of what occured in police courts in Ireland. If you take accounts of what happens in police courts in this country you will also find some that are highly coloured and highly spiced, and it is easy to understand that reports may be still further dressed up in journals hostile to the administration of the law. Modern boycotting, according to the hon. Member opposite, is a degenerate form of boycotting—not that boycotting of which we heard such admirable descriptions in times past from the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian.

DR. TANNER: We took some tips from the Primrose League.

*MR. MADDEN: Modern boycotting, in fact, is represented by hon. Members as exclusive dealing only, but impartial spectators in Ireland do not take quite the same view of the case, and it does occur to me that starvation, the deprivation of the necessaries of life, must be as disagreeable for the victim now as it was in the early days of the agitation. From the *Freeman's Journal* I will read part of a charge delivered by one of the ablest Judges on the Irish Bench, once an ornament of this House. Baron Dowse, addressing the Grand Jury of Kerry, at Tralee, on March 11, 1889, said:—

"I am informed by the proper authorities, who can speak with confidence in these matters, that the crime of boycotting has decreased of late, and that whereas there were some years ago several hundreds of persons in the county boycotted, the number is very considerably decreased, and in the month of January of the present year, the agrarian outrages in Kerry only amounted to five in number, as compared with a very considerable number in former years. Well, now, I am very glad to be able to say that there is a decrease in the number of boycotting offences. The number of persons boycotted in February, 1888, was 131, and now the number is only 33. A distinguished statesman, a great master of language—namely, Mr. Gladstone—said that boycotting was 'organised intimidation,' and he stated in 1882 that 'the creed of boycotting, like every other creed, requires a sanction, and the sanction of boycotting, that which stands in the rear of boycotting, and by which alone boycotting can in the long run be made thoroughly effective, is the murder which is not to be denounced.' Now, these words are as true to-day as they were on the day they were spoken It may be said that political exigencies should ignore the meaning of these words. But nothing can make any difference, not even in the lapse of years, in the definition of a crime of this description. The maxims of morality, fortunately, do not depend upon the necessities of statesmen."

These are not the words of an irresponsible person, but of an able and experienced Judge, holding a position of

absolute independence, and having equal knowledge of what boycotting was in 1882 and of what it is now. The hon. Member for Cork does not seem to appreciate the fact that conspiracies, even to the point of starvation, if unaccompanied by the elements of intimidation and undue influence, cannot be punished under the Crimes Act. Such a conspiracy can of course be made the subject of indictment at Common Law, but a prosecution cannot be undertaken in respect of it under the Statute. If Magistrates confuse the two kinds of conspiracy and deal under the Crimes Act with a conspiracy punishable at Common Law, their decision can be reviewed and set right, as in the Killeagh case. If, then, there has been any conviction under the Act for conspiracy unaccompanied by intimidation or undue influence, the remedy is perfectly plain. The hon. Member has discussed the subject of Press prosecutions, beginning his review of the cases at a very early period of the administration of the Crimes Act. He will forgive me, I hope, if I only deal with the cases that occurred last year, for the others have been discussed over and over again. The hon. Member says that Press prosecutions have been instituted in peaceful districts, where there could be no excuse for their institution. I quite agree that regard must be had to the circumstances under which words are spoken. There is a wide difference between throwing a lighted match on the high road and throwing one into a powder magazine, and I wish that the followers of the hon. Gentleman who have addressed my countrymen in various parts of Ireland had more frequently borne that consideration in mind. But when Press prosecutions are instituted in comparatively peaceful counties, it is done for the purpose of preventing the introduction into those counties of illegal combinations and the system of intimidation which have proved so disastrous elsewhere. That was the reason of the prosecution in Kildare to which the hon. Member has referred. The prosecutions during the past year were all in respect of articles or notices calculated to intimidate. The hon. Member, I know, draws a distinction between articles and notices—a distinction which may affect the editorial mind; but what about the effect on the mind of the reader, what about the results to the victim of intimidation? Whether the editor of a paper has the manliness to express in a leading article his view about a man who has taken an evicted farm, or whether he publishes his views in the form of a Report of a meeting of a suppressed League, is not the result the same in the reader's mind? Let any hon. Member produce an instance of a prosecution following upon the publication of a Report of an innocent character, and we shall then have something to discuss.

MR. E. HARRINGTON: Mine. There are heaps.

*MR. MADDEN: The hon. Gentleman will have an opportunity of producing one out of the heaps. The question is whether these intimidatory notices are calculated to produce an effect in the country. Now with reference to cases: I shall refer to one. M'Hugh, the editor of the *Sligo Champion*, was tried and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. His case came on appeal before a gentleman whom hon. Members opposite have described as a learned and merciful Judge—and rightly so described—and the sentence of four months' imprisonment passed by the Court below was affirmed, and the Judge, in delivering sentence, commented in the strongest terms upon the character of the publication and the intimidatory tendency of what appeared in it. I make this broad general statement. What are called Press prosecutions are not so at all; to call them so is a gross misnomer. They are prosecutions for doing by means of the Press what would be equally criminal if done by any other means. These prosecutions in no sense interfere with the liberty of the Press. If you commit a crime by means of the Press you cannot shelter yourself behind the doctrine of the liberty of the Press. The liberty of the Press is not assailed because your criminal action is assailed. It is not for me to criticise the Act of 1882, or its administration, and I will not do so. But this I will say, that what are called Press prosecutions under the Act of 1887 should not be so called, and that there were clauses in the Act of 1882 directed against the Press, while there are none in the Act of 1887. The hon. Member for Cork brought forward a number of cases which he described—and I think the House will entirely agree with him—as trivial cases. Of course the gravamen of his accusation was that the persons

prosecuted were old women, children, and newsboys. It is easy to make general statements about prosecutions of this kind, but I should like some hon. Member in the course of this debate to bring forward some case of the prosecution of newsboys. No such case has yet been adduced. The hon. Member called attention to the lighting of some tar-barrels in the streets, as to which he said that the maximum penalty of a 10s. fine was inflicted. Well, that was not a prosecution under the Crimes Act at all. I am almost certain it was a prosecution under the Towns Improvement Act, because somehow or other the maximum penalty of 10s. is familiar to me in connection with that Act. I am not sure whether those who live in England enjoy legislation similar to that which is in force in Ireland, but there are provisions in that Act under which certain specified trivial offences in the public streets can be summarily prosecuted, and I have not the smallest doubt if any person were to light a tar-barrel in the Strand — [*Laughter*] — well, say in some nice quiet street in a cathedral town, he would be prosecuted under an Act of this kind in England, and that the maximum penalty would probably be inflicted. Does the hon. Member recognise that we are here for the purpose of encountering a serious indictment against the administration of the law in Ireland by the Government? Yet in this—one of the main cases in support of that indictment the Government have no concern whatever, except that the police are the usual prosecutors. The administration of such Acts as I have referred to forms no part of the work of the Executive Government which is now on its trial. There was a case referred to by the hon. Member as to which I have some information. He mentioned as a gross instance of the maladministration of the law the prosecution of Mr. T. Queley at Dungarvan, County Waterford. Mr. Queley was ordered to find sureties for his good behaviour for doing that which the Member for Cork said, in his opinion, was a perfect legal act. The hon. Member said that for a man to tell persons that if they buy from or sell to A B they are doing an unpatriotic act, and that the goods of A B are boycotted, is perfectly legal. Unfortunately, on this point the hon. Member is in direct conflict with the Court of Exchequer in Ireland. The hon. Member may be quite right and the Court of Exchequer may be quite wrong. ["Hear, hear!"] I gather from the hon. Member's attitude that he considers himself to be in the right, but I do not know whether the House generally will be content to accept his view and to receive their idea of the law, either of England or Ireland; not from a Court of Law, but from an hon. Member in this House. At all events, whether the Court of Exchequer is right or wrong we are bound to accept its decisions. Proceedings had been taken against Queley in consequence of the boycotting of Matthew Walsh. Queley, it seems, made a regular practice of following Walsh about to different markets inducing people to refrain from buying his pigs, Walsh's offence having been the taking of an evicted farm. Queley acted towards Walsh in a most exasperating manner, and for this he was ordered to find sureties for his good behaviour, it being held that his conduct amounted to intimidation. In this case there were all the elements that would have warranted a conviction at Common Law wholly irrespective of any Crimes Act, just as in the case at Manchester the other day. Are people not to draw inferences from facts? Why was not this man allowed to sell his cattle? [*Laughter from the Home Rule Members.*] Why was he compelled to take them home unsold? Hon. Members may laugh and treat this and similar cases lightly, but do they realise what it means when a man in this position of life cannot sell his cattle? It means ruin and starvation, and it is intended to mean ruin and starvation. I am happy to say that this system of boycotting cattle at sales is being successfully dealt with, for it is a most serious matter. I presume that the cases which the hon. Member has brought forward are the strongest in his favour which he can find.

MR. PARNELL: No; I took them at random.

*MR. MADDEN: Of course I accept the hon. Member's statement, but I should have thought that when the hon. Gentleman was going to directly impeach the action of the Government he would have

selected the strongest cases he could find in support of his contentions.

MR. PARNELL: I think it highly probable that I did unwittingly pick out the best cases for the Government.

*MR. MADDEN: Well, if the hon. Member took the cases at random, I think I may assume that they are a fair sample. Her Majesty's Government are quite prepared to stand by the action they have taken in grappling with this system of boycotting cattle at fairs, a practice the illegality of which has been pronounced by the Court of Exchequer in Ireland, and which has constituted an evil of the greatest magnitude. The hon. member has also referred to what he terms the system of punishing persons twice for the same offence by holding them to bail to be of good behaviour. But in this view the hon. Member is again in conflict with the highest Courts of law, which both in England and Ireland have laid it down that the precautionary measure of taking securities that a man will keep the peace is not a punitive sentence or one which can be regarded as in the nature of punishment. It has been laid down by Judge after Judge in England and Ireland, that there is nothing punitive in the sentence, but that it is merely precautionary and intended to secure proper obedience to the laws of the country. The hon. Member describes the administration of the law in Ireland as "exasperating." Whom does it exasperate? Does it exasperate the 4,900 boycotted persons who have been saved from a living death, or does it exasperate the boycotters? If it is a terror to evil-doers, I can only say that in so doing it fulfils one of the legitimate functions of the law. There is one portion of the population, however, that it does not exasperate. I allude to that portion, which, I believe, is composed of the majority of the people of Ireland, without distinction of class or creed, whose desire it is to pursue their business in peace, without molestation and intimidation. This portion of the population regards the administration of the law with feelings not of exasperation but of gratitude, as securing to them that protection and security without which prosperity and progress are alike impossible.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The Opposition in this House are not responsible for the present method of governing Ireland, nor are they amenable to it. They are not the authors of that method, nor are they in any sense the instruments of the Government, nor, again, are they its victims. They are able, I hope, to apply a tolerably impartial mind to the question raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell)—an Amendment which contains some very important propositions. I have listened to the hon. Member's speech, and to that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, and having, in addition, thought out two or three points which the hon. Member himself left untouched, unwilling, as I presume he was, to trespass on the time of the House, I hope I shall be able to make out a case for the Vote, which I believe many Members, if not all those on this side of the House who owe allegiance to the leaders of the Opposition, will give. Both the hon. Member for Cork and the right hon. and learned Gentleman have referred to the fact that times are changed. No doubt they are. The right hon. and learned Gentleman lays stress upon the fact that in the old days, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was in office and the hon. Member for Cork attacked the administration of the Law in Ireland, the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian received the support of the Conservative Party. On one occasion in the past the hon. Member for Cork brought forward an Amendment to the Address, asserting that the recent policy of the Chief Secretary in Ireland had not tended to the interests of tranquillity or contentment of the Irish people, protesting against the wanton prohibition of constitutional meetings, whereby the exercise of the right of free speech was practically extinguished in Ireland, and condemning the Irish Executive for having permitted bodies of magistrates to make public declarations applauding the conduct of Lord Rossmore. No wonder that, in resisting that Amendment, our Government was supported by the Conservatives! That was an unjust Amendment. The Government of Ireland in those days laboured under great difficulties, because free speech was attacked from two quarters. We laid down for ourselves the rule that meetings should be pro

hibited only where outrages would follow the excitement, and that rule we believe we kept. But hon. Gentlemen in Ulster thought that that was not sufficient. They thought that in the heart of Ulster, where there were no outrages and no fear of outrages, meetings of the League should not be allowed, because they were disliked. Being attacked on both sides the Government found it difficult to steer a clear course, but I believe we were in this matter patriotic, and I am sure we were impartial. Then, says the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork, times have changed in Ireland, and he gives the reasons. I will acknowledge those reasons by saying that before we left Ireland the National League was such a body that we absolutely refused, notwithstanding the great criticism, and even the obloquy of many of the Irish Conservatives, to take steps against it. Since then there are reasons why still greater changes have come over the spirit of the leading organisation of Nationalist Ireland for the time being. That is, that a Conservative Government came in, the Viceroy of which spoke of ruling Ireland by what he called amity and concord: and since then again a great measure has been brought forward for the purpose of satisfying Irish aspirations, a measure about which I say nothing now, except that the people in Great Britain take such a deep interest in it that they turned out a Government on it. Now the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) brought forward a number of cases which reflect, in his opinion, on the administration of justice in Ireland. I shall not go through those cases except so far as they are impugned by the Attorney General, who objects to the epithets unjust, exasperating, and futile. It is not difficult to understand the abuses of the administration of what is called law in Ireland, when the Attorney General for Ireland treats Press prosecutions lightly. [Mr. MADDEN: No.] I gathered that was the case; but I am willing to withdraw the word "lightly," and say the hon. and learned Gentleman regards Press prosecutions as proceedings which can be defended with an extremely small amount of argument. Conceive what would be the effect in this country if an editor was thrown into prison, and, above all, on hard labour, for an offence which would probably be called libel, but which partook of a political character; and then imagine what would be the state of things in the country if in the course of 18 months or two years 18 or 20 very severe penalties were imposed on the Press. The Attorney General says that these are not Press prosecutions at all, that they only punish the crime which is committed by means of the Press. That is mere juggling with words. Everybody knows that one of the clearest principles of jurisprudence, and certainly of politics, is that you cannot without the very greatest danger and wrong punish what is called the incitement to crime by the Press instead of punishing the crime itself. The longer I live the more I am persuaded that the rule in this matter may be made, as it were, absolute. It certainly was made, if not absolute, very nearly so for many months, I should think we might count the period by years, towards the end of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. If you once infringe that rule and begin to punish for what is called incitement you very soon begin to punish for incitement which leads to no crime, and that in this case has been strangely so. Gordon, in Jamaica, was hanged because he incited the negroes to outrage. [An hon. MEMBER: Quite right too.] An hon. Gentleman opposite says "Quite right too." I remember at that time arguing with a friend of mine, who likewise sat on the opposite benches to myself, against the hanging of Gordon. I said, "Here you have the Fenian agitation. John Bright spoke the other day about the wrongs of Ireland. Would you hang John Bright?" and he replied, "Certainly I would." The Attorney General says that in no case do these prosecutions interfere with the liberty of the Press. Let me show the House how these prosecutions interfere with the liberty of the Press in the most subtle and trenchant manner. The great objection brought by the hon. Member for Cork against these prosecutions is that they are not for bitter and brutal leading articles, but for the reports of meetings and proceedings written by people other than the editor. I do not think that in any case can it be proved that serious outrage has followed the

printing of the reports. But mark the manner in which this method of dealing with the Press lays the whole Press of Ireland at the absolute disposal of the Government. I suppose I am not exaggerating when I say that these proceedings have no or only a very partial, deterrent effect. Men have been punished by publishing the reports of suppressed branches of the National League, but directly they had been released they had proceeded to publish similar reports. The Government really choose who they shall prosecute, and they, of course, choose who they shall punish, because this is an offence for which there is no defence. So the Government has at its mercy the whole of the Irish Press, loyal or disloyal, to use their own words, which publish reports of suppressed branches of the League. Then the Attorney General spoke on the question of boycotting, and I must say he generalised far too much upon the horrors of boycotting, which is at present being punished in Ireland. It is idle to tell us that murder is stalking about in Ireland now. It is not so. In 1882 murder and murderous crimes were enormously prevalent in Ireland, but two years after they ceased, and they have never been revived. The Attorney General tells us that boycotting consists in the denial of the necessaries of life, in starvation, and so forth. I should like to refer to one case in particular. In Miltown Malbay there was some serious boycotting. Two persons were tried, and there was a great deal of discontent and disorder in the town. The next time that one of these cases came on for trial the parish priest, in his anxiety to prevent disorder, advised the publicans to close their shops; but the police, who it was proved had sufficient whisky in their barracks to satisfy their requirements, went round to 24 public houses, and in each case asked for a glass of whisky, which was refused. The 24 publicans were thereupon brought up for refusing to supply the police with necessaries. Twelve of them consented to express their regret for their action, but the others, who refused to do so, received a month's imprisonment each. This is the way in which the statistics of boycotting are made up, and the police are thus converted into the most odious characters in the world—namely, common informers. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has said that a good many of the cases that have been brought forward by the hon. Member for Cork are risible cases, but I can assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that where respectable honest tradesmen are sentenced to prison for a month it is no laughing matter. The right hon. and learned Gentleman speaks of the extreme danger of lighting bonfires. In Scotland £300,000 is spent on the police annually, in Ireland not very far short of £1,800,000. Surely the enormous force of police which the latter sum represents ought to be able to preserve order in the time of a little popular excitement by the process by which it is kept elsewhere—by being present and pleasant. It is not long since I was in a country town in England when a crowd lighted a bonfire and burnt a celebrated character in effigy, still no man was sent for 10 days. Now, I want to bring forward one or two cases that are not risible, and these are the cases which, above all others, give me the opportunity, which I am very glad to have, of declaring early in the Session what I think are the mistakes which the Government are committing in Ireland. We have been told that there is nothing that is a crime in Ireland that is not equally a crime in England. I, however, can give an instance of an absolutely new crime that has been created in Ireland by the Crimes Act of 1887. To belong to the National League would have been no offence under the Crimes Act of 1882, whereas it is a crime under the Crimes Act of 1887. My contention is that under the latter Act the Government have the power, if they desire to do so, to use the law for political purposes. In one Irish county as many as 38 people have received an average of over two months' imprisonment with hard labour for the new crime of attending meetings of suppressed branches of the National League. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has referred to the legality of a particular class of punishment whereby a man is sentenced to a lengthened term of imprisonment for refusing to be bound over to keep the peace. In one case the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) had been condemned to one month's imprisonment for an alleged offence, and in the course of the proceedings the hon. Member had used some hot words, the

hottest of which were to the effect that the magistrates had come down to the Court with their sentence in their pockets. For saying this the hon. Member was ordered to be bound over to keep the peace or to be sent to prison in default. An appeal was made to the Court of Exchequer, with the result that the original and governing sentence was revised for a technical reason. The binding over, however, was confirmed; but Baron Dowse said that if he had been the judge he should not have thought it worth while to take notice of the language used. That was at first, but Baron Dowse, at a later period, said with regard to the form of warrant that

"No doubt the magistrates had come down with their ammunition ready,"

thereby repeating the very offence of the hon. Member. The first was a very serious statement, but he took no notice of the words; the second was more serious still. The Chief Baron said:—

"I think if I were held to good behaviour there is nothing in the world would induce me to give security."

Now whatever it may be in England, and I have not dealt much in this matter, it is in Ireland considered a point of honour among high and low not to give security when it is called for in this way. I do not praise or blame it. I take the feeling as it is, and I say that to call upon a man to give security as an alternative to a term of imprisonment is in Ireland equivalent to passing a sentence of imprisonment, and the Lord Chief Baron used words to this effect. Here you have a state of things in which one judge says no notice ought to have been taken of the words used, and the other says that notice being taken of the language is equivalent to the magistrates passing a sentence of three months imprisonment. That is a specimen case of the administration of justice in Ireland. This case was brought before the House of Commons, and instead of the Government making one of those speeches such as a wise Government would make, seeking out the best case they could, but allowing that it was hard law, and that its application was slightly indiscreet, and that they would take care such punishments were not carried out: instead of that the Government take such a line that all the removable magistrates all over Ireland know on the high authority of the rulers of Ireland that to require security is the right course to take, and that a majority in Parliament agree that this is the right course to take. There is one part of his Resolution as to which the hon. Member for Cork has said nothing, but it is a point that I feel extremely strong about, and that is the position of the Irish tenants whose sufferings have been brought about by the Land Act of 1887, who are deprived of the benefit of that Act and deprived of the right of combination. It will be hardly believed that that eminent nobleman, who was lately Viceroy of Ireland, and after holding that high office for two years came back to his own neighbourhood, where he was entertained by his friends with great honour and compliments at a dinner, made a long and powerful speech chiefly upon the Land Question, and there was not one single word in that speech from first to last that informed his hearers that owing to the fall in prices rents had come to be unjust, and that the hon. Member for Cork had urged the Government to revise rents; that the Government had refused; but the next year on revising the rents acknowledged that the rents were unjust, and that in the interval large arrears of these unjust rents had grown up, and for being unable to pay these arrears of unjust rents—I do not say all, I do not say most—but many of these Irish tenants were being evicted. How many are there being evicted? There is not an assertion made more frequently by those who undertake to inform their fellow-countryman in this country than that the number of evictions have fallen very low; but surely to a House of Commons containing a large number of Irish Members this is not an assertion to make. They know that by the Act of 1887, a powerful, grinding, but all silent and unostentatious process was instituted, which carries out all that is serious in eviction. The terrible circumstances of an eviction scene, the police, the soldiers, the battering ram, the old people carried out and laid by the roadside, are not there, but what constitutes the real misery of an eviction? That a man leaves the home he or his forefathers created to at least one-half of its value, and often more. I was reading recently an article in the journal

of the English Agricultural Society —written by an eminent Conservative, Mr. Pell, and he with considerable knowledge tells his readers how in England and Scotland—I do not say in the Highlands —an enormous part of the value of land has been put upon it by the landlords in the shape of buildings, irrigation, draining, and every sort of improvement, and he puts the natural rent of the soil at an extremely low figure. But what he did not say, and had no occasion to say, was that in Ireland everything is done by the tenant and not by the landlord, and the consequence of eviction is that the tenant loses all this. Under Section 7 of the Land Act of 1887 a number of tenants have been converted into caretakers. In 1888 there were 9,752 persons so converted; in the first quarter of 1889, 1,581 tenants were turned into caretakers, and in the second quarter 1,975. I do not want to go beyond my knowledge or outside the Government Returns. I know these men have the opportunity, if they can do it, of redeeming themselves within a certain time. I do not know how many are able to do so but I know that an enormous number do not do so, that the numbers who suffer under the operation of this section, which is in every essential one of eviction though not in name, are very great and altogether belie the too favourable accounts often given by supporters of the Government in the country, though I do not say by Members of the Government themselves. And now I come to the words in reference to combination, and upon this point I feel most intensely. I am not like the hon. Member for Cork in one respect, for if I had to move an Amendment to this part of the Address I should have wished to leave out some words of the Address; I should have wished to leave out the words in commendation of the operation of the Ashbourne Act. The Ashbourne Act has one evil about it as to which I am sure all Members who act with us, whether they come from England, Ireland, or Scotland, will agree fully, and that is that it is too frequently made an instrument of the most serious oppression. When a number of tenants are in arrears with their rent and cannot pay those arrears, then comes the clever agent of the landlord and says: "If you will buy under the Ashbourne Act"—it is called buying but I will not give it the word—"if you will undertake to give an annuity under the Ashbourne Act"—for in my opinion it is the Government for the taxpayers who buy—"if you will agree to terms of settlement with me for my employer you shall be saved from eviction." That is the operation that goes on and we can conceive how even an honourable, a kindly landlord would use the pressure his position over the tenant would give him. But this being the case, the situation being so delicate surely it behoves the Government to be absolutely impartial in the matter? Now, I do not think the Government is absolutely impartial. The Government early in its career—I am referring to a matter as to which, when I was first informed, I took a more serious view of the facts, but what I am stating now is correct. The hon. Member for North Monaghan went down to an estate where there was a question of the landlord selling to the public and the tenants taking an annuity, and in the most moderate language, the most peaceable language that could possibly come from anyone's lips, told the tenants that 17 years' purchase was too high. Well, the Government instituted a prosecution against him. I was incorrect in referring to this on a former occasion when I said he was punished for this; the hon. Member was punished for something else in the same Court. He was not punished for that, but the Government prosecuted him, and thereby proclaimed, let us say, in the most unmistakeable manner they could, that to advise tenants not to give the price asked by the landlord was a punishable crime; and I should imagine that there never was any legal opinion that had a more practical effect, an effect that for my part I believe most disastrous, because the men who were willing to go about the country among the tenants, go into all the circumstances of each case, and give practical advice—were peaceable, quiet-going men, who did not care to run the risk of being sent to prison. But there is a much more serious matter than this. The tenants are not to get advice from those who agree with them, but the landlords can get the most practical advice and assistance from those who agree with them. I touch only the superficies of the question in relation

to the Ponsonby estate, but all will agree there was a price at which what is called the sale of the estate might have taken place. That price was considered too low by the brother landlords of Mr. Ponsonby, and they interfered. The Government should have been absolutely impartial, at least, and I think they should have been something better than impartial; they should have endeavoured to act as mediator, as Mr. Drummond would have done in old days. But instead of that they backed up the Landlords' Syndicate, who I do not say were not acting within their perfectly legal right, but with what consequence? I am informed, and I believe rightly, that on all that large estate all but four of the tenants have been served with notices of eviction, and much disorder has been created, a public body has been suspended, and two other public bodies who have taken the same action as the Cork Board of Guardians must either be suspended also or allowed to defy the Government? What will be the end of this? I do not wish to go into the circumstances that are almost more painful than those of the Ponsonby estate, upon the Tipperary estate, but when we consider what have been the direct consequences I can only say in regard to the Ashbourne Act, which was honestly intended by a great number of the people who supported it, and I believe by those who brought it forward, to be of the greatest advantage to Ireland, has produced great misery by the manner in which it has been carried out. One of the most terrible curses in the Scriptures is that where the prophet says, "He shall curse your blessings." The Ashbourne Act was intended to be a blessing, but can anyone say that the action of the landlords to prevent Mr. Ponsonby getting what they considered too low a price has been a blessing—at any rate, to that part of Ireland? How different are arrangements of another sort. Imagine how many arrangements between landlords and tenants might have taken place had the Government brought their powerful influence in the same spirit towards a settlement as that which my hon. Friend the Member for Hackney brought to the settlement of the dispute on the Vandeleur estate. I have been looking at extracts from newspapers, and for the circumstances I do not vouch, but they describe how the long-standing struggle between Mr. Synnot and his tenants has been brought to a happy end as a great victory for the Plan of Campaign; but if the Government had sought to settle by an Arrears Bill, or to a limited extent by personal interposition between landlord and tenant, as Mr. Drummond would have done, I believe there would have been a great many more victories, not for the Plan of Campaign, but victories for peace and for good sense in the relations between landlords and tenants. I have one observation more before I sit down. The hon. Member for Cork has put the word "exasperating" into his Amendment. Now, I must say I feel extremely the manner as well as the matter of the Government of Ireland. The hon. Member for Cork did not complain of it, and I think very likely because he and his friends consider there is something undignified in complaining of mere words. But I am very much impressed with the enormous evils resulting from the rulers of this country not maintaining the language of rulers. The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks Beach) when he was leader of this House, laid down in 1885 a very important doctrine on this matter. An eminent Member of this House had charged an Irish Member with being disloyal to the Crown and hostile to Great Britain. Now, in that there is nothing personally insulting, nothing intended to hurt the feelings; it was a mere expression of that eminent Member's undoubted belief. The leader of a Conservative Government here rebuked his supporter for using language that exceeded the bounds of moderation. Now I think that was wise. But what do our rulers say now? At a great meeting the present Prime Minister is reported to have said, referring to those who act with the Irish Party, that they would hand over the executive government of the United Kingdom to "gentlemen whose exploits he would not describe because they have been set forth by the Special Commission and in the Cronin trial." These words, the meaning of which is plain, used by rulers towards the people they rule in the name of the whole community, are the kind of words that undo almost any good that could be

done by kindly legislation, and almost by kindly administration. But I was still more struck with words used by a more reticent person, the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, at Belfast. He said the demand for a Parliament in Dublin proceeded from

> "a body of men whose leaders have no stake in the country, who contribute nothing to the wealth of the country, who have nothing to lose and everything to gain, who trust to the changes they clamour for, for a share in the benefits arising from the enterprise of others in which they have no part or lot, and to divide the spoil they never helped to gain."

It is a sad thing to find a man who has been the ruler of the country for two years back, saying this of men who have the confidence of five-sixths of their countrymen, who represent an unbroken area of eleven-twelfths of the acreage of the country the twelfth they do not represent, being in one small angle of the country by itself. For a nobleman to say this within a few months of his being chief ruler in the country, proves what I have said. Need I say the description is not a true one? These gentlemen do not want to get what belongs to others; what they want is to have a share in the responsibility and honour of governing their own country. At this moment they who represent the great majority of the people are excluded from this. It is far from them to wish to grab spoils, and I firmly believe they would be the first to object to the enormous sum of a quarter of a million sterling being paid in pensions and salaries to Bar and Bench. They want to do the business of Ireland; then they should have the opportunity and not be excluded, as if they were foreigners, because of their opinions. They want to pass their own laws on purely Irish subjects, and I think I have shown in the course of my speech that if in 1886 and 1887 they had been allowed to legislate according to Irish ideas on Irish land, there would not be a tenth of the Irish discontent there now is. The Opposition, in whose name I have the honour to speak, wish to settle Ireland in accordance with these aspirations in a manner which we are satisfied will be safe for the Empire. Meanwhile they wish that Ireland should be wisely, mercifully, impartially governed. The hon. Member for Cork has shown how in some respects Ireland is not so governed, and I have shown how in other respects it is not, and so I shall certainly vote for the Amendment.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): There is nothing so interesting to Members on this side as to witness the gradual progress of the right hon. Gentleman in the course he has set himself, namely, that of discarding one by one his previous opinions, and adopting those laid before him by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Even in his attitude and manner we noted the change, for nearly the whole of his remarks were addressed not to the Chair or to this side of the House, but I might almost say with his back turned while he appealed to the sympathy and cheers of hon. Members below the Gangway. In the concluding portion of his speech, the right hon. Gentleman alluded with condemnation to some words used by the noble Lord, the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to the effect that Irish Members had no stake in the country, nor did they add to the wealth of the country. Now I am not sedulous to defend the words the right hon. Gentleman has quoted as those of the noble Lord, and which I have never heard before, because I think they are such as any Member on this side might equally be attacked for having used. But if the right hon. Gentleman objects to their tone, then I think it would be well for him to withdraw some of the observations he has himself within recent times addressed to the Irish Party. If he objects to these words, which seem to me words expressing an opinion which at all events he has brought no facts to controvert, what has he to say of words he himself used in 1886 when speaking of the Irish Party? He said:

> "They would set up a separate Executive and they know that this Executive would be composed of Members of the Land League who have been teaching that rent is robbery."

I am not concerned to decide whether the words of the noble Lord or of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the status of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway are the more derogatory to them; but everybody knows this was the right hon. Gentleman's opinion then, and I doubt if he can contest the truth of them now. It cannot be denied that they have described rent as robbery, and that this doctrine is inconsistent with proper government of the country,

may well take heart from the extremely light charges which have been brought up against them. The point which must remain is this—that a great decrease has taken place in crime, the use of the police has largely decreased, calls on the military have hardly been needed during the last year, but in every department there is increased quiet, and with increased quiet there is increased prosperity. The Crimes Act has not been accompanied by the filling of gaols. The Government have not put 1,000 men into prison without trial. The strongest tribute to my right hon. Friend is that he has so seldom had to put the Act into force, and it is, I think, a consciousness of its success, and that that success is producing its natural results in restoring confidence, as it is restoring order, which makes it necessary for the party below the Gangway opposite to indict the Government for their proceedings, and which has made it incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman, by the exercise of his ingenious mind, to find some pretext for accompanying them into the Lobby.

MR. MAC NEILL: We have heard from the Treasury Bench the answer the Government have to make to the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The Attorney General for Ireland appears to approve of the opinions expressed by Mr. Baron Dowse; but how does that learned Judge speak of the body of Resident Magistrates? Why, he has stated it as his opinion that it would be as impossible for an Irish Resident Magistrate to state a case as it would be for him to write a Greek ode.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. MAC NEILL: The hon. Member for Cork mentioned in his speech the case of a man who was sent to prison for two months for insulting a policeman by calling him "Balfour;" but the learned Baron went even beyond that, for in a recent speech he alluded to one of the counsel as "Balfour junior." Reference has also been made by the learned Attorney General to what has been said by Chief Baron Palles, and other Judges; but, for my part, I do not think that the dicta of Judges ought to be brought before the House of Commons, for, after all, they are only men who administer the law as they find it, and I do not think their opinions are of much importance. The Amendment now before the House impugns, as I understand it, the administration by the Government of the ordinary law, and the exceptional law of the country; it asserts that the administration is unjust and harsh, and states that no efforts are being made to relieve the tenants from the coercion incident to the landlords' combination. It likewise impugns, in very vigorous language, the character and conduct of the administration of the Coercion Act. One of the grounds on which the justice of the ordinary administration of the law is impugned is this, that although it is within the knowledge of every one that there has long been a fierce collision between the landlords on the one side and the tenants on the other, the Government have rather fomented the difference than attempted to produce a more satisfactory state of things. For my own part, I say without hesitation that at the present moment Dublin Castle and all the machinery of the Irish Government may be described as a mere auxiliary to the Rent Office, every policeman, from the lowest to the highest, and every magistrate being engaged in the endeavour to exact rent in order that the land may be sold at a fictitious value. I am able to prove that the Government have been as much a party as the landlord has been to the evictions on the Olphert estate. With regard to the question of the celebrated battering ram, the Chief Secretary, who is not, as a rule, very careful as to the opinions of his opponents, has manifested a strange reticence in regard to information which has been asked for on this subject. Ministers have been asked over and over again for a statement of the cost of that battering ram, and at whose cost it has been obtained, but the information has been withheld. There can be no doubt it was intended to be paid for by the Government; but, after the questions put about it in this House, the Landlords' Convention, held in Dublin, agreed to defray the cost. As to the use made of it, it was proved indisputably in this House that that ram was used against no fewer than seven huts. What is the reason the Chief Secretary will not tell us the cost of the battering

ram? I leave it to the House to judge whether a Government which resorts to such expedients can be regarded as holding a fair balance between the two classes of the Irish people. This battering ram used by the Government officers was paid for by the Landowners' Association. It is the landlords, therefore, who are subscribing to keep up the war on the Olphert estate. The police are discharging the duty of emergency men with the landlords' instruments of destruction. I shall now have to make some observations in reference to the character of the government of Ireland for which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is responsible. The right hon. Gentleman is absent from the House just now, but that makes no matter, seeing that he was absent from Ireland during the occurrence of the great majority of the events I am going to describe. I took a note of the right hon. Gentleman's movements. Parliament rose last year on the 13th August, but the right hon. Gentleman did not go to Dublin until the 22nd of October, and then he spent very few days there, leaving Dublin again on November 6th. On December 17th he came back and remained a month. The right hon. Gentleman proved his bravery by his absence from the scene of action, although specific occurrences which attracted a vast amount of attention were taking place. There was the planting of the Coolgreany estate, the rise of the landlords' syndicate, the breaking off by that syndicate with the Ponsonby tenants, and then the trials which arose out of the transactions at Gweedore—trials so significant that English politicians went over to witness them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was in the country. But what was he doing? He was going from one landlord's house to another consulting with the landlords about the state of the country and no doubt in reference to the purchase scheme. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not left more that eight days when Tipperary was proclaimed under the Coercion Act. The Attorney General for Ireland rather twitted the hon. Member for Cork with saying nothing about the ordinary law as administered in Ireland, and perhaps I may, in a humble way, endeavour to supplement that omission. I would say that under the present administration of the ordinary law in Ireland the life of a subject taken by a policeman is of no value, whereas it is high treason to touch a policeman. I will exemplify this by two cases: There is the notorious case of District Inspector Martin, and the case of the two boys who, within a few days of each other, met their death at the hands of the police, one in Tipperary and the other in the streets of Timoleague. I would ask the House to contrast what took place at Gweedore—the severity with which the trial was conducted—with the way in which the police were shielded from justice in reference to these other matters. I think I am strictly correct in saying that in this country there has been no serious conflict between the police and the subjects of the Crown since Peterloo; but in Ireland, during the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman, no fewer than 14 men have been murdered or have met their death at the hands of the police, and I say that for the blood of these 14 men—for this massacre—justice has not been brought home to one man, nor has a single individual been a day in custody. The police have a free hand in Ireland. They are the agents of the Government, and the Government are the agents of the landlord. Let me show how matters led up to this. The Chief Secretary had only been three days in office, but had never put a foot in Ireland, when he sent the famous telegram to the police, "Don't hesitate to shoot." That resulted in the death of the young man O'Hanlon. The Chief Secretary was young in his office then. Since that time he has had experience, but it does not seem to have improved him. The massacre of Mitchelstown occurred. Did the right hon. Gentleman improve after that? No; he justified the action of the police. He said—

> "A certain policeman would have been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty if he had not fired to kill. It was contrary to every received regulation that an armed force dealing with a crowd should fire deliberately over their heads. It was well known to everyone conversant with the subject that a more cruel kindness could not be committed, and he was glad to think that it had not been committed by the Irish police."

Commenting upon that, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) subsequently said that the police were learning lessons in ferocity

they had never learnt before. There was a man put on the removeable bench to teach the police these lessons of ferocity—namely, Mr. Cecil Roche. Here is a sample of his teaching: At the Tralee Petty Sessions, before Colonel Rowan, R. M'Cowen, and Cecil Roche, R.M., two respectable young men named Timothy Cournane and Michael Quinn were charged with assaulting Sergeant M. Cook and Constable Buckley on the 11th August. On the evening in question the police arrested Cournane for drunkenness. He resisted, and a crowd gathered, from which stones were thrown, one of which struck Constable Buckley on the head. Quinn was arrested for throwing a stone, and was sentenced to six months' and Cournane to seven months' imprisonment, with hard labour, and bound to the peace. Mr. Roche, concurring with the sentence, said—

"I quite agree with the sentence of the Court, and wish to say that in any other country in the civilised world had these men attacked the ministers of the law in the way they had their lives might have been taken, and they (the police) would have been justified by the Government in taking their lives. This was a most deadly attack on these policemen, who behaved with great moderation in firing their revolvers in the air. It is not necessary for me to decide, but if the police took life on the occasion they would, in my opinion, be justified in doing so in the discharge of their duty."

Then came the two murders by the police of the 3rd and the 5th of September, and contrast what happened in these cases with what took place in the case of the murder of District Inspector Martin, the only policeman who has met his death at the hands of the people during the *régime* of the Chief Secretary, whereas 14 members of the public have been done to death by the police. In the case of the murder of District Inspector Martin the whole country round, it will be remembered, was in a state of terror. No fewer than 400 houses were entered without a warrant, no fewer than 150 people were committed to prison, and no fewer than 23 men were returned by the Removable Magistrates as being guilty of the murder or accomplices. Father M'Fadden was arrested and kept in gaol for months, the system of police passes was started, prisoners were sent to one of Her Majesty's vessels in handcuffs, though the naval captain refused to take them on board in that condition, and we all know the frantic efforts that were made to obtain convictions against the accused. No one knew the hand that slew District Inspector Martin, but everyone knows who slew the two boys to whom I have referred. When the lads were shot they were simply amusing themselves in the street, taking no part, as they took no interest, in politics. In the case of Daniel Donoghue, who was shot at Timoleague by a policeman named Cullinane, the inquest was held before Dr. Somerville, and Mr. Shinkwin, B.L. (who appeared on behalf of the next-of-kin), said that at the outset of the proceedings he should emphatically protest against the way the jury was constituted. He said it was an old-established law that a Coroner holding an inquisition was very much in the position of a Grand Jury, and the full number of jurors which is allowed should be enrolled if the friends or next-of-kin of the deceased wished it. The Coroner said—

"That is a mistake. I can hold an inquiry with any number from 12 to 23, and 12 only need agree to a verdict."

Mr. Shinkwin then said—

"Twelve jurors must agree; but in order that the inquest should be perfect and proper, the law does not exempt the Coroner from having 23 men where the next-of-kin wish it."

The account from which I am quoting goes on to say—

"Counsel then quoted from Jervois in support of his argument. He, however, had to protest against the constitution of the jury. Seven of the 12 men enrolled differed in religion and politics from the deceased. It certainly was an extraordinary thing that in a community where over 90 per cent. of the people were of the Catholic persuasion, the number of Protestants on the jury was seven. He had been informed that of the five Catholics one was the brother of a policeman, who had been sent for to a distance of four miles, while there were numbers of respectable residents in the village and neighbouring district who had never been summoned to attend there at all. The police had been scouring the country for miles around that morning in search of men from whom they knew they would get a favourable verdict. It was a barefaced and scandalous attempt at packing a jury. He had been further informed that three of the Catholics summoned spoke only Irish, and had confessed that they did not understand their position. The five Catholics there were, he was bound to confess, men far inferior to their Protestant fellow-jurors both in their social scale and in point of intelligence. It was a great injustice to put into the hands of a jury so constituted the scales of justice between the relatives of the dead man and the

individual who, he was prepared to prove, had so brutally and murderously taken away his life."

The House will remember how an hon. Member accused the Irish Constabulary of being addicted to drunkenness. Well, listen to the evidence given at the inquest on the body of Daniel O'Donoghue

"Constable Patrick Cullinane, sworn, said—He was on patrol duty at Timoleague on the night of the 3rd September. Constable Thomas Burns was with him. They left the barracks at 9 o'clock that night to go on patrol duty. They did not attend the roll call at 10 o'clock that night"

—a very serious dereliction of duty, as everyone who understands police discipline will know. In cross-examination the witness said—

"I am nine years in the force. I came here from Kerry. I am here about three months. I went into only one public-house before 9 o'clock that evening. I was standing at the door of another. I took about four drinks up to that time. The four drinks were not taken in public-house. I took two there and two in the barracks. I took one about 5 o'clock at Mr. Griffin's public-house, and the other about 8. I took no drink after 9 o'clock. I was in a public-house after 9 o'clock. I was in four public-houses about 10 o'clock in the discharge of my duty, to see if anybody was there. The doors were shut at this time. I always, when on duty, go to those places to see if anybody is there. I was not drinking in any public-house after 9 that night. Burns was on duty with me. I had not a bottle of whisky that night about me. I don't know whether Burns had. I got into trouble about drinking in Kerry."

He was then asked, "Tell us the circumstances," and he replied—

"I won't, sir.

Come, sir, tell us the circumstances. At what station was this?—I can't answer, sir. It is confidential. There are some things connected with the force that might come out.

Do you consider your drunkenness confidential in connection with the force?—No, sir. I'll put it to the Coroner whether I'll answer that question.

Mr. Wynne: Answer the question.

Witness: It was at Banemore Station, in County Kerry."

Were you so drunk that you lost your uniform on the occasion?—I did not lose my uniform.

How often were you drunk at Banemore?—Only once.

Punished, I take it?—Yes.

What was the next station you got into trouble at?—I don't know ought I to answer that.

Besides getting into this trouble there did you get into trouble at another station?—(After a long pause)—I did, sir.

What station was that?—Crotta station, County Kerry.

What happened you there?—Absence after roll call.

Means being drunk?—No, merely being late for roll call. I did not get into trouble anywhere else. I was fined 7s. 6d. for being late for roll call. My clothes went astray when I was being transferred from Kerry to this county. I did not lose my tunic off my back."

Now, of course, the jury in this case disagreed, as a jury so constituted was bound to disagree. From that case I come to that of the poor boy murdered at Tipperary. It was shown here that there were only 50 people in the street when the boy was shot, that only a few stones were thrown, and no policeman was really hurt. The case was carefully examined into by an independent coroner, and a verdict of wilful murder was returned against Inspector Carter, who ordered the shooting, and the Constable Louhy who fired the shot, the jury who returned the verdict being one that even George Bolton described as "enlightened." The Crown prosecuted the men with a make-believe prosecution, the Bench before whom the prisoners were brought being packed with Removables. As a result, the prisoners were discharged without a stain on their valuable characters. We have heard so far no sensational cry got up by the Government as to the atrocities of the police. How different was the attitude of the Government in the case of Father M'Fadden. Then, I come to another matter. It is important to view the police in the capacity of Government note-takers. About 15 or 16 Members of Parliament have been actually tried and sentenced and convicted on the testimony of police note-takers. The hon. Member for North-East Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond) was convicted in September last on evidence taken by these men. The *Birmingham Daily Post*, commenting on the conviction, said

"Once more the police reporters, under the ingenious system of cross-examination which was first devised in Mr. O'Brien's trial a few weeks ago, broke down utterly and disgracefully. The reporters this time professed to have taken their notes in long-hand. Mr. Healy, who defended Mr. Redmond, tested the first reporter by reading to him 587 words; when the policeman's notes were read it was found that he had only written down 87 words. A second reporter declared that he had written down his notes of Mr. Redmond's speech from memory immediately after the meeting. Again the witness broke down under Mr. Healy's test. That ingenious gentleman read to him the short and

exceedingly clear and pithy speech which Mr. Chamberlain delivered at Huddersfield on Wednesday morning. The witness was then left alone in the magistrate's room to write notes of the speech from recollection, and at the end of an hour and a half he had not been able, even with the assistance of tobacco, to set down a single word. A third reporter had some distinctly incriminating words written down on his notes, below where he had written the word 'End.' Now, we do not wish to hastily condemn the action of the magistrates. There may have been other evidence upon which they could properly convict, but which is omitted from the scanty reports of the trial. It will be remembered that in Mr. O'Brien's case the police reporter cut a still more ridiculous figure, though the prosecution was able to prove the speech by the report in the newspaper which Mr. O'Brien himself edited. But it must be said very strongly that, so far as the reports go, not only was Mr. Redmond convicted upon insufficient evidence, but that the breakdown of the witnesses upon the question of their capacity to report speeches had been so complete that the magistrates ought to have disregarded their evidence upon all other points as well, and would, indeed, have been justified in regarding the whole case for the prosecution with grave suspicion. However, there is to be an appeal, and when the case is reheard before the County Court Judge a better opportunity will, no doubt, be provided to estimate the sufficiency of the evidence. We have certainly, however, had about enough of these police reporters. We had hoped that the grave scandal which disfigured the O'Brien trial would have opened the eyes of the Irish Authorities to the necessity of employing properly-qualified and professional shorthand writers in the place of the rough and clumsy amateur reporters of the police. Perhaps this second scandal will complete the work of the first. Whatever their alleged offences, and whatever their known character, Irish prisoners must only be convicted and punished when their guilt has been proved beyond question by evidence unassailable, and legally, and logically complete.',

This scandal of police reporting has even attracted the attention of the professional reporters' organ, the *Phonetic Journal*. It says :—

"We have no desire to comment upon the political bearings of the matter, but it must be obvious to everybody that if criminal prosecutions are to be instituted upon the evidence of a short-hand note-taker the utmost care should be taken to select only writers of undoubted competence. The plan of using policemen instead of professional short-hand writers may be economical, but it is palpably unjust to the accused, who may be convicted upon the testimony of short-hand notes, which are altogether untrustworthy. That such a course must eventually bring discredit upon the administration of justice is so self-evident that we are surprised that a short-sighted policy of economy should have prevailed so long.....It would be just as reasonable to use policemen with a slight knowledge of drugs to investigate a case of suspected poisoning instead of calling in a properly qualified medical man, on the ground that it would be cheaper to do so. The adsurdity is not greater in the one case than in the other."

The Government wish to secure convictions, and so they employ these men. There is another case of police swearing to which I should like to call attention. In Tipperary a crowd of men were charged with riot. The police sergeant produced his note of what took place. At first he said it was the original note, then he said it was not the original note, and produced another note-book, and in the end he confessed that the second was not the original note at all. It is upon evidence such as this that honourable men are sentenced to imprisonment in Ireland. This battalion of swearers are only men after all; and when they have been trained by the Government to swear as desired for political purposes, it is only natural to suppose they will do some business for themselves. We have seen how the police swear by the Government; let us see how they swear by themselves. Sergeant Murphy, a bold and strong man, whose evidence has sent many men to prison under the Coercion Act, had recently to do a little swearing on his own account. Murphy was sued before a County Court Judge and jury at Wexford by an unfortunate girl whom he had seduced. The girl went to the workhouse and gave birth to twins. One of the children died, and the girl sued Murphy for the maintenance of the other and obtained a verdict for £40. What did the miscreant try to do? He endeavoured to intimidate the girl. He first of all wished her to state he was not the father, and then he wrote her a letter to say he would put her in the dock for the murder of the child which died. These are the words of the letter—

"You put forward a charge that you know to be false—you have given me out as the father of your children, and you have instigated your father to threaten me. You have shown me no mercy. One little life has been put out, and I have carefully preserved letters in which you threatened to take your child's life. I will bring up the child out of the grave to prove against you. I will cause an inquest to be held, and I will be the chief witness against you. I will show you no mercy. Unless you admit the falsity of the charge in writing into the dock you go. Save your neck if you can. I don't care a damn one way or the other."

In this letter he enclosed the following document for the signature of Anne Gladney :—

"I, Anne Gladney, of Bohanna, County Carlow, do hereby withdraw the charges made against Sergeant W. Murphy. I now admit I stated falsehoods in putting him forward as the father of my children. I now beg his pardon for having done so. The father is ———."

Such are the men in whose hands our lives and property are placed. Let us now view the police in the capacity of administrators of justice. During the Gweedore trials a remarkable incident occurred. Very frequently counsel put a question which is ruled out of order, and then an argument takes place as to the admissability of evidence. During the Gweedore trials The MacDermott wished some evidence to be admitted. Mr. Justice Gibson refused to receive it, and asked The MacDermott if he meant to say so and so. The police officer whom The MacDermott was examining at the time interposed, "That is his contention." The MacDermott quietly added, "You see, my lord, the witness has settled the matter." In November last, at Clonmel, a police-sergeant (Keogh) prosecuted a man named Neill for assault. The Mayor, Mr. Thomas Condon, M.P., who presided, said he witnessed the whole thing and there was exaggeration on both sides, whereupon Sergeant Keogh said, "For the sake of the dignity of the Bench you ought not to adjudicate." Of course, the Irish Members of Parliament ought not to interfere with policemen in what they conceive to be their duty. Now, the Chief Secretary has challenged us to show that law and order in Ireland is futile. I said at the outset of my remarks that the whole administration in Ireland is simply an administration to exact rent under some form or other. Of course, it was only natural to suppose that the Tenants' League would occupy the attention of Her Majesty's Government and of the landlords in general. We find that it has done so. The police have been employed in obstructing the organisation, just as they were employed in obstructing the Irish Members to clear their characters before the Special Commission. At Boyle Michael M'Garth was charged before three Removables,

"That on the 15th day of December, at Cootehall, in the County of Roscommon, being a proclaimed district under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, you, the said defendant, did wrongfully and without legal authority unlawfully use intimidation towards certain persons whose names are unknown, to wit, persons who, on the same day attended, or on Sundays usually did attend, the services of the Roman Catholic Church at the chapel of Cootehall aforesaid, with a view to cause the said persons to do an act which they had a legal right to abstain from doing, namely—to subscribe to a certain Association known as the Tenants' Defence Association."

The Crown Solicitor thought better of the prosecution, and announced that it would not be proceeded with. But on what ground? That the proclamation in Roscommon had been revoked. The excuse was a shameful one if true, but what if it was false? Sometimes policemen come under the cognisance of Courts of Justice. What occurred at the last Sessions in Waterford is rather remarkable. Action was taken against a policeman for assaulting two boys. The police entered a bandroom, one boy was knocked down, and when he was getting up the policeman struck him on the leg with his baton. Driscoll, the constable, was called, and said he saw a disorderly crowd in Jenkin's Lane. The case then proceeded:—

"His Honour: How were the crowd disorderly?—Witness: By shouting.—His Honour: Is every crowd that cheers disorderly?—Witness: It was a mixed cheering. [*Laughter.*] The reason I drew my baton was that I saw a crowd rushing out.—His Honour: I suppose Walsh ran against your baton? [*Laughter.*]—Witness: He did. [*Loud laughter.*]"

The Judge gave decrees against the constable in each case. We find the police dispersing with batons a meeting called in the town of Listowel for the purpose of demonstrating its approval of the result of the Elgin and Nairn and the Peterborough elections. Indeed, the police of Ireland exasperate and irritate in every way all persons who are supposed to have political views different to the Government. As the Government is so often called a brave Government, and as the Irish Minister is, according to his friends, pre-eminently a brave man, let us test the bravery. If ever a challenge was given to a brave man a challenge was given to the Chief Secretary by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) during last Session. The Chief Secretary said that if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford made in Ireland some of the speeches he made in the House he would receive a little of the

"plank bed" discipline. Well, in the following autumn the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) went over to Ireland and attended two meetings of the Tenants' Convention. These meetings are held in a room where it is not usual to have the presence of police note-takers, but the right hon. Gentleman requested that the Government note-takers might be present at the meeting in Galway, where he expressly advised that the tenants should stick to their combinations. Then he went to Drogheda and attended a meeting of the Tenants' League and again it was proposed to exclude the police reporters but the right hon. Gentleman said "No, let them be present," and then with deliberate plagiarism the right hon. Gentleman repeated the speech to the Massereene tenants for which my hon. Friend Mr. Dillon got six months' imprisonment, and challenged the Government to proceed against him. But this brave Government showed their courage by letting him alone. Hear what a Unionist print has to say on this incident—

"It is understood that the Government will not proceed against Mr. Shaw Lefevre, their policy being on all fours with that of the waiter who declined to kill the big blue-bottle on the ground that other flies would swarm to the funeral and make the nuisance worse. Mr. Shaw Lefevre is an ex-Minister, an occupant of the front Opposition Bench, and one of our Gladstonite lieutenants, and is therefore a different sort of subject to handle from men like Mr. Conybeare. Between letting him pass this time and giving the enemy an opportunity of raising a row in this country and sending fresh sympathisers to Ireland, the Government we hear have decided to adopt the first course."

Well, I compliment you on your bravery. Now, a word on the inequalities of sentences. Around any man who is supposed to sympathise with the Nationalist cause the Government forces create a cloud of distrust and obloquy, and if he is guilty of any small offence he is prosecuted to the death, whereas an emergency man has very different treatment, and when proceedings are taken apologies and excuses are forthcoming, though he be found guilty of the most heinous crime. Take an instance. At the Crossmaglen Petty Sessions, a man and his wife were brought before Dr. Palmer, J.P., and Mr. James Hunter, J.P., a local landlord, charged with singing a ballad with the refrain "We'll have good times in Ireland when the landlords go." They were sentenced to three months' imprisonment each. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) has stated that they were punished because they were tramps, but that is not so; they were sentenced for impugning the dignity of the landlords, and they were tried before magistrates of whom one was a landlord and the other a Government official. These poor creatures were sentenced to three months' imprisonment for attempting to earn a few halfpence by singing an innocent song, and we find these same magistrates inflicting a fine of sixpence upon a man named M'Nulty for being drunk and disorderly, resisting arrest, cursing and scandalising a patriotic priest and Nationalist of the locality. This is the action of your Government of an "even keel." Last December, for a cruel and unprovoked assault on the police, men who took part were sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment, and at the same Court which sentenced them an emergency man was brought up on the charge of criminally assaulting a little girl of six years old. The evidence was clear, and after the jury had been in consultation for some time, they applied to his Lordship for further advice, and one of their number said that though the evidence was clear, he could scarcely bring himself to believe it was possible that human nature could be so depraved as to produce a representative capable of committing such a hideous offence. This elicited from the Judge the remark that, with his experience, it was possible that any charge might be true. The prisoner, being an emergency man, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment—that is to say, the same sentence as was inflicted upon my hon. friend the Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane) for giving bread to a starving tenant. Now, at this same winter Assizes at Cork, an emergency man, in the employment of Mrs. Maroney, of Miltown Malbay, for forging his employer's name to a cheque got two months' imprisonment, while a poor child, for stealing a pipe from a shop-window, got six months' imprisonment with hard labour. A perfect cordon of legal protection is drawn around every person who is in the pay of the landlords or the Government, to save them from the consequences of any offences they may commit. We have heard a great deal of the

Statute of Edward III., and requiring sureties for good behaviour, and under this enactment there have been several examples of the administration of Courts of Justice, and my hon. Friend the Member for Cork has told us of the offence of blowing horns being visited with four months' imprisonment. In September, in Tipperary, several men were brought before the magistrates charged with riot. The Court could not commit them on the evidence produced by the Crown, but made an Order that the several defendants should find sureties to be of good behaviour for 12 months, themselves in £20, and two sureties of £10 each, with an alternative of two months in gaol. They were acquitted of the offence with which they were charged, but declining to give bail went to gaol on no evidence at all! Of course, the great advantage of this Act is that there is no appeal under it, and the removables are not slow in considering that. I find that at the Cappoquin Petty Sessions in November a man named Thomas Edwards was charged with boycotting the sale of some pigs at the fair. The buyer denied that the defendant had said anything to him about the animals being boycotted, and the defendant declared the whole charge a fabrication, the police having a grudge against him because he had had occasion to report Sergeant Nash to the District Inspector. The Court ordered defendant to be bound ever to keep the peace for twelve months, himself in £20, and two sureties in £10 each, or in default to be imprisoned in Waterford gaol for two months, the chairman reminding defendant's counsel that there was no appeal in a case of this kind. The defendant declined to give bail, and was removed in custody amid the cheers of the crowd. Now, my recollection is distinct that the Chief Secretary led us to believe that a sentence of this kind should be open to appeal. It is interesting to remember that one of the first persons to be charged under this antiquated jurisdiction was the hon. Member for Mid-Cork, who was brought before two Resident Magistrates, one of whom came from Belfast, where he was successful in obtaining a verdict against an Irish Member, and the other was a gentleman whose father was hunted from the police, and these were anxious to retaliate upon the man who had given a severe blow to the Resident Magistrate system by unearthing the Segrave scandal, the embezzler of the Cape. We have heard much on this question of requiring bail, but perhaps I may be allowed to recall Lord Salisbury's view as he expressed it at Hitchin in 1882. He said:

"It appears that this Act (that is, the Liberal Coercion Act) is of no use for suppressing seditious speeches such as those Mr. Davitt has made, and so there has been disinterred a Statute of Charles I., by which a man can be required to give security for good behaviour, or in default he may be imprisoned. I have not made any particular researches, but if I remember rightly the 10th and 11th of Charles I. (that is, a re-enactment of the older Statute) was passed during the Viceroyalty of Stafford."

The noble Lord's nephew was not then a mature politician.

"It is said generally by historians, and particularly by those of Liberal opinions, that that Government was slightly arbitrary, but now that this most liberal Government has shown a marked preference for this Act, I suppose historians will reverse their judgment. It must be confessed that this mode of keeping the peace is likely to give a stimulus to very interesting historical studies."

That was about the time when we were listening to Conservative overtures for Home Rule, and on the strength of promises made we voted for Conservatives—may God forgive us!

"If they institute a search for precedents I daresay the Government will find many others that will be most useful for the control of Ireland. It is my opinion that the Star Chamber jurisdiction was never abolished there, and if that is the case they may find an admirable engine at command."

This comes from the statesman who says Ireland cannot be pacified except by 20 years of strong government. I had a complaint to make at the outset of my remarks, but as my observation was of a somewhat personal character, I deferred making it until the hon. Gentleman to whom I referred was present, and he is here now. I would advise the Financial Secretary to the War Department, if he will take advice from a political antagonist, not to make himself a political phonograph; I would recommend him not to assume the responsibility of the rôle of recording angel. He was virtuously indignant with something said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, and wished to rake up old

memories which are entirely forgotten on our side, and I believe on his. In that the hon. Gentleman will not succeed. Of all Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench the last person to rake up charges and throw them in the teeth of Members of this House should be the Financial Secretary for War. Was it not he who said on one occasion out of doors, "I will not mince language, I will call the letter Mr. Parnell's letter." But do we not know the hon. Gentleman was compelled not only to mince that language, but to eat his words.

*Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I do not expect to be able to rival the eloquence or the agility of the hon. Member who has just resumed his seat, but for a short time I will trespass on the indulgence of the House. And first I express my sincere regret that an Irishman has been found to vilify so large a number of his countrymen as are to be found in the Royal Irish Constabulary. An allegation was made during the closing period of last Session, and when I was not in the House, by an hon. Member who now sits opposite, that I had spoken of the Royal Irish Constabulary as "Morley's Murderers." I contradicted that statement in a letter to the *Times* in words and with epithets that I am afraid I should not be Parliamentary in repeating, but as strongly as Parliamentary usage will permit I reiterate my denial. Such words were never uttered by me nor did I entertain at any time any sentiment at all approaching them in character. The Royal Irish Constabulary being Irishmen are not infallible and have their faults. If any hon. Member thinks that to be an Irishman is to be faultless I cannot agree with him. For myself though proud of being an Irishman I cannot claim to be infallible. At most critical periods the Royal Irish Constabulary have exercised the greatest discrimination and judgment in very difficult duties. Allusion has been made to the never-too-much to be regretted outrage that resulted in the death of the Constabulary officer, Mr. Martin, and it has been pointed out as one of the instances in which a section of the people of Ireland committed outrage and murder; but there is this difference dividing the murder of District Inspector Martin from the deaths caused sometimes by the weapons of the Royal Irish Constabulary, that wherever these deaths have occurred, amid scenes of riot and disorder, from the firing of shots by the Constabulary those deaths have been accidental. The death of District Inspector Martin was wilful and designed murder. It cannot be pretended that any member of the Royal Irish Constabulary took deliberate aim with the intention of murder, but in the case of the murder at Gweedore, unquestionably a body of men were guilty of acts leading directly to the death of Mr. Martin. The Financial Secretary for War has been attacked for his able and eloquent speech, which was listened to with pleasure by all on this side of the House, and I congratulate him upon that speech most sincerely and cordially. Much has been said by the hon. Member who introduced this Amendment upon alleged misgovernment of Ireland, but it must not be forgotten that hon. Members opposite have stated their intention to make the Government of Ireland impossible. If the Chief Secretary has succeeded to an unprecedented extent in quieting disorder and tumult, and repressing crime, he deserves the gratitude of all right-minded, right-thinking men, and I thank him for the result of his administration. I think even hon. Members opposite may congratulate themselves. They have adopted a course of conduct whereby they are enabled, without hindrance, to take their seats in this House, their presence not being required elsewhere. I think the very fact that they are here in force to-night, and joining in this discussion is a proof of the success of the Government of the Chief Secretary in Ireland. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Bridgeton Division has repeated to-night one of those speeches in which he recanted former opinions, turning his back on his former policy. If he were here now I would ask him does he not recollect addressing me, during the time he held the office of Chief Secretary, a communication in which he thanked those who shared my political opinions for the able support they had given him in his attempt to govern Ireland? But those days are gone by. It is a painful thing to find him turning his back on his former supporters. But at least I think the right hon. Gentleman has not gone so far as to join in a treasonable conspiracy to

bring about the independence of Ireland. [*Interruptions.*] I hear some allusion to the Queen's Crown, but I do not know what it is. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Mid Lothian, has spoken of the hon. Member for Cork as the "uncrowned King of Ireland." Perhaps it was with the object of making him a crowned king that a certain number of the party opposite joined in a conspiracy which has been condemned by the Parnell Commission. The day may come when, with the assistance of the right hon. Gentleman, this undesired event may be nearer accomplishment; but before that day comes some of us in the North of Ireland will have to be reckoned with, that portion of the country which is peaceable, loyal and progressive, and where the Lord Lieutenant was welcomed the other day to the rising town of Belfast by a concourse of loyal people who desire to see a continuance of the connection between Great Britain and Ireland, which, please God, shall never be ended in our time. An attack has been made to-night upon some of the juries of Ireland, I think on the ground that no Roman Catholic was allowed to serve on them, that they were exclusively Protestant. But is it to be imagined for a moment that a Protestant on a jury conscious of his obligations will wilfully perjure himself? I should be ashamed of the name of Protestant if any one of them should violate his conscience and break his solemn obligations on such an occasion. Those who make these accusations of perjury against a section of the Irish people cannot understand what Protestantism means. Reference has been made to the rejoicings which were attempted to be stopped when Mr. O'Brien was released from prison, but it cannot be forgotten by hon. Gentlemen opposite that certain shopkeepers in Youghal who refused to put up their shutters were boycotted, deprived of their trade and means of livelihood. [An hon. MEMBER: It is not true.] One scarcely knows what may be called true in this House; white is made to appear black, and black white. But I say without fear of contradiction that the statement I have now offered has been proved time after time in this House and out of it. I regret that in this debate resulting from the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork, some more eloquent exponent of the principles I desire to advocate has not risen in my stead, but I feel that no representative from Ireland desires to see the material and moral prosperity of that country more than I do. It is with the desire to promote that material and moral welfare that I hope for a long continuance of the *régime* that gives us the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, who has done so much to bring about the pacification of that country by his skilful and able administration, and who has done much and proposes to do more for the material welfare of its people. Every obstruction was thrown in the way last Session of the Light Railways and other Bills, but I trust that the hon. Members opposite have now come to a better frame of mind, and though they may not like the giver they will thankfully accept the gift. The right hon. Gentleman makes no attempt to bribe the Irish people; his legislation is proposed in the belief that it is right, and anyone who has studied his character will appreciate his position, and will feel that he is only doing those things his conscience heartily approves. I do not think this debate should close without one Member for Belfast declaring that we in Ulster—the loyal portion of Ulster—will never join in the conspiracy to bring about the legislative independence of Ireland. The loyal portion of Ulster rejoices in the connection between Ireland and Great Britain, and the rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty, and will not join in any sentimental utterance of "Ireland a Nation," but is content to remain part of the Great British Empire, enjoying all the rights and privileges of that position. the I rejoice, as a Member of Parliament representing a portion of Ulster, to be able to add my voice, however feeble, to the utterances of those who have expressed their determination that Ireland should remain an integral portion of the Empire, and therefore I resist this Amendment, which declares that the policy of Her Majesty's Government has been unjust, exasperating, and futile, because I believe it has been just, successful, and satisfactory. If those who are influential in forming the public opinion of Ireland and controlling to a large extent the feeling and sentiment

of the people would only set themselves resolutely to develop the resources of that country and calm instead of exasperating the people, the day would not be far distant when instead of disturbance, disunion, and turmoil, we should see a peaceful, a prosperous, a happy, and a contented Ireland.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I should like to remind the House that the hon. Gentleman who has just admonished his fellow-countrymen in such lofty tones has always been a consistent coercionist. The Irish Constabulary know that anything they do will always find in him a defender, and anybody who knows anything about that body must be aware that since the present *régime* their conduct has become unbearably insolent, doing everything to exasperate the people and delighting in bludgeoning them. I admit that a great improvement has taken place in trade, particularly in the North of Ireland, while we have also participated to some extent in the general revival of trade. We are told that order is necessary for the well being and the improvement of the condition of the people. We are prepared to admit that if Ireland is to be prosperous and successful it is necessary that respect for law and order should exist. But those who teach that to us seem to forget that if law is to be respected, you must make that law worthy of respect, and any one who has any knowledge of the way in which the law is administered in Ireland will come to the conclusion that, as administered there, it is absolutely unworthy of respect; now referring to the improvement which right hon. Gentlemen opposite say has taken place in Ireland, I find that whereas in the year 1886, £8,296,000 was spent in Poor Law relief, in 1888 the amount was £8,440,000. Does this increased expenditure with a decreasing population justify the Ministerial statements? My hon. Friend the Member for South Donegal has cited many cases in which we complain of the manner in which the law has been administered, and I should now like to state the case of my own county of Waterford, which has been harassed and scourged by coercion of the most drastic type. Waterford is far from being a typical county; one can do in it almost with impunity what would be visited with three or four months' imprisonment in other parts of the island; but it possesses a County Court Judge who has the confidence of the people, and who is prepared to mete out justice even-handed between all classes. It is significant that no language we have ever used in regard to the removables equals the abuse heaped upon County Court Judge Waters, because he has had the courage to reverse the decisions in certain cases which came before him. He is supposed to be a Liberal, but when his own Government was in power and when the removables in those days imposed unjust sentences he never hesitated to reverse them. The result is that he is a man who has the respect of the people, and they abide by his decisions because they believe him to be just, and before I quote Judge Waters' statement, let me point out that in Waterford the right of combination does not exist, neither is there the right of public speech, nor freedom of the Press. This Coercion Act of which we complain is aimed not at crime, or at criminals in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, but at political organisations, and its main object is to break down that very combination which has been rendered absolutely necessary in Ireland by the action of this House. Now, at the Waterford Quarter Sessions in January, 1888, Judge Waters, addressing the Grand Jury, congratulated them on the state of the country as regarded crime. He said:—

"I have examined the record of the past year, and I am glad to be able to tell you, as you will be glad to hear, that the account of the crime of the County and City of Waterford investigated in this Court during the year 1887 is very light—indeed, I may say, insignificant. It consists altogether of 15 cases. These are made up of five larceny cases, six cases of assault, two of embezzlement, one of arson, and one of attempted burglary, and, considering that the population of the county and city at the last census was 112,768, this number of 15 cases may be reasonably called small.

But, Gentlemen, you have no reason to pride yourselves in this county on being exceptionally good and free from crime. You know, I presume, that I am the County Court Judge of two other counties, namely, Cavan and Leitrim, and I am sorry to tell you that the record of crime in Waterford, light as it is, is the heaviest of the three.

In Cavan, with a population of 129,008, I had only 14 cases in the year; and in Leitrim, out of 89,795 people, only 11 cases were returned for trial.

The total for the three counties is 40 cases. In some of these more than one person was involved, so that the 40 cases included 63 individuals.

Now, Gentlemen, it may of course be truly observed that the cases returned for trial to the Court of Quarter Sessions do not by themselves supply a satisfactory index of the crime of a county, as other cases are sent for trial to the Assizes. I have obtained the number of cases sent for trial to the Assizes for each county, and I find that they are as follows:—In Waterford for the entire year 1887 there were 26 cases, in Cavan 13, and in Leitrim 12—in all 51; which, added to the 63 returned for trial to the Quarter Sessions, make a total of 114 persons committed for trial for indictable offences in all Courts for the three counties.

These three counties represent a large area, inhabited by a population of 332,616. It is also a diversified area, lying in the three provinces of Munster, Ulster, and Connaught, so that I think it may be considered as fairly representative of the whole country. For the purpose of comparing the crime in this representative area of Ireland with that of England and Scotland I have procured the last published statistics of those parts of the United Kingdom, and they show that the number of committals in England and Wales were 13,856, which gives the rate of one committal to 1,911 people. The population of my three counties is, as I have told you, 332,616, so that to make crime in these counties equal to crime in England the number of committals here should be 174, whereas they amount only to 114—that is to say, our crime is only 63 per cent. of the crime in England, and less than it by a full third.

It may be said that a comparison with England is deceptive; that it is not right to compare a rural population, as ours is, with the vast congeries of inhabitants to be found in the great English cities; and that a comparison with Scotland, made on more equal elements, would be juster. Let us see, then, how our case stands with that of Scotland. In Scotland the committals were 2,535, which gives the proportion of one committal to 1,473 people. In order that the rate or proportion of our crime should equal that of Scotland, the number of committals should be 225, but they are only 114, so that our crime is very nearly only one-half that of Scotland.

But it is often said that though criminals may be returned for trial in Ireland the Irish juries will not do their duty, and will not convict even on clear evidence, so that it will be interesting to compare the rate of convictions in the three countries. I find that the rate of convictions in England and Scotland is nearly the same, 77 per cent. of the committals; and, strange to say, the rate of convictions in Waterford is almost identical, differing only by an inconsiderable decimal. In Leitrim the rate of convictions is 82 per cent.; and in Cavan, where I have mixed juries, where Catholics and Orangemen meet in the jury-box, the rate of convictions is lowest—only 57 per cent., and not a single case occurred in that county of a jury not agreeing to a verdict one way or other."

I drew the Chief Secretary's attention to this remarkable statement last year, and when I complained of the way in which we were taxed for extra police the right hon. Gentleman said it was rash to draw conclusions hastily from statistics of this kind. The fact remains that the Removables do not like their decisions to go before this County Court Judge for review, so they have adopted the suggestion of the Chief Secretary and imposed sentences which do not give a right of appeal, while in other cases they remove the venue of trial and charge the accused before packed juries. Why, even an Englishman, and a Protestant, who has lived in Ireland 37 years, recently wrote to the newspapers that since the last Coercion Act was passed jury packing had been systematically carried on in all cases in which the venue had been changed. It is humiliating beyond expression the way in which the Catholics are treated by such creatures of Dublin Castle as George Bolton. It is bad enough to be ordered to stand by by respectable officials, but it is a gross aggravation of the affront to be told we are unfit to discharge our duties as citizens by a man like Bolton, whose character was described in the Maamtrasna Debate in this House by the present Solicitor General for England in the following words

"Discredited as Casey had been and must be, and infamous as he was as a witness, if it were a conflict of evidence between him and Mr. George Bolton he did not think the balance would be greatly in favour of Mr. Bolton. He was sorry to have to say it, but his view was that the very gravest misfortune that had befallen the Government in Ireland during the last two years had been the having as one of its trusted and responsible servants in a position of great responsibility a man of the antecedents and character they knew George Bolton to be."

Nevertheless, this individual is still in the service of the Crown. These are the men whom we are supposed to respect in Ireland. I have said that the Coercion Act is not aimed at crime. Now the League is proclaimed in Waterford, and they say its power is

gone. But the League was never more flourishing than now, and land-grabbers never had a worse time of it than they have now. I am informed that the boycotting of emergency cattle was never before more vigorously carried out. The League is a terror to land-grabbers, and I may mention a case which came under my own observation, where a land-grabber named Michael Walsh, who was under the protection of Mr. Balfour, came forward and offered an abject apology, offered to make any private or public reparation, and to pay any fine that might be imposed by any properly-constituted tribunal, if he were re-admitted to the League. I hope—and I say it from my place in this House—that this man will be re-admitted and received with open arms. He has had enough of the protection of the right hon. Gentleman; it did him more harm than good; and I may add that the fine he is prepared to pay goes, not to the branch of the League, but to the owner of the property to compensate him for injuries done to it by the previous tenant. Thus it would appear that the object of the Coercion Act—to put down combination and organisation—has not been achieved. In fact, the suppressed branches hold their meetings regularly. I have had the honour of being at meetings of three suppressed branches: indeed, nothing is easier than to attend the meetings, although the people will not give information to the police. It may be said that this is a sign of a bad mind on the part of the people. But we say you have burnt into the souls of the Irish people the belief that the law, instead of protecting them, is used for their oppression, and you cannot expect to do away at once with an impression which has been created by centuries of misrule. The right hon. Gentleman has never done boasting of the progress he has made in the pacification of Ireland; but if he looks carefully through the whole of the statistics, and takes cognisance of the state of feeling at present existing, he will find he is very much as he began, and that the organisation he supposes he has crushed has, in reality, been the means of crushing his own policy, the people being more determined now than ever. He tells us he is anxious for a specific settlement of affairs in Ireland, and yet he has again and again refused the measures we have brought forward that would tend to bring about that result. If he really feels the anxiety he has expressed, why has he not dealt in a satisfactory and judicious manner with the question of arrears? All he has done has been to give the County Court Judge power of spreading the instalments over a greater number of years, and has failed to give us that which has been so successful in the North of Ireland. We have had some remarkable trials in reference to the utterances of the Press in Ireland, and not long ago Mr. Ryan, Q.C., who represented the Crown, when questioned as to his conduct of a particular case admitted that this Coercion Act, which is said not to have created any new crime, has created new crime. I would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should get one of his Secretaries to write to Mr. Ryan, and question him on the subject. Before many days are over there will be an election in the Western Division of the County of Waterford, at which we shall be able to test what the people think of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. He may sneer at such a test, but it is the only test we have, and we shall apply it at that election. The Duke of Devonshire has large property in the district, and so has Mr. Villiers Stuart, who was once a Member of this House, both of whom will now be able to gauge the amount of influence they can exercise in the return of any nominee of theirs. None of us will go over to assist the National candidate, and yet I venture to say that while the candidate of our opponents may poll perhaps 500, our candidate, in all probability, will poll between 4,000 and 5,000. I wish here to give an instance of the system of espionage which is carried on in Ireland, and of which English Members can have no possible idea. In England, I believe, you have one policeman to every 1,252 individuals, but in my constituency we have one policeman to every 314 persons, and the police complain that they are overworked and cannot fully perform their duties. I think there is something in that complaint, because of the extraordinary duties that are imposed upon them. I went to the December fair at

Waterford, where I spoke to a constituent of mine named Horan. While doing so a policeman stood as close to us as the hon. Member immediately below me is to me. When spoken to he said—"I have been told off to look after this gentleman wherever he goes." Well, we went into two or three shops, into all of which the police followed us and remained there until we went out. I had occasion also to go to the National Bank, and a policeman followed me even there, and remained until I left. I could not do any business in the man's presence, and reported the matter to the manager of the Bank, telling him it was a shame that we could not do our business without being dogged in that way. I believe the manager communicated what had taken place to the authorities. That is a simple illustration of how, instead of looking after crime, the police are employed in looking after the political opponents of the Government. It may be remembered that in the case of "O'Brien *v.* Salisbury," tried at Lancaster, Captain Slacke, who is one of the satraps of the South of Ireland, was asked what was the condition of Waterford during the 10 years commencing with 1868. His reply was that it was remarkably quiet and peaceful, while in the succeeding 10 years it was turbulent. He also stated that the condition of Tipperary during the 10 years preceding the Land League was remarkably peaceful, but that after that it became very turbulent. He was then questioned as to the crime during those two periods, and was obliged to acknowledge that during the 10 years previous to the establishment of the Land League no less than 28 murders and attempted murders took place in Tipperary; but that in the 10 years subsequent to the establishment of the League there was not a single murder. When he was pressed upon the subject and asked—"Do you not consider that that was a remarkable index of the state of the county?" his reply was—"In the early days there was no combination, while in the later period there was combination"—a statement evidencing that in his mind the great sin of the Irish people was not agrarian crime, but the fact that they combined. These, Sir, are some of the reasons that induce me to give my support to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork. I think the policy of the Government is exasperating, and that by the present system they are almost endeavouring to drive the Irish people into the commission of crime. I consider the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, whose name will never be forgotten in Ireland, has been futile to an eminent degree; that it has not subdued the spirit of our people, but has rather had the effect of stimulating and purifying it. He may introduce his County Government Bill. We will accept that measure for what it may be worth, and use it on our different platforms in making our larger demands. [*Ministerial ironical cheers.*] I would say to those who cheer that observation that we do not want to disguise our sentiments. We have never once admitted that any measure of County Government would settle the Irish Question, although it may settle the landlords. If we accept the measure we shall only accept it as an instalment; and it will be used, as I have stated, on so many platforms as a lever for obtaining the inalienable right of the Irish people to make their own laws in the capital of their own country.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I think it must have struck every one who has listened to this debate that its character represented very accurately the present political situation. Irishmen are quiet on the other side of the water, and Irishmen are quiet in the House of Commons. This Motion, which is made year after year, is, in fact, a Vote of Want of Confidence in Her Majesty's Government. It is a hardy annual, which takes 12 months to grow, it flowers in February; and then disappears, I am happy to say, without leaving any seed behind. It is a matter of great satisfaction to those who sit on this side of the House that there is one characteristic of these annual attacks, namely, that they become weaker and weaker from year to year. We all remember the vigorous attack made two years ago, which I may describe as the Mitchelstown-Dopping attack. Members came down to this House full of fire, not to say of fury; and I remember in particular my friend the senior Member for

Northampton came down full of the deeds of valour executed at Mitchelstown. Well, that agitation vanished away. It was succeeded in the following year by the attack made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), who was assisted by his leader, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), the principal attack on that occasion being the Mary Colliton attack, the "Mary" turning out to be really "Michael." On the present occasion we have had a renewed attack. The hon. Member for Cork had, as he thought, a grand opportunity, and I expected to hear from him a great speech, such a speech as from his well-known ability he is capable of making. Of the character of the speech he has made I leave the House to judge. They will be aided in forming that judgment by the silence of the hon. Gentleman's own compatriots on the other side of the House. When a Vote of Want of Confidence in Her Majesty's Government takes the form of a series of attacks on the Irish Administration in small Petty Sessions questions, which can have no possible effect on the great question at issue, and then culminates in an onslaught of three-quarters of an hour on prosecutions undertaken by the Government against the Press, I ask myself whether the hon. Member has not given up and abandoned the policy of which he was supposed to be the propounder, and to which the hon. Member who has just sat down has alluded. Sir, we have heard no mention in the hon. Member's speech of any alternative policy. I need hardly point out that if this Amendment is carried by a majority of this House it will have the effect of displacing those Gentlemen who now sit on the Treasury Bench, and will place gentlemen opposite in power. Therefore, I imagine that in proposing a Vote of Want of Confidence we should have had from the hon. Member for Cork at least some indication of the policy which he and his friends would carry into effect, if they were placed in the same position as those now sitting on the Treasury Bench. This is a vote of a very serious character. It includes the whole system of Her Majesty's Government in dealing with Ireland, and attacks it root and branch. If the Amendment is carried it carries with it an absolute condemnation of the policy of the Government and the Unionist policy. Well, Sir, I have read this Amendment with considerable attention, and it appears to me so utterly unlike anything I should have expected from the hon. Member for Cork, whose ability and astuteness I greatly admire and acknowledge, that I hardly believe he can have drawn it up himself. I think it must have been done by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who has distinguished himself beyond any other Member of the House, in present as well as in former times, as the greatest manufacturer and discoverer of mare's nests. The reason why I decline to believe that the hon. Member for Cork drew up this Amendment is that the first count in the indictment is destroyed by the other two. The first count in the indictment is—

> "That the happy growth of peaceful and amicable relations between the peoples of Ireland and of Great Britain has been grievously impeded by the unjust, exasperating, and futile administration not only of the exceptional repressive legislation of the year 1887 but of the ordinary Criminal Code by Her Majesty's Government."

If this be true we might naturally expect that Ireland would be in a terrible state of confusion; that crime and outrage would be rampant; that conspiracy in Ireland would be rife; and that life and property would no longer be safe, while the Irish people generally would be in a state of seething fomentation. But the hon. Gentleman goes on to say in the very next line that—

> "Notwithstanding the long-continued tranquillity of the country, considerable sections of the Irish people are still harassed with invasions of their liberties and alienated from the Law by the conduct and character of many of its administrators, and large bodies of Irish tenants, whose sufferings brought about the Land Act of 1887, are debarred from the benefits of that Act, deprived of the right of combination and of public meeting, and subjected to wholesale eviction in the interest of landlord combinations, despite their repeatedly-expressed readiness to submit the justice of their claims to the judgment of any Court of Arbitration."

I venture to say—and in doing so I defy contradiction—that there is no man in this House who four or five years ago was sanguine enough to expect we should

hear from the lips of the hon. Member for Cork an admission that under the oppressive and tyrannical sway of the Unionist Government, and especially under the administration of the Chief Secretary—Ireland has at length obtained that long desired position of settled peace and tranquillity. Why, Sir, it has not required 20 years of firm and resolute Government to bring about this happy result; it has only required three. I think I know my countrymen pretty well. I live in Ireland, and hope I shall continue to live there, and I am happy to say I have always got on pretty well with the Irish people. Having this knowledge of my countrymen, I have always entertained the belief that they are extremely easily governed. All they want is a settled Government, with settled principles, which they mean at all hazards to maintain. So when I find that Session after Session the attack on the Government gets weaker and weaker, and when I also find that Session after Session hon. Members opposite employ weaker and weaker engines of assault on the policy of the Government, I think I am right in saying that all we need to do is to sit still and give them rope enough, in which case they are sure to hang themselves in the end. With regard to the two principal counts in the indictment brought forward by the hon. Member for Cork, the House will remember that he devoted most of his time to the reading of very long extracts from trials which had taken place at various Petty Sessions in Ireland, which did not appear very interesting to him, and which I do not think proved at all interesting to the House. The hon. Member in the course of his speech accused the Government of interfering with the right which he claims for the Irish tenant—the right of combination. He said the Government dared not interfere with the dockmen in London as they constantly interfered with the tenantry in Ireland. Of course not. You have no power of boycotting in England or in Scotland as you have in Ireland. You must have behind you a similar combination, and you must also have behind you a sanction of some kind to boycotting. You have not got that sanction in this country, and it is absurd to suppose that Her Majesty's Government, or any sane man, would attempt to interfere with any labour combination in this country simply because these combinations were carried on on absolutely legal grounds. For my part, I do not think that anything has ever redounded more to the honour of the British working man than the conduct of the dockmen during the recent strike. We did not hear of intimidation, we did not hear of outrage, or of any houghing of cattle, or burning of houses. We did not hear either of murder not being denounced, and therefore Her Majesty's Government very naturally did not interfere, and cannot interfere, in a free country with these combinations. These combinations are the very foundation of the liberties of the working classes in England, but that certainly does not apply to Ireland. The Government interfere in Ireland with combinations and boycotting, which is essential to combination, and it interferes with them because boycotting and combination in Ireland are not a spontaneous growth which emanates from the Irish people, but they are fomented and created by a political party, not for the welfare of the tenants, but for the furtherance of their own political ends. The hon. Member for Cork failed altogether in the parallel he attempted to draw, and the same failure is made by other hon. Members in the speeches wherein they attempt to institute a parallel between lawful combination as it exists in England and unlawful combination as it exists with the sanction of boycotting and crime in Ireland. I am greatly pleased with the instances which hon. Members opposite have adduced of the tyranny and oppression which prevail in Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite are thoroughly acquainted with Irish affairs and with Irishmen themselves. Having, therefore, the best means of information, their lynx-eyes are fixed upon the Chief Secretary, in order to see whether they can detect any flaw, if any flaw exists, or discover any injustice, if any injustice exists. They have been engaged for the last year in reading up everything in which they might discover, and be enabled to prove, if possible, that Lord Salisbury's Government in Ireland is an unjust Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member

for Mid Lothian, who has all sorts of information at his disposal, made a speech the other day at Chester, in which, as his chief specimen of the injustice which exists in Ireland, he spoke of the case of the two strolling ballad singers who were taken up because the ballads they sung were to the effect that when landlord oppression was got rid of there would be peace in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman went on to make some remarks about the solitary position of Lord Hartington, into which I will not at present go. But I must say that the case he alluded to was not one that was tried under the Crimes Act; it was one of a kind that often happens in England, and was tried under the Vagrancy Act, not by what has been termed an irremovable magistrate, but in ordinary Petty Sessions. This, then, was the great case which the right hon. Gentleman made his chief accusation against Her Majesty's Government. It so happened that at Crossnaglen in Armagh tramps had been committing depredations and certain petty thefts, and the magistrates were forced to take steps against them, and these two tramps, vagrants who went about singing ballads in the streets, and who had been warned over and over again to desist from pursuing the course of life they were living in that country, were summoned before this tyrannical Court and sentenced to fine and imprisonment, that is to say, they did not pay the fine and were sent to gaol. But this is what happens constantly in England and Wales. I do not know whether it is so in Scotland, and yet such is the great case which after a year's labour on the part of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues he was able to rake up in order to influence the Partick Election, which has resulted in so complete a triumph for our side. That was the specimen he gave of what he described as unjust and tyrannical conduct on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The fact is that the Government and the Crimes Act which was passed by this House have no more to answer for in relation to that transaction than the right hon. Gentleman himself. I think it is greatly to the credit of the Government that, after a year's effort on the part of Gentlemen whose ingenuity no one can deny, the two great cases brought against us as instances of injustice are the vagrant case cited at Chester and the case which was cited by the hon. Member for Cork, which turns out to have been a case heard under the same Vagrancy Act in Ireland. There is another statement in this Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork. He tells us that a section of the Irish people are interfered with and harassed by the law, but he admits that the people—I suppose he means the whole people—are in a state of absolute tranquillity. I do not think that anyone who knows Ireland will say that any law-abiding man is interfered with by the Crimes Act. Any law-abiding man can go about his business and transact his affairs and express his opinions with the same freedom that he can in England, Scotland, or Wales. There is only one liberty that is taken away from the Irish people, and that is, the liberty of making free with the property and lives of other people. The law is a terror to evil-doers. These are the only people who are exasperated, but it is now generally recognised that the greatest good of the greatest number ought to be the great object in view, and it therefore should be a source of gratification to hon. Gentlemen that they are securing the tranquillity of the bulk of the Irish people by those periods of enforced retirement which many of them so cheerfully and wilfully indulge in at intervals. Now, I must say there was one omission from the speech of the hon. Member for Cork which struck me with astonishment. The hon. Member has been telling us to-night of the condition of Ireland. Now, practically, at the present moment in Ireland there are only two or three places in which a very vigorous battle is going on. Tipperary is the centre of action and is an exception to the rest of the country, and it is somewhat strange that the hon. Member for Cork did not say anything with regard to the state of things at Tipperary at the present time. Perhaps the hon. Member does not approve of what is going on there. The fight now proceeding at Tipperary is a very severe and very remarkable one. How did it arise? I see no allusion to its origin in speeches made on this side of

the water recently. If anyone told the electors at Partick about it they at any rate did not succeed. How did that battle originate—how is it carried on? I do not intend to go into any details, and I do not wish to trouble the House with the full particulars, as they will be dealt with by others who have far more title than I have to deal with them. Briefly, however, the battle occurred thus: The Ponsonby estate was the first field of action. Here the Plan of Campaign was started. It is a property on which the tenants are most solvent and well-to-do. They have a merciful landlord, and it cannot be said that he refused his tenants fair terms. [An Irish MEMBER: "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members may hold a contrary view, but I defy their ability to pro e their contention. Mr. Ponsonby is a resident landlord. ["No, no!"] [An Irish MEMBER: He lives in Hampshire]. At any rate, he is a gentleman who lives a considerable part of the year in Ireland, and a large sum of money has been spent by him in improving his estate—I believe some £10,000. [An IRISH MEMBER: Borrowed from the Board of Works.] A very fair offer was made by this landlord to his tenants—so fair that one of the Judges said it was the fairest offer he had ever heard a landlord make to his tenants. Well, the Ponsonby tenants did not accept the offer, and why did they not accept it? Why, because they dared not. We have an organisation in Ireland which has laid down certain laws which, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, must not be disobeyed. This is the sort of statement we have made about the condition of the estate. The hon. Member for Mayo declared in this House—"I can point to men who can pay, and will not pay, because I tell them not to pay." There are men in Ireland who avow that they can pay, but refuse to do so because there is a Plan of Campaign. It is, therefore, easy to understand the effect produced by the great eloquence of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien) opposite, when he goes to an estate like that of Mr. Ponsonby to remind the tenants of the duty they owe to their country—that his advice is enforced by Tipperary "heroes," who are manufactured not only by eloquence but by paving stones and blackthorn sticks—it is easy, I say, to understand that tenants like these of Mr. Ponsonby do not dare to accept the generous offer their landlord has made them. Therefore, my hon. Friend the Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Smith-Barry), who well deserves all honour from every loyal man, determined, as far as in him lay, that Mr. Ponsonby should not be overridden and trampled on by the Member for North-East Cork. What has been the result of the policy of revenge which has been adopted by the Member for North-East Cork? He cannot allege that he went to Tipperary because the hon. Member for Huntingdon is a tyrannical and rack-renting landlord, for that would be flying against the deputation of priests and people who admitted last year that my hon. Friend has always been a generous and considerate landlord. The hon. Member for North-East Cork went there in order to beat down my hon. Friend—and he never attempted a more hopeless task—and in order to gratify a policy of revenge, which I do not think this House will ever sanction. The hon. Member went to Tipperary and hounded on the people, who had no complaint to make of my hon. Friend, to refuse him his just rents. The result is a depopulated town. Men who have been in affluence and have enjoyed all the comforts of life have been turned out of their houses by the hon. Member for North-East Cork in order to gratify his own revenge, so that he may go down to Tipperary and elsewhere and say to the people of Ireland, "See, I have brought down Mr. Smith-Barry to his knees." The hon. Member has not done that yet. He never undertook to beat down a tougher customer than my hon. Friend. I do not think there is any danger of my hon. Friend losing, as he does not stand alone in the fight. He is backed, and will be assisted, by every man who values real freedom in Ireland. There is a delightful simplicity about the Plan of Campaign. I will explain in a few words what it is. It is beautiful and satisfactory to some persons. Let us imagine a tenant who owes his landlord £100 for a year's rent. Well, the hon. Member for North-East Cork goes down to the district and tells the tenant that he must join the Plan and ask for a reduction of 40 per cent. The landlord

often offers 25, or even 30 per cent reduction, but that offer is not accepted. Consequently, the tenant keeps £40 himself, which he owes to his landlord, and the £60, which he also owes to his land lord, is turned over into the "war chest" of the Plan of Campaign. "War chest" is not my own expression. It is the technical phrase which describes the receptacle to which so much goes in and from which so little comes out. [An hon. MEMBER: Tell that to the marines.] I am not speaking to the marines, but to the British House of Commons. The £60 which goes into the "war chest" is devoted to the payment of law expenses, and to fighting the battle of the tenant against the landlord. Perhaps it goes to pay law expenses, and I am not surprised that when the Plan was adopted so many hon. Members opposite adopted the Legal Profession. That is one of the professions which really pay in Ireland. Well, that is the Plan of Campaign. Anybody can carry it in his head. You can easily understand that the landlord does not approve of it, and you can also understand that the tenant for the moment thinks it not so bad. Well, Sir, the hon. Member for the City of Cork told us something about the wrongs and woes of Ireland. As far as I can make out now, they are centred in the prosecutions which the Press suffer. That has not always been the opinion of the hon. Member. It is an interesting thing to hear the opinions of the hon. Member for Cork. I acknowledge the hon. Member's position. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) has reminded us with a look of profound veneration that the hon. Member is the uncrowned King of Ireland. I have no objection to the hon. Member retaining that title, but we do not mean him ever to be the crowned King of Ireland. A short time ago the hon. Member delivered speeches at Liverpool and Nottingham, and gave some details with regard to the condition of the Irish people. The hon. Member made a most remarkable discovery. He said that the Irish tenants were much dependent upon the landlords, who confiscated their improvements, leaving them nothing but potatoes to live on. The hon. Member added that very often the tenants had only potato skins to live on. I suppose the landlords eat the potatoes and hand the skins to the tenants. Then the hon. Member went on to describe what really is the national aspiration, saying—

> "The best way in which we can promote the nationality of Ireland is by constructing harbours, cleansing our rivers, and making canals and arterial drains, not at your expense, as Mr. A. J. Balfour proposes, but at our own."

Well, all I can say is that I never in my life met an Irishman who would do work at his own expense when he could find some one else to take the pecuniary burden off his shoulders. But the hon. Member was not content with that remarkable description of Irish nationality; he was not content with describing this intense longing and desire on the part of potato-skin filled natives to dig canals, to turn the bottoms out of rivers, and to sweep the sand out of harbours. He went on to say how the degradation of the Irish people had been accomplished. He said that, when the happy days arrived,

> "Ireland, instead of being a drag on your resources, a Lazarus by the wayside, an exhibition provoking the wonder and the scorn of the nations of the world, the pauper sister of England, could at last clothe herself in decent garments and look to her future with some self-confidence. These things must be done at our expense and with our exertions."

It appears, therefore, that it is not the Chief Secretary for Ireland and his tyrannical Government who have sapped and destroyed the energies of Ireland, but that it is the flood of British capital that has checked and swallowed up and destroyed that self-confidence, which in different circumstances any beggar would feel. I do not deny that the hon. Member for Cork ought to be a good judge of beggars, for I consider that persons are beggars who go round the world hat in hand. Those, indeed, are the beggars who make Ireland the scorn of the nations of the world. The only indication of a policy which has come from the opposite side of the House is that contained in the Liverpool and Nottingham speeches of the hon. Member for Cork, when he proclaimed this extraordinary desire of the Irish people to execute engineering and other works, not at the expense of England, but at their own expense. I do not think that the House of Commons will be persuaded to discard the present Government in order to adopt

so nebulous a policy. Before accepting the Amendment I suppose hon. Members will ask themselves whether the Government have carried out what they undertook to do. What did they undertake to do? They undertook to substitute the law of the land for the law of the League, and the returns of crime prove conclusively that they have succeeded in doing so. If crime and outrage continue to diminish in the same ratio for a year or two more hon. Members opposite will find themselves compelled to present a pair of white gloves to the head of Her Majesty's Government. The Government never undertook to satisfy that section of the Irish people alluded to in the Amendment, and I hope they never will. What they undertook to do was to make the law respected and obeyed in Ireland, and they have done it. Nobody denies that Ireland is now absolutely tranquil. The most sanguine Unionist a few short years ago could not have hoped to be able to point in 1890 to a tranquil, peaceful, and prosperous Ireland. We can do so, and I say, Sir, the fact is a happy one for Ireland, and a triumphant crown to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. We can point to an Ireland quiet, thriving, increasing in wealth and prosperity. The only discontent to be discovered is among that section alluded to in the Amendment, the section which cannot endure that cold tranquillity which is the destruction of agitators. As an Irishman, I hope and expect that under a determined and just and generous policy Ireland will come to her senses, know her true friends, and rally round the men who have her prosperity and not their own at heart. We see in the immediate future, not the vision of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, the letters of fire telling of coming doom, but the light that comes from the dawn of happier and brighter days.

MR. SHEEHY (Galway, S.): I do not attempt to follow the hon. Member for Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) into his laboured jokes. I am here for serious work and not for jokes. The hon. Member gave a fanciful description to the House of the Plan of Campaign. I will give a description from my point of view of the Plan of Campaign. It is a combination which has been tried in Ireland for three years, and which has been unconquered and is unconquerable to the present day. Every day we have the newspapers reporting, "Another victory for the Plan of Campaign." The hon. Member presumed to speak for the men of Tipperary. I wonder who gave him authority to speak for the men of Tipperary. The hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Smith-Barry), and he alone has given him that authority. Will the hon. Member (Colonel Saunderson) go down to Tipperary and canvass the people there as to whether he has a right to speak for them? If the men of Tipperary give him authority, I shall have no more to say. As to the hon. Member for Huntingdon and his bravery in this battle, the people of Tipperary are as brave as the hon. Member; and they will fight the fight out with him. This is not merely a fight between the people of Tipperary and the Member for Huntingdon; it is a fight also between Ireland and the Government. When this Government dies and I see evidence of death already, the fight will then be over. It has been stated that the hon. Member for Huntingdon is a good and just landlord, and that in recent times his relations with his tenants have been of the most amicable character. Why, Sir, he had not the courage to fight the people of Tipperary! While the hon. Member for Huntingdon was giving reductions to his own tenants, he was begging every other lahdlord in Tipperary to refuse reductions. This is why the people of Tipperary, their patience becoming exhausted by the way in which their money was being used against other people in the South of Ireland, determined that it should no longer be put to such vile uses. So they entered this issue with the hon. Member, and I think, when he comes out of it, he will be a wiser, and also a sadder man. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) challenged the

hon. Member for Cork to give any instances of prosecutions of newsvendors and children in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have forgotten the prosecution of Mr. Roche in Tralee, of Mr. Broslin in Clare, and of another man in Ennis for selling the *United Ireland*. He seems also to have forgotten a great number of cases about which questions were put to the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in this House by Mr. Flynn in 1888. The cases about which these questions were asked were those of Denis Desmond, a young lad, for refusing to sell a copy of *United Ireland* to a policeman; that of another boy for refusing to sell a copy of *United Ireland* to a police sergeant; that of John Reilly, a young lad, for the same thing; that of Cornelius Buckley for the same thing; those of Patrick Bradley and Patrick Hamilton, young lads, for the same thing; and that of Michael Murphy, an old man of 70, for the same thing. An inquiry was asked for into these cases, and of course the right hon. Gentleman did not order one, but it is rather amazing for him, in view of these facts, to challenge any Member to produce cases of the kind. But, curiously enough, the right hon. Gentleman referred to the case of Mr. McHugh, of Sligo, and all he had to say about that case was not that it was not a Press prosecution, but that the County Court Judge, Mr. Morris, confirmed the sentence. He said also that the prosecution was in accordance with the law. Our complaint is that it is the law. Great stress has been laid on the fact that the accusation against Mr. Feeley was that of intimidation. The accusation is one thing, however, and the evidence is another. The only evidence was that he was seen speaking to an intending buyer. Our complaint is that in this country, and in any other country, except Ireland, it is perfectly lawful for a man to remonstrate with another about any act that he is about to perform. We have no evidence that Mr. Feeley did offer a remonstrance, but if he did, we say such a remonstrance was perfectly legitimate on his part, although we know it is not lawful according to the Coercion Act. We had evidence three weeks ago of a young man going into a shop in Tipperary and remonstrating with his own relative for supplying the police, and, though the shopkeeper declared on oath that he was not intimidated, the young man was sent to gaol for six months and ordered to find bail for good behaviour for six months more. The application of the Coercion Act in Ireland has not led, and is not likely to lead, to peace and contentment, but is likely to provoke wild passions among the people. An extraordinary scene occurred recently in the town of Tipperary. A most respectable young man who was highly esteemed and beloved in the town and district died rather suddenly. At his funeral the greatest respect for him was manifested, and what was the attitude taken by the Government and its officials? At the solemn moment when the coffin was being conveyed to the church the authorities issued a proclamation, posted it on a wall opposite the church, and placed four policemen round it as a guard. A large body of police armed with rifles was drawn up opposite the church. Groups of constables were also stationed at various points in the town and the streets swarmed with detectives. In the day of sorrow and mourning all this was very hard to bear, and it became worse later on, because the sacred place where the dead man was laid to rest was not safe from the contumely and unsympathetic conduct of the police. Four waggon loads of policemen actually drove through the procession to reach the burial ground, and, as the remains were being lowered into their last resting place, the police endeavoured to get nearer the grave. This is but a sample of the methods that are used by the Government on every possible occasion in Ireland. They want to provoke riot because they want to have blood. We have shown we have no fear for ourselves, but when we attempt to address a public audience in Ireland we shudder at the responsibility of asking our people to meet us, because by so doing we expose them to the batons, the bayonets, and the buckshot of the police. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland said there was one class of people in Ireland who had no fear of the Coercion Act. Yes, there is one class—the landlord class, as represented by the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr.

Smith-Barry). His agents are allowed to walk at large in the streets of Tipperary, and to flourish their revolvers. They are brutal, cowardly ruffians gathered from the slums of the cities, and if a citizen terrified out of his life dares to go to a Court for protection, the man is defended and the revolver is restored to him. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General said the other day that Mr. John Slattery, who is now being prosecuted by the Government, was the organiser of boycotting in the South of Ireland. What right has the right hon. Gentleman to use such language? He might have learnt from the case of Peggy Dillon that it is not quite safe to speak of as respectable people as himself in insulting and offensive language. He spoke of Peggy Dillon in the same way, and we have it on record how the right hon. Gentleman ran away from Peggy Dillon. I have only to say in conclusion that it is not fear that is causing tranquillity in Ireland, but hope, and nothing you can do will destroy that hope. We can endure your treatment, and we have endured it up to the present time. We have beaten you on every platform; we have beaten you even in your gaols, and now we have come to the dawn of better days we have no fear for the hope or the patience of the Irish people.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. O'Brien,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

FOREIGN GOODS (MARK OF ORIGIN) BILL.—(No. 72).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Howard Vincent.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I really must object to this Bill being brought on at this time of night. The measure must be received by the House with grave suspicion. The hon. Member has been for a very long time identified with the opposition to Free Trade, and any ordinary observer can easily see at what he is driving. One of the favourite methods of procedure adopted by the hon. Member and his Friends is that of attacking Foreign Merchandise imported into this country. Last year I had not the opportunity of seeing many of the measures that were brought before the House, because, owing to the method of procedure adopted in Ireland, I, like many a better man, had to do my six months. At all events, I see what this Bill proposes. It provides that no goods which do not bear a legible and conspicuous mark of origin shall be imported. The measure seems to be loosely and imperfectly drafted. The hon. Member who moved the second reading has not given us the slightest explanation, and I should like to ask some of the hon. Members whose names appear on the back of the Bill—I see there are no less than seven of them—to explain its proposals to the House I conceive it to be a very insane proposition that any restriction should be placed on the importation of goods of foreign manufacture into this country. If foreign goods are of such a character as to command a market, they ought to be introduced. Every restriction you place upon imports must of necessity be disadvantageous to the major portion of the consumers. I believe this small Bill covers a deep and insidious design to introduce the thin edge of Protection. Why should you have a mark of origin on the cheap tobacco that comes from Hamburg, and the butterine sent here from Holland and elsewhere? The effect of restricting the introduction of foreign goods would be to increase the cost of similar goods to the purchaser.

It being midnight the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare

abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House: and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed:—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it:—And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House. The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Sir Charles Forster, Mr. William Lowther, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr Hugh Elliot, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Mulholland, Viscount Lymington, Mr. Wiggin, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy, Sir Robert Fowler, and Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the Committee on Public Accounts do consist of Twelve Members.

Ordered, That Mr. Donald Crawford be added to the Committee. — (*Mr. Jackson.*)

MOTIONS.

PAUPER LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Superannuation of Officers and Servants of Pauper Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. William Corbet.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 140.]

FARM SERVANTS' WAGES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Haldane, Bill to amend the Law relating to the payment of the Wages of Farm Servants in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Haldane, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Marjoribanks.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 141.]

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, Bill to amend "The Infant Life Protection Act, 1872," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Matthews and Mr. Stuart-Wortley

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 142.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS' IMPROVEMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to compensate Agricultural Tenants for Improvements, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Halley Stewart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 143.]

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to amend the Law in regard to the appointment, qualification, and removal of Justices of the Peace, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Bernard Coleridge, Mr. Howell, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 144.]

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill for the prevention of Corrupt Practices at Municipal, County Council, and other Elections in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 145.]

RAILWAY, &c. BILLS.

Copy ordered—

"Of Report by the Board of Trade upon all the Railway, Canal, Tramway, Gas, and Water Bills of Session 1890."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy preesnted accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 43.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House at its rising do adjourn till Monday next.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 17th February, 1890.

The Earl of Effingham took the Oath.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION.

THE EARL OF BELMORE, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any Correspondence in his Department on the subject of Australian Federation, and, if so, whether it can be laid before the House without public inconvenience, said: My Lords, before putting this question, I would like to say a few words on the subject of Australian Federation. I have great pleasure in expressing my gratification at the [progress which has been made so far at the Conference, or by whatever name it may be called, which has within the last week been sitting upon this question. It is very gratifying to me, both in its results and in the lines upon which it has proceeded. Sir Henry Parkes, the Prime Minister of New South Wales, a gentleman with whom I at one time had the pleasure of working when he filled a very important office, though not the first office in the Government there, has gone upon the lines not only of a Federal Parliament, but also of a Federal Executive, and I have long been strongly of opinion that it is only upon those lines that what is desired can be effectively carried out. I recollect as long ago as 1871, on the occasion of opening a railroad, when I had, of course, to make a speech, venturing to dive into futurity and prophesying that some day or other something of this sort would come about. But this subject had engaged people's minds at an earlier period than that. Sir Henry Parkes has told us that 35 years ago, before what is called Responsible Government was conceded to the colonies, he had advocated this measure, and I have lately learned that the late Mr. Wentworth also advocated for the future something of the sort. My noble Friend near me (Lord Norton) will remember Mr. Wentworth. He is probably not well-known in this country to the present generation, but he was certainly a foremost statesman in New South Wales, and without disrespect to anybody else, I may say with truth he is, perhaps, the foremost statesman they ever had in Australia. Mr. Wentworth was in his earliest days one of the pioneers of the colony; he was one of the first to penetrate the Blue Mountains and to find the plains of the interior; he was afterwards engaged in public life; he took a very active part in the abolition of transportation, and he may be called the father of the Constitutions of the Australian Colonies. I believe the shape in which those Constitutions now exist is very much the creation of his own mind. Mr. Wentworth never, I believe, held ministerial office; after accomplishing the great work of his life he very soon retired from public life, and he ended his days in this country. To come, my Lords, to the more immediate question before us. In the subject which is under consideration, the colonies will have to deal, in the first instance, with three important questions. The first question will be, supposing that a Federal Parliament and Executive is established, whether there shall be a Federal capital. It might be arranged that the Federal Parliament should meet alternately in some of the existing capitals, but I see it has been suggested by Sir Henry Parkes that the town of Albury on the River Murray would make a suitable metropolis. I remember the town of Albury. It is situated in the colony of New South Wales, on the banks of the Murray; it is within about a mile of the border of the colony of Victoria; it is nearer to Melbourne than Chester is to London; it is on the main line of railway which runs up through the continent; and it is a most delightful and healthful place of residence. Not very far from the mountains, it is in a rich country abounding in vineyards and with every advantage for being constituted the town where a Federal Parliament might hold its sittings. My Lords, the next queston which would have to be considered would be the question of contributions by the different colonies for defence. That is a very important question. I well remember the time when Her Majesty's troops were withdrawn from the Australian Colonies about 19 years ago. I need not go into

what is now an old story, but personally I regretted that that step was taken. Probably it was inevitable, but I always felt that in case of a war breaking out very great difficulties would arise from the want of some directing mind and some General Officer to direct operations. Fortunately, a period of profound peace has existed since that time. But we cannot always count upon a profound peace, and if we were to go to war with Russia or some other great Power we might be for a time entirely cut off from our Australian Colonies. There is nothing like taking time by the forelock, and I am extremely glad to find that this great and important question is now in a fair way of being settled. My Lords, the remaining point which will present itself for the consideration of those who have to deal with this matter will be the question of a common tariff. It is not necessary that this question should be decided before a Federal Parliament is brought into existence; indeed, one of the first things that that Parliament would have to do would be to revise the tariffs. It is very desirable to have some system of Inter-Colonial Free Trade, so that the vexatious lines of posts between the colonies might be abolished. At one time that object was effected in a way by the Colony of Victoria, for instance, handing over a certain sum to the Colony of New South Wales, and at the time I left the colony there was considerable popular excitement. All the great excitement and strong Party feeling which unfortunately existed at that moment was caused by the first arrangement having come to an end, whilst the efforts which had been made for its renewal had failed. I have always thought that the difficulties might have been overcome which led to the re-instating of the line of Custom houses. My Lords, if they abolish the collection of duties between the different colonies they must necessarily sooner or later have a uniform tariff, because where tariffs vary so much as they do in Australia, of course it must be obvious that as regards all foreign trade everything would be landed at the ports where the duties were lowest, and would find their way overland to the other parts of the group of colonies. This would sooner or later necessitate a uniform tariff. My Lords, I will not at this time pursue the subject further.

The Earl of Belmore

Having been for a time connected with these great colonies, although it is nearly 18 years ago since I left them, and although it is quite possible I may never see them again, I cannot help taking a great interest in them, and feeling great gratification that what I have always looked upon as so desirable is likely now to come to pass. I beg now, with those few remarks, to ask my noble Friend whether any correspondence has passed in his Department which can be laid on the Table of your Lordships' House?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Lord KNUTSFORD): My Lords, with respect to the special question which the noble Earl has asked me, I have to say that we have no public despatches or information which could be laid before the House. With respect to the general observations of my noble Friend, he has expressed a feeling which is shared by the great majority, if not by all people in this country. Her Gracious Majesty, in the Speech from the Throne, assured us of the lively interest with which she awaited the result of the Conference which was being held to discuss the important question of the federation of the Australian Colonies; and how warmly and keenly Her Majesty's subjects in these great colonies appreciate that interest is well shown by the loyal terms of the Address, which was unanimously agreed to by the Members of the preliminary Conference. With your Lordships' leave, I will read a few words from that Address:—

"We, your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects assembled at Melbourne to consider the question of creating for Australasia one Federal Government, desire to approach your Most Gracious Majesty with renewed expression of our devoted attachment to your Majesty's Throne and person on behalf of your Majesty's subjects throughout Australasia."

The results of the Conference will be accepted as most satisfactory by all who believe, as I do, and as I am sure my Colleagues do, that the prosperity, the welfare, the strength and importance of these great colonies will be materially increased and secured by a closer union amongst themselves under some form of Federal Government, which will be for them to decide upon, leaving full powers to the local Legislatures. The different colonial Legislatures will now be asked to sanction the holding of a second Conference, at which not more than

seven Members will attend from each responsible self-governing colony, and four from each Crown colony. That difficult questions will be raised before that Conference I have no doubt. Some of those questions have been pointed at by the noble Earl, who speaks with experience on this subject, but I would not even deal with them so far as he has done, because I think no good purpose would be gained now by our offering any opinion on those questions which are essentially for the Members of the Conference to decide. I am quite satisfied that the difficulties of those questions will be overcome by the tact and the judgment of the statesmen who are to take part in that Conference. I will conclude by saying that we do in this country most heartily wish success to their work.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I do not think it is necessary for me, after the satisfactory statement of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to add anything to what I had the opportunity of saying the other day on the Motion for the adoption of the Address; that is, to express on behalf of myself and my friends our entire sympathy with the feelings of the Government on this subject. I think the noble Lord has followed a judicious course in not going into the details of this matter. There is no doubt he is right in saying there are very great difficulties to be contended with, but they are difficulties which ought to be solved, and, I believe, will be solved. On behalf of those with whom I act I can only say that, in the most hearty agreement with him in what has been and is being done, we look forward to what is going to be done in the future, and I cannot help anticipating that there will be exactly the same success in regard to these colonies uniting themselves as attended the federation of our North American Colonies.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL.—QUESTION.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Bill relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools is to be re-introduced early this Session and in this House?

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I should be glad to add a few words upon the question put by Lord Norton. In connection with one of the largest Industrial Schools in the country I have made it my business to ascertain the views of those concerned in the management of these schools. I find there is no dissentient voice among them, but on the contrary a general concourse of approval with regard to what has been proposed by Her Majesty's Government. They consider that the measure is not only necesary but urgent.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): I beg to answer both questions in the affirmative.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL (No. 6).

SECOND READING.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, the Bill to which I am going to ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading is the same Bill as your Lordships passed last year. It is probable that few of your Lordships have suffered from the increased scarcity of hares. Indeed, one of the noble Lords who took part in amending this Bill has told me that since the passing of the Ground Game Act, he has found that the number of hares on his property has very much increased: and my own experience has been similar. But your Lordships must have heard from your neighbours, and read in the sporting papers, of the great diminution of hares throughout the country. They have almost disappeared from Devonshire, and I hear the same complaint from Lincolnshire. If your Lordships give a Second Reading to this Bill, as it is the same Bill that passed through the Standing Committee, perhaps it would be your pleasure that it should not again go through the Standing Committee, but that it should go before a Committee of the whole House.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: I do not know whether my noble Friend has considered the advisability of amending the Bill; but there is one portion of it which I think requires amendment, and that is the portion of the Bill which makes it penal for any person to have a dead or wounded hare in his possession. I think it would

be very hard upon any of my noble Friends' gamekeepers, who might happen to find hares under such conditions, if a policeman should pounce upon them and take them up under those clauses.

On Motion agreed to.

Bill Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

IRISH LEGISLATION.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, in rising to ask the Prime Minister whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take the judgment of Parliament this Session upon their proposals for increasing the number of occupying owners in Ireland, and for extending to that country the principles of local self-government; to what extent, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, those measures are connected with and dependent upon each other; and whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of introducing the latter measure in the House of Lords, said:—It appears to me most desirable for many reasons, and especially from the point of view of the supporters of the Government, that there should be no misconception as to the policy and intentions of the Government in respect to Ireland as foreshadowed in the Gracious Speech from the Throne. Your Lordships will recollect the action of the Unionist Party in 1886, and you will also recollect the utterances of many of the leaders and prominent men in that Party since. It may be easy for you to put a proper interpretation upon the paragraph in the Gracious Speech from the Throne which relates to Ireland; but it may not be quite so easy for the people outside Parliament; and I think it is of great importance that some clearer delineation of the main line of the Government policy in this respect should be given us, than is possible to be given within the limits of the Queen's Speech. There were four questions relating to Ireland dealt with in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. We were told that, owing to the improved state of the country, it was possible considerably to limit the area over which exceptional criminal procedure had to be maintained. I have nothing to say about that, except that it must be a matter of the greatest satisfaction to every one who has the welfare of Ireland really at heart to find that so great progress has been made in so short a time, in spite of exceptional difficulties. Then we were told at the end of the paragraph that measures would be taken to ameliorate the condition of the people in the poorer districts. I do not know what that means, but I hope the means adopted will be successful. However, I am not concerned in that matter now. What I am interested in, and what I venture to ask some information about, is in regard to the questions of land purchase and local self-government. Those are matters of the very greatest importance, and the Unionist Party is very deeply pledged against the principle of advancing public money, or engaging the public credit, for the purchase of the landlords' interest in Ireland except under certain circumstances. What I am anxious to know is whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take the judgment of Parliament upon both those subjects; whether both are to be passed through Parliament; and whether they are to be considered, and to what extent they are to be considered, as united and inseparably connected with each other? I should like to know whether the scheme of local self-government is dependent upon the creation of a larger number of persons in Ireland with a stake in the country—with a financial interest, which is only to be obtained by ownership—whether it is dependent upon the substitution of real ownership for what, in my opinion, is the most absurd system of dual ownership which at present exists; and whether it is dependent upon Ireland's being relieved to any considerable extent from the friction between classes which, for many reasons which I need not particularise to a great degree exists at the present time. Further, I should like to be informed whether the purchase scheme is considered necessary in order to give the local self-government scheme a reasonable chance of success. Again, I am desirous of hearing whether the advance of Imperial money, or the use of the Imperial credit, is dependent upon the creation of some local authority derived from the scheme of local self-government? Your Lordships will recollect that a good deal of discussion took place in Parliament when the last advance was made under Lord Ashbourne's Act,

the operation of which has been so beneficial. It was then clearly laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that further advances would not be asked. My Lords, what practical difference can be made? It appears to me that the only important practical difference is that an advance of money would be necessary for political reasons, in order to make the local self-government scheme successful, and also that some security should be provided between the British taxpayer, who finds the money, and the occupying owners in Ireland. Judging by the position of the two sentences in the Gracious Speech in reference to those matters, and by the utterances of the leaders of the Unionist Party, the natural supposition is that the two measures of local self-government and land purchase are to be considered as united questions. On the other hand, Notice of Motion for the introduction of one measure only has been given in another place. These matters, my Lords, are, in my opinion, so important that they ought to be lifted out of the realm of supposition and placed upon the solid ground of actual fact. As to the last part of my question, I would ask Her Majesty's Government to consider the advisability of introducing the Local Self-Government Bill in this House. Of course, it would be impossible to introduce the other Bill here, as it is practically a Money Bill, and the House would have no effectual means of discussing it. But it is difficult to see any constitutional reason why the Local Self-Government Bill should not be introduced into your Lordships' House. If that course can be adopted without any detriment to the public business, I hope it may be, and it would have this practical advantage—that both Bills would be before the country, and would be proceeded with concurrently, and Parliament and the country would be in possession of the full policy of the Government on both these important points. I hope the Government will be able to pursue that course; but if that is impossible, I hope they will be able to give the House such details of the general lines of their policy, as to remove all doubt with regard to the relationship existing between those two Bills, and as to whether the Land Purchase Scheme can become law should Parliament reject the scheme for local self-government.

*EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I hope my noble Friend will permit me to answer this question on behalf of the Prime Minister, who is unavoidably absent. I am afraid it will not be in my power to follow my noble Friend in the various remarks which have fallen from him—remarks which I venture to think might perhaps have been with more advantage uttered in the Debate which took place a few days ago on the Speech from the Throne. I will content myself, however, with replying to the questions my noble Friend has asked. Undoubtedly, my Lords, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to do their best to lay before Parliament and to obtain the judgment of Parliament on those measures which were announced in the Speech from the Throne, and especially may that statement be made with reference to the proposals for increasing the number of occupying owners in Ireland and for extending to that country the principles of local self-government. I can hardly think that my noble Friend intended to ask me to give any particulars with reference to the two measures to which he has referred. I think his ingenuity would have led him to have spread his net not quite so obviously in the face of his victim had he intended to "draw" me to that extent. It is obviously impossible for me on this occasion to make the statement which he has endeavoured to obtain from me; and I can only further say with reference to the next question, namely, "to what extent those measures are connected with and dependent upon each other," that if my noble Friend will wait for a few days longer he will, when he has heard the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland on introducing the Bill of which he has given notice, be able to judge for himself how far those two measures are dependent on each other, and how far the passing of the one is dependent on the passing of the other. Then my noble Friend asks whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the question of introducing the Local Government Bill for Ireland in the House of Lords. I can admit that in the idea of simultaneous discussion of the two Bills, one in one House and the other in the

other House, there might perhaps be, in the opinion of my noble Friend, some advantage. It is no doubt true that the conduct of one measure would be in the hands of one Minister in one House and the other measure in the hands of another Minister in the other House; but both those measures relating to Ireland and affecting Irish interests are practically measures promoted and guided by one Public Department, and I cannot agree with my noble Friend that it would be advisable or even possible that Parliament or the country should take into consideration two measures of such magnitude affecting the same portion of the Empire and largely affecting similar interests at the same time and during the same portion of the Session. I shall be glad if any arrangements can be made which will, by economising time, promote and forward the passing of those two measures; but I am bound to confess that I do not think the fact of the Local Government Bill being introduced in the House of Lords at the beginning of the Session would in any way promote its ultimate success in passing through Parliament. Her Majesty's Government trust that Parliament will approve the programme which they have announced and the order in which they have shown it to be their intention to pass those measures; and I hope my noble Friend will, on consideration, be satisfied to allow the Government to make their own arrangements for the guidance of Public Business.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Select Committee appointed: The Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Richmond.
D. Saint Albans.
D. Bedford.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
M. Ripon.
E. Mount Edgcumbe. (*Ld. Steward.*)
E. Lathom. (*Ld Chamberlain.*)
E. Jersey.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Belmore.
E. Harrowby.
E. Bradford.
F. Beauchamp.
E. Camperdown.
E. Granville
E. Kimberley.
E. De Montalt.
V. Hardinge.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. Willoughby de Eresby.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery*)
L. Foxford. (*E. Limerick*).
L. Colchester.
L. Ker. (*M. Lothian.*)
L. Colville of Culross.

Earl Cadogan

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed. The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

E. Cadogan. (*Ld. Privy Seal.*)
M. Bath.
E. Lathom. (*Ld. Chamberlain.*)
E. Winchilsea and Nottingham.
E. Lindsay.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Bathurst.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Milltown.
E. Belmore.
E. Powis.
E. Harrowby.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Wharncliffe.
E. de Montalt.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen*)
V. Hutchinson. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
V. Hardinge.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. de Ros.
L. Clinton.
L. Balfour of Burleigh.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery*).
L. Thurlow.
L. Foxford. (*E. Limerick.*)
L. Colchester.
L. Wigan. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)
L. Poltimore.
L. Sudeley.
L. Wenlock.
L. Belper.
L. Houghton.
L. Hartismere. (*L. Henniker.*)
L. Sandhurst.
L. Monk-Bretton.
L. Sudley. (*E. Arran.*)
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Kensington.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 17th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

THE PARLIAMENTARY AND THE COUNTY COUNCIL REGISTER.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the register of Parliamentary and County Council electors is in Westminster and the majority of London boroughs printed in one list, with proper divisions, so that the register is available for either Parliamentary or County Council elections; also, that in some London boroughs, especially in Woolwich, Greenwich, Lewisham, and Deptford, a different practice prevails, so that the parishes are put to the expense of paying for preparation and printing separate lists for County and Parliamentary purposes, although the bulk of the names

in each list are the same, and whether entirely separate lists are legal; and, if so, will he take an early opportunity to amend the Law, and cause the practice to be uniform throughout London, following the Westminster plan and saving the unnecessary expense of a double or separate list?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have been able to refer to the registers of Parliamentary and County Council electors of some of the Parliamentary boroughs which are mentioned in the question, and I find that the practice has been as stated. I am not prepared to say that entirely separate lists for Parliamentary and County Council elections are illegal, but the arrangement by which the registers of the two classes of voters are in the metropolis printed in one list is a convenient one and has the advantage of the saving of expense; and I am not aware why the arrangement should not be generally adopted. The list in the Kent part of London appears to be printed in such a way as to entail unnecessary cost, and I hope that, attention having been directed to the matter, a practice similar to that followed in other parts of the metropolis will in future be adopted.

DISQUALIFICATION OF VOLUNTEERS AS VOTERS.

COLONEL HUGHES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government is aware that, following the decisions already given in the case of soldiers and sailors, even Volunteers absent from home on duty under Military Law by consent in barracks at Easter are thereby subjected to disqualification as voters by the break in their occupation; and, whether Government will seek to amend the Law in this respect?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I think there may be considerable doubt as to the interpretation placed upon the recent decisions by my hon. and learned Friend, but if they do apply to Volunteers, then the Bill of which notice has been given by the Attorney General will completely meet the case.

THE PROPERTY TAX.

COLONEL HUGHES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will again consider the grievance of charging Property Tax on the gross value instead of on the net, whereby Income Tax is paid on that which is spent in repairs?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I am afraid I must give the stereotyped answer that it is impossible for me to express any opinion about changes in taxation before the Budget.

IRELAND—DERRY GAOL.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many prisoners attending the ministrations of the Roman Catholic Chaplain, and how many prisoners of other religious denominations, were confined in Derry Gaol on the 10th September, 1889; on what ground was the Reverend J. Doherty dismissed from the post of Roman Catholic Chaplain of Derry Gaol by the Prisons Board; did the Prisons Board apply by letter, dated the 10th Septenber, 1889, to the Very Reverend J. Kearney, Vicar Capitular of the Diocese of Derry, to nominate, for the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, another clergyman in succession to Father Doherty, as Chaplain of Derry Gaol, and can he state what reply was received to this letter; were the Roman Catholics of Derry Gaol deprived for two months after the dismissal of Father Doherty of the ministrations of a Chaplain, and were they then at great expense sent to other prisons; has Father Doherty recently received a letter from the Prisons Board, who, on September 10th, 1889, accused him to Father Kearney, his clerical superior, of "gross insubordination to prison authority," intimating that if he again stated his position they would reconsider their decision, and what reply has Father Doherty returned to this communication; would he have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the evidence adduced at the inquiry, and the correspondence between the Prisons Board and Father Doherty and Father Kearney, and to state what arrangement has been made for providing for the

spiritual wants of the Roman Catholic prisoners of Derry Gaol; is it the fact that at present Roman Catholic prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment exceeding in duration one month are removed from Derry Gaol to other prisons; and would he state the number of Roman Catholic prisoners transferred from Derry Gaol to other prisons from the date of the dismissal of Father Doherty till the present time, by reason of his dismissal, and the amount of the expense incurred in consequence of the said transfer?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The General Prisons Board report that on 10th September, 1889, there were in Londonderry Prison 121 Roman Catholic prisoners and 25 prisoners of other religious denominations. On that date the Chaplain mentioned was dismissed on the ground stated in the question. The Chaplain did not offer any justification whatever for his action, but refused "to answer any questions or sign his name to anything." The Governor of the Prison in accordance with the usual practice proceeded as indicated in the 4th paragraph. The facts are as stated in the 5th paragraph. The letter was dated 19th September. No communication has passed between the General Prisons Board and the late Chaplain; but onthe 2nd October, 1889, the Board informed the Very Rev. J. Kearney to the effect that it was open to the late Chaplain, if he considered himself aggrieved in any way, to appeal to the Lords Justices, a course which would be also open to any Chaplain who might be appointed to succeed him, as it is to every prison officer. It is not usual, or for the interests of the Public Service, that such evidence should be laid on the Table. The Inspector states that he did not inform the late Chaplain of the nature of the inquiry, nor is such the practice, all prison officers being expected to assist the Board's Inspector at any time in matters of discipline. Owing to the refusal of the Vicar Capitular to nominate a successor, the Roman Catholic prisoners were for the period stated deprived of the ministrations of the Chaplain. The Board then adopted the practice of removing such prisoners, whose sentences exceeded one month, to another prison. Fifty-seven prisoners have been so transferred. The claims for the expense incurred have not yet been furnished.

THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the evening of Saturday, 26th October, Mr. Hewson, the agent of the Olphert Estate, accompanied with five emergency men, set fire to four houses in the town land of Drumnatinny, near Falcarragh, from which four tenants named Edward M'Ginley, Dan Terry, Edward Barry, and James M'Ginley had been evicted at the suit of Mr. Olphert, and on the evening of Sunday, 27th October, the same gentleman, with the like assistance, set fire to the house in the same townland from which Daniel Ferry had been evicted; whether he is aware that when the thatched roofs of the houses had been burnt, Mr. Hewson and the emergency men proceeded to demolish the walls; whether he is aware that a force of Royal Irish Constabulary accompanied Mr. Hewson and the emergency men on these expeditions; and, by whose orders were the forces of the Crown employed for the protection and assistance of Mr. Olphert's agent?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that four houses were destroyed by the agent. He was not receiving police protection, but there were four policemen, as usual, accompanying the caretakers who were present on the occasion.

MR. MAC NEILL: May I ask whether after an eviction has taken place the Government authorise the police to join with emergency men in the destruction of property?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of the hon. Member relates to proceedings which occurred on two separate days. Certain houses were destroyed on the first day, and the burning took place on the second. I have no reason to believe that the police assisted the emergency men in destroying the property.

MR. MAC NEILL: Did they not go to protect the caretakers in the burning and destruction of the property?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe they did not.

THE MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the attention of the Government has been directed to the recent Report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, which, speaking of "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," says:—

"As the result of our experience we are of opinion that in many trades a considerable improvement has taken place in the marking of goods imported into this country, and generally the tendency is to mark the goods in a more truthful manner.

"On the other hand we notice that large quantities of goods are imported without any marks at all, and it is probable that labels bearing false trade descriptions are placed on many goods after they have passed from the hands of our officers.

"Indeed, quantities of labels and tickets imported separately have been detained as evidently intended to be placed on goods for sale in this country.

"Trade descriptions in the English language, which do not include the name or trade mark of a British trader or a place in the United Kingdom, are not illegal when truthfully applied to goods imported from an English-speaking country. In consequence of the state of the law, large quantities of goods are imported from America (often in transit) bearing English wording, such as steel goods marked 'Warranted best cutlery,' &c., and there is nothing to distinguish them on the home or foreign market from English made goods. This appears to give goods made out of the United Kingdom, and in most cases not even in an English dependency, an advantage over other foreign made goods which may not have been intended by those who framed the Act."

And, having regard to the injury inflicted upon the artisans of the United Kingdom by this defect in the law, if Her Majesty's Government will move the appointment of a Select Committee to consider how it may be most speedily and effectually remedied, and also to examine the three Bills introduced for the amendment of the Act in question?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have seen the Report referred to, and my attention has been directed to the concluding paragraph of the extract quoted. It is possible that advantage would follow if a Select Committee were to consider the objection pointed out and other matters in connection with the administration of the Act, especially the costs of prosecutions thereunder, which have been brought under my notice. If the hon. Member, after conferring with me as to the terms of reference, should decide to move the appointment of such a Select Committee, I should not be disposed to object to the Motion; but I cannot accept the principle of the measure introduced by him which is down for consideration to-night.

THE SCOTCH COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, whether information has reached him that, during the County Council elections in Scotland, treating to intoxicating drink was common in many places, and other expenditure, which would be illegal under the Corrupt Practices Acts; whether there is any reason why the Corrupt Practices Acts should not apply to County Council and other municipal elections in Scotland as well as in England; and, whether he will, at an early date, bring in a Bill to make those Acts applicable to such elections in Scotland?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): While it seems that in a few instances there have been some regrettable irregularities, there is no reason to suppose that the recent County Council Elections in Scotland, as a whole, have been conducted otherwise than in a creditable manner. At the same time the institution of those elections adds another reason for applying the Corrupt Practices Acts to municipal and other local elections in Scotland (as has already been done in England), and in the view of the Government this ought to be done. Relying on what I believe to be a general concurrence of opinion in the House I shall on an early day move for leave to introduce a Bill for this purpose.

MR. CRAWFORD: I beg to give notice that I shall, on an early day, move for leave to bring in a Bill on the subject.

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps, if any, have been taken by the Government to give effect to the Treasury Minute of July 20th, 1888, on Perpetual Pensions?

MR. GOSCHEN: It will be within the recollection of the hon. Member that the Government undertook that before

proposing any Perpetual Pension or payment for commutation the Treasury should take the opinion of the law officers in order to be advised whether each grant is legally binding, and whether it is permanently, or likely to be permanently so binding. A case of every grant has now been submitted to the law advisers of the Crown, and their opinion has been obtained in almost every instance. The preliminary examination as to the binding nature of each payment having been practically concluded, Her Majesty's Government will submit their proposals to Parliament at an early opportunity.

NAVIGATION OF THE UPPER YANGTZE.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any proposition has been made by the Chinese authorities to open the port of Chung-King, on the Upper Yangtze, to Foreign trade, on different conditions to those in the Chefoo Convention of 1876?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Discussions have taken place between the Chinese Government and Her Majesty's Legation at Pekin as to the execution of that portion of the Chefoo Convention of 1876 which relates to the opening of the Port of Chung-King. Proposals have been made by the Chinese Government for a modification of this part of the Convention on terms which seem not unlikely to be acceptable, but Her Majesty's Government, who have only received a telegraphic summary, are not as yet sufficiently acquainted with the details of those proposals to communicate them to the House.

ALLOTMENTS AT BANBURY.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, notwithstanding that the hon. Member for the Rugby Division called attention to the subject by a number of questions on the 15th of August last, hardly any allotments have since been procured by the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority, although the unsatisfied demand for them in a number of villages is admitted; whether he is aware that, although the Local Government Board wrote to the Sanitary Authority in December last inquiring as to the then situation of the allotment question, when this letter was named by the clerk at a meeting of the Authority on 2nd January, the chairman told the clerk to reply to the Local Government Board that it was just in the same position as it was at the date of their last letter, whereupon another guardian said, "as you were," which was followed by laughter; whether the Local Government Board will permit the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority to treat their communications in this manner; whether the Board will consider the advisability of sending a special inspector to confer with the Sanitary Authority upon the cases of, and to visit, all villages where there still exists an unsatisfied demand for allotments, and especially the cases of Farnborough, Mollington, and Claydon, and make a special report to the Board; and whether there will be any objection to the hon. Member for the Rugby Division accompanying the inspector on his visiting the various villages?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have no information as to what observations were made at the meeting of the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority on the date referred to. The communication received by the Local Government Board on the 3rd January was to the effect that on the 19th December the Authority had resolved to take three fields in Claydon for allotments which had been offered to them by the owner, but that upon inquiries being made respecting the land with a view to the preparation of a lease, the owner declined to carry out his proposal. In reply to a further letter, the Board were informed on the 31st January that the Sanitary Authority would use every endeavour to provide land for allotments as occasion might arise. I have received a further communication from the Authority in which it is stated that although no land has been taken since the 15th August last directly by the Authority, the Allotments Act has been of great service by inducing landed proprietors to let land for allotments, and that the Authority have not ceased in their endeavour to obtain land; but

they have experienced great difficulty in procuring suitable land for allotments near to the dwellings of the labouring class. I cannot undertake to direct an Inspector of the Board, accompanied by the hon. Member for the Rugby Division, to visit the several villages in the district where an unsatisfied demand for allotments is alleged to exist; but as the hon. Member is aware it is my intention to introduce this afternoon a Bill giving a right of appeal to persons who consider that the Sanitary Authority have failed to discharge their duty in respect of the provision of allotments.

POLICE EVIDENCE.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that, on the 27th of September last, Mr. William Churchill, grocer, of Deddington, was convicted by the magistrates of selling a bottle of whiskey to Amelia Gilbey, while she was in a state of intoxication, and fined 10s. and 29s. costs; that the principal and most important witness in support of the charge was Police Constable England, whose evidence was contradicted in many respects by seven respectable witnesses who were called for the defence; whether the Chairman of the Bench, H. C. Risley, Esq. is correctly reported to have stopped the solicitor for the defence in cross-examining the police constable as to his character and credibility, and remarked that "Police Constable England would not be there if he had not a good character;" whether seven months previously Police Constable England had been removed from Tadmarton to Deddington for drunkenness, and 14 months previously had been removed from Woodstock to Tadmarton, because he induced two boys to improperly procure beer for him out of their father's cellar; whether he is aware that very general dissatisfaction has been expressed in the district by the action of the Bench and the police; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiries into this case, and am informed that the conviction took place as stated. The Bench were more satisfied with the evidence of the constable and the independent testimony of a very reliable witness, than with the evidence for the defence. I do not gather that the Chairman used the words quoted, but stated that the antecedents of the constable did not affect his credibility as to a plain matter of fact. The Chief Constable informs me that the constable was removed from Tadmarton for drunkenness, but he has no record of his having been removed from Woodstock under the circumstances stated. Both the Chief Constable and the Justices inform me that they are not aware of any general dissatisfaction in the district with the action of the Bench and the police.

TROOPS IN NATAL AND ZULULAND.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War for what reason leave beyond the limits of the command continues to be withheld from the troops stationed in Natal and Zululand, and when it will be reopened?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am not able to say when the ordinary conditions as to leave can be reverted to in Zululand. It is dependent on military considerations, as to which the general officer commanding in South Africa must be sole judge.

IRELAND—THE SURVEYOR OF INCOME TAX AT DERRY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a warrant was lately issued by the surveyor of Income Tax at Londonderry against Mr. John Tracy, of Newtown Cunningham, in Donegal, in respect of Income Tax upon property, but was discharged on evidence that the ownership was not in Mr. Tracy; whether it is a fact that during the discussion the Surveyor asked Mr. Tracy, "Why did you get your name in for a vote on another person's property;" and if he will explain how an electoral franchise concerns the Surveyor of Taxes as such?

*MR. GOSCHEN: An assessment having been made on Mr. Tracy in respect of a holding for which he was rated as owner and occupier, Mr. Tracy explained that he was not the owner. The Surveyor of Income Tax then asked Mr. Tracy whether he was rated for the purposes of obtaining a vote, in order to

proposing any Perpetual Pension or payment for commutation the Treasury should take the opinion of the law officers in order to be advised whether each grant is legally binding, and whether it is permanently, or likely to be permanently so binding. A case of every grant has now been submitted to the law advisers of the Crown, and their opinion has been obtained in almost every instance. The preliminary examination as to the binding nature of each payment having been practically concluded, Her Majesty's Government will submit their proposals to Parliament at an early opportunity.

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*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Discussions have taken place between the Chinese Government and Her Majesty's Legation at Pekin as to the execution of that portion of the Chefoo Convention of 1876 which relates to the opening of the Port of Chung-King. Proposals have been made by the Chinese Government for a modification of this part of the Convention on terms which seem not unlikely to be acceptable, but Her Majesty's Government, who have only received a telegraphic summary, are not as yet sufficiently acquainted with the details of those proposals to communicate them to the House.

ALLOTMENTS AT BANBURY.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, notwithstanding that the hon. Member for the Rugby Division called attention to the subject by a number of questions on the 15th of August last, hardly any allotments have since been procured by the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority, although the unsatisfied demand for them in a number of villages is admitted; whether he is aware that, although the Local Government Board wrote to the Sanitary Authority in December last inquiring as to the then situation of the allotment question, when this letter was named by the clerk at a meeting of the Authority on 2nd January, the chairman told the clerk to reply to the Local Government Board that it was just in the same position as it was at the date of their last letter, whereupon another guardian said, "as you were," which was followed by laughter; whether the Local Government Board will permit the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority to treat their communications in this manner; whether the Board will consider the advisability of sending a special inspector to confer with the Sanitary Authority upon the cases of, and to visit, all villages where there still exists an unsatisfied demand for allotments, and especially the cases of Farnborough, Mollington, and Claydon, and make a special report to the Board; and whether there will be any objection to the hon. Member for the Rugby Division accompanying the inspector on his visiting the various villages?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have no information as to what observations were made at the meeting of the Banbury Rural Sanitary Authority on the date referred to. The communication received by the Local Government Board on the 3rd January was to the effect that on the 19th December the Authority had resolved to take three fields in Claydon for allotments which had been offered to them by the owner, but that upon inquiries being made respecting the land with a view to the preparation of a lease, the owner declined to carry out his proposal. In reply to a further letter, the Board were informed on the 31st January that the Sanitary Authority would use every endeavour to provide land for allotments as occasion might arise. I have received a further communication from the Authority in which it is stated that although no land has been taken since the 15th August last directly by the Authority, the Allotments Act has been of great service by inducing landed proprietors to let land for allotments, and that the Authority have not ceased in their endeavour to obtain land; but

they have experienced great difficulty in procuring suitable land for allotments near to the dwellings of the labouring class. I cannot undertake to direct an Inspector of the Board, accompanied by the hon. Member for the Rugby Division, to visit the several villages in the district where an unsatisfied demand for allotments is alleged to exist; but as the hon. Member is aware it is my intention to introduce this afternoon a Bill giving a right of appeal to persons who consider that the Sanitary Authority have failed to discharge their duty in respect of the provision of allotments.

POLICE EVIDENCE.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that, on the 27th of September last, Mr. William Churchill, grocer, of Deddington, was convicted by the magistrates of selling a bottle of whiskey to Amelia Gilbey, while she was in a state of intoxication, and fined 10s. and 29s. costs; that the principal and most important witness in support of the charge was Police Constable England, whose evidence was contradicted in many respects by seven respectable witnesses who were called for the defence; whether the Chairman of the Bench, H. C. Risley, Esq. is correctly reported to have stopped the solicitor for the defence in cross-examining the police constable as to his character and credibility, and remarked that "Police Constable England would not be there if he had not a good character;" whether seven months previously Police Constable England had been removed from Tadmarton to Deddington for drunkenness, and 14 months previously had been removed from Woodstock to Tadmarton, because he induced two boys to improperly procure beer for him out of their father's cellar; whether he is aware that very general dissatisfaction has been expressed in the district by the action of the Bench and the police; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiries into this case, and am informed that the conviction took place as stated. The Bench were more satisfied with the evidence of the constable and the independent testimony of a very reliable witness, than with the evidence for the defence. I do not gather that the Chairman used the words quoted, but stated that the antecedents of the constable did not affect his credibility as to a plain matter of fact. The Chief Constable informs me that the constable was removed from Tadmarton for drunkenness, but he has no record of his having been removed from Woodstock under the circumstances stated. Both the Chief Constable and the Justices inform me that they are not aware of any general dissatisfaction in the district with the action of the Bench and the police.

TROOPS IN NATAL AND ZULULAND.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War for what reason leave beyond the limits of the command continues to be withheld from the troops stationed in Natal and Zululand, and when it will be reopened?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am not able to say when the ordinary conditions as to leave can be reverted to in Zululand. It is dependent on military considerations, as to which the general officer commanding in South Africa must be sole judge.

IRELAND—THE SURVEYOR OF INCOME TAX AT DERRY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a warrant was lately issued by the surveyor of Income Tax at Londonderry against Mr. John Tracy, of Newtown Cunningham, in Donegal, in respect of Income Tax upon property, but was discharged on evidence that the ownership was not in Mr. Tracy; whether it is a fact that during the discussion the Surveyor asked Mr. Tracy, "Why did you get your name in for a vote on another person's property;" and if he will explain how an electoral franchise concerns the Surveyor of Taxes as such?

*MR. GOSCHEN: An assesment having been made on Mr. Tracy in respect of a holding for which he was rated as owner and occupier, Mr. Tracy explained that he was not the owner. The Surveyor of Income Tax then asked Mr. Tracy whether he was rated for the purposes of obtaining a vote, in order to

ascertain how his name appeared in the Rate Book when the property was not his,

THE CORK JUSTICES.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached him that considerable difficulty and trouble has been experienced in the Cork Police Office during the past six months, owing to the non-attendance of Justices; whether it is true that the local resident magistrate, Mr. Gardiner, has been most frequently absent; and whether some steps will be taken to remedy the grievance complained of?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No complaints of the nature indicated in the question have reached me; nor does there appear to be any ground for such complaints. The Court is held daily and has not once fallen through during the past six months by reason of the non-attendance of magistrates. The resident Magistrate invariably attends except when prevented by more pressing duties.

DR. TANNER: Am I to understand that the Court has not been repeatedly adjourned from 11 o'clock owing to the non-attendance of magistrates until 12 and even later?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I stated was that the holding of the Petty Sessions had never fallen through. Whether the Court was adjourned for an hour or two I cannot tell.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Mr. Ker, the Governor of the Falkland Islands, who returned to this country last autumn, has recently gone out to resume the duties of his office, although he is now in his 72nd year; whether he will explain why, although the usual term of a Colonial Governor's office is six years, Mr. Ker has held the government of the Falkland Islands for nearly 10 years, and whether the reappointment of a Colonial Governor who is over 60 years of age is usual; whether specific charges have been made against Mr. Ker, amounting to wilful contravention of quarantine regulations, and the consequent importation of infectious disease, attended with much loss of life, into the Falkland Islands by Mr. Cobb, an unofficial member of the Executive Council of the Falkland Islands, and by Mr. James Smith; and whether the memorials of these gentlemen, embodying these charges, have been received by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; whether Mr. Smith has also, in his memorials to the Secretary of State, accused the Governor of the embezzlement of a sum of £900, and the falsification of public accounts, with the object of concealing that embezzlement, and prayed an investigation into these charges, which have been openly made throughout the Colony; whether the attention of the Governor was directed to these charges during his stay in this country; whether Mr. Smith and Mr. Cobb had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the replies of the Governor to their deliberate statements, which they have expressed themselves ready and willing to prove; Why, having regard to the gravity of these charges against the Governor, has there been no public investigation into his conduct; and why, having regard to his advanced age, has the unusual course been adopted of permitting him to hold his office for a period far in excess of the term for which such offices are usually held?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The greater portion of hon. Member's questions were answered by me on the 12th July last. As regards the remaining portion I have to state that there is no rule against the reappointment of Governors of more than 60 years of age, and that Mr. Ker, who is believed to be about 70, is in full physical and intellectual vigour. The Secretary of State has received the memorials of Mr. Smith and Mr. Cobb; no accusation of embezzlement is made in them, and for the reasons which I gave to the hon. Member on a former occasion the Secretary of State does not think any enquiry necessary; but if the hon. Member will communicate with me I shall be happy to give him any further particulars.

MR. MAC NEILL: I will make a statement on this subject on the Estimates.

EMIGRATION TO CHILI.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Lord Salisbury, in his capacity of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, nas been directed to the following passage in the *Chilian Times* of the 7th December, 1889, the only English Paper printed in Chili, and reproduced in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 28th January, 1890:

"We regret to say that the Government agents are making things very unpleasant with regard to British immigrants. The old frauds with respect to the value of money and the rates of wages are being perpetrated again, with the result that a considerable number of British immigrants are dependent upon the charity of their countrymen for support. All applicants are strongly recommended to come out, no matter what their trade may be or whether they have a trade or not, and they are assured that work at fabulously high wages awaits them on arrival. . . . As an instance of the sufferings to which British immigrants are exposed, we may mention that a meeting, at which the British Minister presided, was held at Santiago last Saturday evening to establish a fund for the relief of distressed immigrants."

And whether the Government will take any measures in the future to check frauds on the part of emigration agents and to relieve the distress of the dupes of these agents?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The particular statements mentioned in the question have not been reported to the Foreign Office, but a Report on emigration to Chili has been received from Her Majesty's Minister at Santiago, and is being printed for Parliament, and will be communicated to the Emigrant Inquiry Office. It is stated in that Report that certain emigrants from this country had found difficulty in obtaining employment, and that the Chilian Government had assisted them in doing so. The attention which has been attracted to the subject may serve as a caution to intending emigrants, but Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake responsibility for the acts of agents who are not under their control.

IRELAND—CONDITION OF PRISONS

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a letter from John Roche, M.D., D.S.Sc., which appeared in the *Medical Press and Circular* in September last, stating that the pallor, tremor, loss of eyesight, and affections of the eyes, which supervene in many cases after admission to a large number of gaols in Ireland, can be traced to the insufficient aeration of the cells; is it a fact that the majority of the prison cells in Ireland are under 11 feet high, and without a chimney; and whether, having regard to the fact that there are cells in Tullamore and Derry Gaols nine feet by six feet by 10 feet high, and without fireplace or chimney, he will give directions to the Prisons Board to see that no prisoner in future will occupy a cell with defective ventilation, and to make such alteration in the space and aeration of prison cells as will render them fit for habitation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: From a Report received from the medical member of the General Prisons Board it appears that the letter in question was written under a misapprehension of the facts. Neither does there appear to be any testimony as to the alleged injurious effects in many cases of imprisonment in Ireland. On the contrary, the health conditions of Irish prisons bear favourable comparison with English and Scotch prisons, and with public institutions generally. The facts are as stated in the second paragraph, but the conclusion drawn in the letter that the cells are thereby rendered unfit for habitation is groundless. The aeration of a cell is not measured solely by its height, but by its cubic contents. And in no modern prison in the United Kingdom, so far as the Irish Prisons Board know, are cells built with a fireplace and chimney, a means of heating and ventilation being otherwise provided. The cubic space in some of the cells in a few of the prisons is less than is desirable; and their improvement in this regard has been for some time engaging the attention of the Board. This applies to the case of Londonderry Prison, but not to that of Tullamore, the cells in which measure 14 feet long by six feet wide by nine feet high, and contain 756 cubic feet of space, which is over the standard required by the most modern ideas.

EMIGRATION TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Lord

Salisbury, in his capacity of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has been directed to the detailed accounts published in the *Freeman's Journal* of 25th January, 1890, relative to the hardships and privations of 600 men, women, and children, who, relying on the statements of emigration agents respecting the abundance of work and high wages, left in the *Durden* for Buenos Ayres, about 12 months ago, for the purpose of settling as emigrants in the Argentine Republic; whether it is true, as stated in the *Freeman's Journal*, that the wretched condition of these people, many of whom have been reduced to actual starvation, has been brought under the notice of the British Consul, who is either powerless or unwilling to aid them; whether any steps can be taken for the relief of these destitute people; and whether the Government, having regard to the great amount of misery inflicted on labourers and artisans who act on the reports of foreign emigration agents, will take any, and, if so, what measures for checking misrepresentations and putting the public in full possession of the facts relating to the labour market, wages, &c., of the country to which emigration is invited?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I think that the name of the ship mentioned in the hon. Member's question must be a misprint for *Dresden*. The case was discussed in this House last year, and is described at page 20 of the Parliamentary Paper, Commercial No. 32, 1889, which Paper contains full information on the points adverted to. It is hoped that the information afforded by several Departments and Offices on the subject of Emigration to South America is sufficient for the guidance of intending emigrants.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state when the Return of Vaccination Prosecutions, ordered last Session, will be laid upon the Table; and what is the cause of the delay?

Mr. MATTHEWS: The bulk of this return has been ready for some time, but there has been great difficulty in obtaining replies from a few places. Returns from three towns are still outstanding. As soon as these are collected the return will at once be presented.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: As the Commission now engaged in dealing with the Question has reached this head, will the right hon. Gentleman do his utmost to expedite the return?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir.

FLOGGING AUSTRALIAN NATIVES.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to a statement which has appeared in the *Christian Colonist*, an Adelaide newspaper, bearing date 18th October last year, saying that—

"The Chief Justice (Acting) of Western Australia has held that natives in the service of white men may be flogged by their masters. Several persons who had killed natives in this way were acquitted;"

whether he can state if the allegation contained in the last paragraph be correct; and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

Baron H. de WORMS: My attention has not been called to the article, but if a copy of it is furnished to me by the hon. Member the Secretary of State will consider whether an inquiry should be made.

TORY ISLAND.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made in the arrangements which proposed to connect Tory Island by telegraphic communication with the mainland; and when this projected improvement is likely to be carried out?

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: I have made inquiry of Lloyd's about this matter, and have received anything but a satisfactory report of the progress made. I shall communicate with them further on the subject.

NAVAL CADETS.

Mr. JEFFERYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is a fact that 49 Naval Cadets were sent out from Portsmouth to the Mediterranean last January in the storeship *Humber*, which only had proper accommodation for 15; and whether the boys had to sleep in hammocks slung in the hold of the ship, without any proper ventilation or sanitary

convenience; and whether the health of any of the boys has suffered in consequence of this overcrowding?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The facts of the case are simply these. It was necessary last month to send out 49 Naval Cadets to the Mediterranean, and as it was considered desirable that so large a number of young Cadets should be sent out in one of Her Majesty's ships, where they would be under proper supervision, rather than in a packet, passage was ordered for them in the *Humber*, the only vessel then available. There are cabins for only 10 superior officers on board the *Humber*, but there was other accommodation which, in the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, was suitable for these young officers. No ship's hold was used, as suggested in the question, and the main deck, where the hammocks were slung, was that usually appropriated for the berthing, messing, and living of 120 seamen, and is well ventilated and roomy. It is true that the messing accommodation was somewhat deficient, but the difficulty was met by arranging for the cadets to take their meals in divisions. The Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth himself inspected the ship, and was satisfied with the arrangements that were made. No Report has been received as to any case of sickness among the cadets who were sent out in the *Humber*.

ABUSE OF THE POSTAL SERVICE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware what advantage is taken by mischievous and malevolent persons of sending letters through the Post Office, purposely open, containing obscene, scandalous, and incriminating matter; and whether there is any power to stop such open letters in transit; and, if not, whether steps will be taken to put an end to such an abuse of the postal service?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): Missives of the kind referred to by the hon. Member have occasionally been sent through the post, but I think such cases have been sufficiently provided for by existing legislation. Under the present law no indecent, obscene, or offensive matter can be sent by post, and if tendered for transmission would be refused, or if detected in transit would be detained and confiscated, and the sender would be liable to prosecution. If the hon. Member has any particular case in his mind and will furnish me with the particulars I will have it properly investigated. I may state that a person was convicted in December last of sending offensive post cards and was fined £10 for each offence or one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

ANONYMOUS LEAFLETS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an anonymous leaflet, entitled *The present position of the Irish farmer under the Land Acts*, purporting to be a synopsis of the Land Act of 1881 and of the Ashbourne Act, was distributed by the Irish Constabulary amongst the farmers of Ireland generally, but in particular on estates, during the Parliamentary recess, where the combination known as the Plan of Campaign is alleged to exist; whether he can say by whom and for what purpose this document was published and distributed; whether it was with his knowledge and authority that the police undertook its distribution; and whether the expense of publication of this leaflet was defrayed by the public funds; and, if so, under what head or department will the amount appear on the Estimates to be submitted to Parliament?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The explanatory notice referred to was circulated by the Irish Government for the information of tenants throughout Ireland, many of whom appeared to be unaware of, or imperfectly acquainted with, their position under the land legislation of late years. The distribution was not specially made to any particular estates, but equally throughout Ireland. The notice was distributed by the Royal Irish Constabulary. It was also sent to post offices. The expenses of printing will be borne by the Stationery Office Vote. The miscellaneous expenses will fall, to the extent of about £31, on the Constabulary Vote, and of about £12 on the Chief Secretary's Office Vote.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): By whom was this document drawn up, and do the

Government hold themselves responsible for it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that the statements contained in it are perfectly trustworthy.

MR. SEXTON: Who prepared them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Who is responsible for the Law Officers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I take upon myself the responsibility.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Were the services of the Law Officers used and delegated in preparing the statements contained in this document?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it is usual for the Government to state the particular advice they receive from their law officers.

DISTURBANCES AT CONLAGOWN CHURCH.

DR. TANNER: A question appears on the paper in my name to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what was the cause of the disturbances which have quite recently taken place at Conlagown Church; and whether an immediate inquiry will be made into the case? As the question appears in a mutilated form I prefer to put it on a future occasion.

INDIA—SERVICES—AGE OF CANDIDATES.

MR. MARK-STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the despatch of the Secretary of State for India, raising the limit of the age of candidates, was concurred in by a majority of the members of his Council; and, if not, whether any dissents have been recorded; and whether there is any objection to lay such dissents, if any, upon the Table?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The despatch of the Secretary of State referred to in the question of the hon. Member was not concurred in by a majority of the members of the Council for India. If the hon. Member will move for the information for which he asks it will be laid upon the Table.

THE INDIAN INDEMNITY BILL.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India under what statutory authority the Secretary of State claims to have allowed the Indian Indemnity Bill of the 14th October last so that disallowance is now impossible; whether the sole statutory provisions as to the power of the Crown to disallow laws and regulations made by the Governor General of India, in Council, are those contained in the 24 and 25 Vic. c. 67, ss. 21 and 23; whether the power of the Crown to disallow under Section 21 can be exercised without limit of time, and under Section 23 within six months from the promulgation of the ordinance; and whether the Government will give the House an early opportunity of discussing the Indian Indemnity Bill with a view to its disallowance?

SIR J. GORST: Section 21 of 24 and 25 Vic., c. 67, is the only section which empowers the Crown to disallow an Act which has been passed with the approval of the Governor General of India. No limitation of time is specified, but if an Act is disallowed, the disallowance is required to be signified by Her Majesty through the Secretary of State in Council. In the present case the Crown, having, through the Secretary of State, in the usual manner signified that the Act will be left to its operation, the Secretary of State is advised that the matter is at an end. The hon. Member for Northampton will therefore see that the last part of his question requires no answer.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman corrects the answer which he gave the other day that the Secretary of State had power to disallow an Act, although it might have been previously allowed?

*SIR J. GORST: If I said so I must have been guilty of some inaccuracy of language. When the Crown has signified its assent the Act must remain in operation.

INDIAN GRIEVANCES.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to a petition signed by Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., as President of the Indian National Congress, recently held in Bombay, asking

for the restoration of the right of raising matter of grievance, with Mr. Speaker in the Chair, prior to the annual Budget statement; and whether the Government will consent to a Resolution in the terms of that petition or in those of the Motion of the hon. Member for North Kensington?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): My attention has been called to a petition signed by Sir W. Wedderburn, as President of the Indian National Congress recently held in Bombay, and also to the Resolution founded on it standing in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge), but Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to recommend such an alteration in the rules of the House as is suggested in the question, as they are of opinion that it is of greater advantage to the interests of India that the time at which the Indian Budget should be considered should be fixed than that Motions should be raised on the Motion for going into Committee. A Bill will be introduced in the course of the present Session which will give hon. Members an opportunity for the discussion of Indian grievances.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the Bill to which the right hon. Gentleman refers likely to be introduced early in the Session? A very late introduction of a Bill would only further delay and irritate.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; I hope that it will be introduced at an early period, so as to afford the opportunity for discussion which hon. Members desire.

FOX-HUNTING.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the Minister for Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of numerous meetings of Chambers of Agriculture, Farmers' Clubs, and other bodies, which have recently been held to take into consideration the best means of carrying on fox-hunting; and, whether he proposes to take any steps in the interest of tenant farmers and agriculturists generally, either by making suggestions to masters of hounds, or by promoting a conference in London of those interested in the subject, to assist fox-hunting, by making it more beneficial to agriculture, and by settling the following among other questions: as to obliging fox-hunters by means of a general subscription to the hunt to pay for their sport as other people pay for other sports; as to requiring the payment of some increased subscription from horse dealers and others who use hunting as a means of livelihood; as to offering greater facilities to hunting men of purchasing their horses and forage direct from tenant farmers, instead of from middlemen, either by establishing a register, or by some other means; as to forming committees of agriculturists to confer with hunt committees, and appointing field stewards to check reckless riding, and wanton damage to fences, crops, and stock?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The hon. Member has put on the paper no less than six questions as to the best mode of carrying on fox-hunting in the future. I presume he addresses them to me rather in the character of an ex-master of foxhounds than in that of the President of the Board of Agriculture, for although I have referred again to the Act, and although the subject is one which is thoroughly congenial to me, it appears that, owing to an unfortunate omission on the part of Her Majesty's Government, the charge of fox-hunting interests was not included in the list of duties which were relegated to that Department at the time of the passing of the Act. At the same time the courtesy which is due to the hon. Member would induce me to offer the best reply that I can. The only meeting of the character to which he refers in his questions of which any report has reached me was a meeting, I understand, between representatives of the Warwickshire Chamber of Agriculture on the one hand and some gentlemen representing the South Warwickshire on the subject of barbed wire fencing being used in that county—a most pernicious practice, in my humble opinion, which often inflicts much suffering on horses as well as on hounds, which is frequently attended with serious danger to the limbs and even the lives of human beings, and which, if it became general, must be absolutely destructive of hunting in this country, altogether. But from what I know my-

self of Warwickshire farmers, and, until I am assured to the contrary, I shall decline to believe that an amicable understanding will not quickly be come to which will be satisfactory to all parties who are concerned. I am afraid of detaining the House, but the hon. Member goes on to ask whether I propose, by making suggestions to masters of hounds or by a conference in London, to promote any one or all of the following objects :—First, to make a subscription compulsory on every one who goes out hunting; secondly, to require an increased subscription from dealers and others who make a livelihood from it; thirdly, to offer facilities for the purchase of horses and forage direct from farmers rather than middlemen; and fourthly, to check wanton damage to fences, to crops, and to stock. As to the last point that is a matter which can be far more effectually dealt with by the master than by any one else, and with regard to the others, I do not propose to take any action of the kind he suggests. First, because I should regard it as outside of the province of this Department; and secondly, because I am of opinion that matters of this kind are far better left to the good sense and the good feeling of the parties concerned.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE.

MR CHARLES DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what is now the condition of Germany and of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein in regard to foot-and-mouth disease amongst the cattle there, and whether there is any immediate prospect of the import of cattle from those countries being soon permitted?

MR. CHAPLIN: The statistics prepared by the Imperial sanitary authority for the third quarter of 1889 showed that foot-and-mouth disease was very widely spread over Germany, and that it attacked during that quarter 78,501 cattle. 58,530 sheep, 15,917 swine. Amongst other places where it existed during that quarter were Lubeck, on the boundary of Holstein, Hamburg, and Bremen, the two latter being also near to the Holstein frontier. By a return compiled by the Prussian Ministry of Agriculture up to December 31 the disease still existed at Lüneburg, near Hamburg, as well as in other parts of Germany and the Rhine provinces. By a further return from the German Embassy, dated the 1st inst., covering a report from the Brunswick Ministry, the disease was reported in two districts in that province. It has not been the practice to admit cattle from Schleswig-Holstein between December 31 and the end of June following, when the cattle from that country, which are grass fed, are ready for exportation. Even if an Order were now passed it is improbable that the trade would be important, but if effectual measures are taken by the German Government to check and restrain, there is no reason why the Board should not consider the question again before the time when the Order is usually passed. I can assure my hon. Friend that these restrictions shall not be maintained a moment longer than I believe them to be necessary.

GROCERS' LICENSES IN SCOTLAND.

MR. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been directed to the Report of the Royal Commission on Grocers' Licenses in Scotland, and whether he is prepared to take any steps to give legislative effect to the recommendations which that Commission made 12 years ago?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: My attention has recently been directed to the Report referred to, but I cannot give the hon. Member any undertaking that the Government will at present propose legislation on the subject.

TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is now prepared to grant the prayer of the Telegraph Clerks throughout the United Kingdom, for the abolition of deductions from their pay during absence from duty caused by sickness?

*MR. RAIKES: I fear, Sir, that this is not altogether practicable; but a scheme is now under my consideration which will, I hope, go no little way in the direction indicated.

MOUSSA BEY.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true, as stated in telegrams received from

Constantinople on Friday, that the Public Prosecutor has decided that there is no ground for proceeding with the principal counts in the indictment drawn up for the new trial of Moussa Bey?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: We are informed that in the late trial Moussa Bey was acquitted on four points; that subsequently in three other cases what we call a *prima facie* case was not held to be established; that some others of an important character remain under consideration by the Public Prosecutor's Department, but are as yet not in a stage to go to trial. In the case of certain other very grave accusations fresh evidence has been required from the scene of the alleged crimes.

IRELAND—POLICE ESCORTS.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by whose authority a police escort has been recently following Mr. John Fitzgibbon, of Castlerea, when attending at funerals, at quarter sessions, at mass, and at the meeting of the Suck Drainage Board, of which he is a member; what is there in the state of the county of Roscommon which justifies this use of members of the constabulary, who might be either dispensed with altogether or allowed to discharge the ordinary duties of constabulary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Member to defer the question until to-morrow.

THE MAYOR OF CORK.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on Tuesday last, the 11th instant, at the Cork terminus of the Great Southern Western Railway, on the arrival of the 1.30 train from Mallow, Head Constable Cummins, of the Irish Police, forcibly prevented Mr. D. Horgan, Mayor of Cork, from speaking to Mr. Thomas Barry, Poor Law Guardian of Killaraller, who arrived by the said train, under escort, being a bail prisoner; whether it is a fact that the Head Constable, on being remonstrated with by the Mayor, stated he did so by authority, those being his orders, and by what authority, and by whose orders, did the policeman in question act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that a cordon of police was drawn around the prisoner to preserve order. Mr. Horgan endeavoured to force his arm through the cordon. The Head Constable kept the prisoner back. The orders referred to by the Head Constable are the ordinary orders of the Force, and the practice on such occasions.

THE ARRAN MURDERER.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, whether he will communicate to the House the substance of the Report of the three medical experts appointed by the Secretary for Scotland, to examine the mental condition of J. W. Laurie, who was convicted of the murder of an English tourist in Arran: and, whether these experts unanimously reported that in their judgment Laurie was "not irresponsible;" and, if so, upon what grounds the Secretary for Scotland advised Her Majesty to commute the capital sentence?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: It would be quite contrary to practice for me to communicate to the House the substance of the Report received by the Secretary for Scotland. I may, however, inform the hon. Member that the words quoted in the question were not used by the medical experts.

THE ARREARS ACT.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, what was the amount paid to Mr. Percy Morgan, J.P. for the counties of Westmeath, Roscommon, and Wexford, under the Arrears Act of 1882, on account of arrears alleged to be due by his tenant Bernard Clogher, of Cartron, in the county Roscommon; in the Schedule sworn to by Mr. Morgan what was the amount alleged to be the then annual rent; and, in the same Schedule, sworn to before Mr. C. Handcock, J.P. for Westmeath, on the 28th November, 1882, what was the amount of arrears alleged to be due on the 1st day of November, 1880?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners ask that this question may be deferred until Friday.

QUESTIONS.

COLONEL HUGHES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, having regard to the fact that last Session there were 5,987 printed Questions on the Order Paper, he will consider the advisability also of printing the Answers to Questions?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The subject to which my hon. and gallant Friend calls attention is one involving considerations of great difficulty. There is little doubt that considerable waste of the time of this House occurs by the practice of putting questions to Ministers which might more suitably form the subject of a letter to the Minister whose Department is concerned; but it is at least doubtful whether the proposal that all answers should be printed would be adopted by the House without lengthened debate. The subject is not one on which the Government is prepared to invite the consideration of the House at present.

THE LUNACY LAWS.

MR. SALT (Stafford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if a Bill for the consolidation of the Lunacy Laws will be introduced during the present Session; and, if so, whether such Bill will be one of simple consolidation only, or whether fresh legislation will be introduced; and, if the latter, whether care will be taken to indicate distinctly in which respects new matter is contained in the Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: A Bill will shortly be introduced relating to the Lunacy Laws, and it will be one of simple consolidation only. No fresh legislation will be introduced. The Lunacy Laws Amendment Act of last Session comes into force on the 1st of May, and it is hoped that the Consolidation Act, as a Code for the guidance of those concerned in the administration of the law, may be passed before that date.

THE SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollux): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Scotch Education Code for 1890 was laid upon the Table of the House in a completed condition, capable of being sent out to be printed; and whether the same was in the possession of the officials of the House only in a state of "dummy"?

MR. W. H. SMITH: A misconception has arisen as to the answer given by my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate on Tuesday to the hon. Member. The rule which governs the practice of the Department was strictly followed with regard to the Scotch Education Code for 1890. The title of the Code was laid on the Table of the House, and the Code itself in its complete and final form was sent for printing and distribution on the same day to the printers of the House by the Scotch Education Office. I am informed that the printers hope to be able to distribute the Code on Tuesday.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. PARNELL (Cork City): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps the Government propose to take with regard to the Report of the Special Commission?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government propose, Sir, to invite the House to state

"That Parliament, having constituted a Special Commission to inquire into the charges and allegations made against certain Members of Parliament and other persons, and the Report of the Commissioners having been presented to Parliament, this House adopts the Report and thanks the Commissioners for their just and impartial conduct in the matters referred to them; and orders that the said Report be entered on the Journals of the House."

I hope it will be in my power to move this Resolution on Monday next, but I name the date subject, of course, to the progress of public business. It is obvious that the Address must be disposed of in the first instance, and that the exigencies of Supply must also be considered. The House is aware that certain financial measures must be passed before the expiration of the financial year in the month of March; but, subject to these conditions, it will be the desire of the Government to ask the House to consider this Resolution at the earliest possible moment.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Address will be moved by Sir Richard Webster?

MOTIONS.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (NAVAL, MILITARY, AND POLICE BILL.)

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to remove certain Disabilities of persons engaged in Naval, Military, and Police Duty to be registered as Electors at Parliamentary and Local Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General and Mr. Solicitor General.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 146.]

ALLOTMENTS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ritchie, Bill to provide for an appeal from a sanitary authority failing to carry into effect "The Allotments Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Chaplin, and Mr. Long.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 147.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [14th February.]—[See page 332.]

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate resumed.

(4.15.) MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork, N.E.): I think that we Irish Members, at all events, have some right to complain of the habit—the growing habit—of the Chief Secretary to defer his speeches until the end of all Irish debates when there is no sufficient opportunity for answering him. There is clearly no sufficient object in following speakers like the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), through the burlesque entertainment, very rollicking and very amusing, no doubt, which he presented to the House the other night. So far as I can see, the only serious statement made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman was that Ireland is at the present moment happy, tranquil, and thriving. But he told us in a sentence or two afterwards, or, at all events, he expressed a somewhat diffident hope, that this same Ireland would soon come to her senses. Well, Sir, when a man in one sentence tells us that Ireland is perfectly happy and in the next breath tells us she is perfectly mad, I do not think it is straining matters too much to conclude that it is possibly the hon. and gallant Member's own faculties rather than those of the people of Ireland that are temporarily in a state of disrepair. But, at any rate, the hon. and gallant Member is not the man we wanted to hear or have a right to hear. Still less was it the inoffensive and learned gentleman who was put up to answer the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). The Chief Secretary for Ireland is the man responsible for the administration of Ireland, and if he has a defence to make we ought to hear it in good time to be in a position to answer it. I venture to submit that he has no right to lie in ambush until the end of the debate when we will have no opportunity of returning his fire or of exposing his inaccuracies. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman will stand up to-morrow night and make a very clever speech. We admit that he always does make clever speeches, evading always great issues, full always of small points and smartnesses. It is not the right hon. Gentleman's brilliancy and gibes and sophistries that we impugn; that is a matter for his own Party, who have had to suffer pretty dearly for the right hon. Gentleman's sarcastic fireworks. The point for us is whether his gibes and his *nisi prius* points have succeeded in crushing the National League, and whether they have succeeded in altering by one jot or hair's-breadth the feeling of determination of the Irish people. The hon. Gentleman, a couple of weeks ago, told us in a public letter that he was perfectly delighted with the progress he has made in the affections of the Irish people. [*Expressions of dissent.*] All I can say is that the letter is in existence, and that I read it myself in the *Manchester Examiner*, the right hon. Gentleman's own paper. I do not deny that the Irish people have made lately a very remarkable demonstration of their feelings in regard to the right hon. Gentleman. During his short term of office they have raised no less a sum than £120,000 by way of a national testimonial in acknowledgment of his services, but, somehow or other, instead of presenting it to the right hon. Gentleman they presented it to the National League—that National League which

he assured this House almost two years ago, on his reputation as a statesman, was as dead as a door nail, and was a thing of the past. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman is free to take his choice between those phrases.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I never used them.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: All I can say is that I am speaking within the recollection of the House, and I leave it to the House to decide whether I have invented the phrase, or whether the right hon. Gentleman has successfully forgotten it.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I only interrupt because the hon. Gentleman distinctly misrepresents something I said in the House two years ago. What I stated then was that in the suppressed districts the National League was a thing of the past.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman will get very much comfort from that. At this moment it is very hard to tell what is, or what is not, a suppressed district. If there is one county in Ireland which is unquestionably a suppressed district it is the County of Cork. That suppressed district has just contributed £8,000 to the support of the evicted tenants of the right hon. Gentleman's administration. That is how the Irish people have testified their appreciation of, and their delight in, the right hon. Gentleman. No doubt he is a great favourite with the loyal minority; but up to the present the admiration of the loyal minority has not taken the form of £120,000, although we are so constantly assured that the loyal minority possess all the wealth and all the public spirit of the community. At the present moment it seems to task all the wealth and public spirit of the loyal minority to raise a small collection for one of the unfortunate victims of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). The results have been modestly concealed up to the present. I should not be surprised if, in the hon. Member's next indiscreet moment, we have him blurting out that the loyal minority are "dead-heads" in the matter of subscriptions as well as "dead-heads" in intellect; that they are "laggards in love as well as dastards in war." They have to come to England for their subscriptions, as they have had to go to Scotland for their orator. Seriously speaking, we now have had nearly three years of the Government's oppressions and of their prosecutions and of their sneering speeches, and where have they all landed us? How often are we told in this House that there are two rival powers in Ireland, and that this Act was passed to crush one of them. Has it been crushed? Will anyone stand up in this House and say that he seriously believes that the rival power is not this day more deeply rooted than ever, or more powerful than ever, than anything else in those suppressed districts, and more likely than ever it is to end, instead of being driven out, in driving the Government out of the Island, and becoming the National Government itself? [*Ministerial cheers.*] I cannot altogether interpret that cheer; I only know that it is not a cheer which seems to indicate much hope. All I can say, as to the glosses that are put upon every idle word that Irish Members speak, is that they speak their sentiments plainly enough, and the English people understand them thoroughly. The Government of Ireland is supposed to rest upon some sort of moral authority. Where is their moral authority in Ireland? What moral authority of any sort or type have they outside the walls of their gaols, or the range of their buckshot? Nobody loves them in Ireland; nobody serves them except for pay, either past, present, or to come. My hon. Friend the Member for Cork reminded the House that the Chief Secretary has had the greatest opportunity that a Chief Secretary ever had in recent times in Ireland. He has had years of reviving trade. He has had the country absolutely free—no thanks to him—from those terrible murder conspiracies that his predecessors had to deal with. He has had all those advantages, and he has flung his oppportunity away through the miserable vanity, for it comes to nothing else, of attempting to get a triumph over the Plan of Campaign. He has covered his party with the odium of perfectly objectless and futile coercion, and, like the old man in the fable, he has lost his ass into the bargain—instead of the right hon. Gentleman conquering the Plan of Campaign it has conquered

him. It is the Government who are responsible, not merely for originating the Plan of Campaign, but it is they, and they alone, who are responsible during the past two years for continuing it. Again and again in this House, within those two years, the Irish Members undertook to put an end to the Plan of Campaign upon the one condition of the Government honestly giving to the Irish tenants the benefit of the land legislation of 1887, which they by their own sacrifices forced upon the Government. During the last two years the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has been endeavouring not to suppress crime, but to put the people on the Plan of Campaign estates outside the pale of the law, treating them as *hostes humani generis*, whom it was open for any one to crush; he has been trying, in the words of the hon. Member for South Hunts, to teach a lesson to those men for daring to combine, for daring to be in the right, for daring to be more than a match for the Government and the right hon. Gentleman. You have been trying to crush and exterminate those tenants by your superior force, by your wealth, and by the cruel powers of that Coercion Act which was given to you for a totally different purpose; you have been trying to make an example of this poor body of Irish tenants, and this poor body has made an example of you—for it has stirred up the blood of Englishmen against the petty vindictive and detestable tyranny which has been maintained. One single generous Arrears Clause in your Act of 1887 would have saved all the difficulty; if you had made a single step in the direction of arbitration you would have settled the difficulty long ago, and you would have had perfect tranquillity and an absolute *tabula rasa* for carrring out a Tory policy. But it was not peace, but triumph, that you desired. You found it easier to continue your miserable policy of coercion than to produce a new policy which avoided coercion. You have striven for nothing else than to crow over us. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary wished to crush the men who have followed and trusted us; I think that if the right hon. Gentleman is satisfied with the results, Mark Tapley ought to have been a Tory Irish Secretary. At every bye-election, in every town and village of England, we see that the people of Great Britain are finding out that instead of crushing the national spirit in Ireland the Government have been simply revivifying and intensifying it. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh affected to discover some incongruity in the terms of this Amendment; but the confusion exists only in the mind of the hon. and gallant Member. What we charge the Government with is that they have in Ireland the most crimeless country in Europe, and yet are not able to govern it, in spite of deeds worthy of Russian despotism, only so much meaner and scurvier. The right hon. Gentleman has brought this ignominy on himself and his party in the vain endeavour to crush a few hundred Irish tenants, whose cause is so just that neither the Chief Secretary nor the landlords dared to submit it to the opinion of any fairly-constituted Court. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh made some vague and apparently rather bothered assertions as to the right hon. Gentleman's success in Ireland. Against these vague assertions we place propositions which can easily be tested by facts and particulars. The right hon. Gentleman has undertaken five different lines of attack upon public liberty in Ireland. We are in a position to prove that upon every one of those lines the right hon. Gentleman has been ignominiously routed. He undertook to put down the Plan of Campaign, and failed. He undertook to crush the National League and failed; to intimidate the Press; he failed there ignominiously. He undertook to extract evidence by Star Chamber inquiry, and he failed again. He undertook to make imprisonment in Ireland a badge of degradation and disgrace—well, I will leave the English people to give their opinion upon that question some fine day. The right hon. Gentleman undertook to put down boycotting in the sense of exclusive dealing, such as the Irish Party have ever preached, and such as I myself for one, in the circumstances of Ireland, preach still. I wish that the right hon. Gentleman would lay upon the Table the confidential Report of his commander-in-chief in Kerry, Colonel Caddell, as to how he has succeeded. Colonel Caddell only two weeks ago, after a campaign of six months' terrorism in Tipperary, was

himself ignominiously evicted from the chief hotel in the town, and had to fall back upon the police barracks. I am told that the proprietor of the hotel, himself a magistrate, made a pilgrimage to Dublin Castle to beg that this man, who was going to liberate the people of Tipperary from intimidation, should be directed to clear out of his hotel. We can name struggle after struggle, particular after particular, in which the right hon. Gentleman has failed; can the right hon. Gentleman name any single particular in which the Irish Party has failed, or one single struggle which was going on when he passed his Coercion Act, which is not going on now, unless it is one which has ended in a triumph for the people of Ireland? If the right hon. Gentleman has the courage of his own self-complacency, I hope and pray that he may be tempted to go one step further, and that he and his noble relative may give us an opportunity of a General Election, to try whether the electors of Great Britain are as perfectly delighted with his work in Ireland as the right hon. Gentleman himself is. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh was in fear that we on this side of the House have overlooked the struggle that is going on in Tipperary on the Ponsonby estate. But the hon. and gallant Gentleman need not have been in the least apprehensive. If there is a man in this House who at this moment looks more supremely foolish than the Chief Secretary, it is the unlucky Member for South Hunts. He has fallen a victim to the boast of the Chief Secretary; he guilelessly believed that the power of the National League was a thing of the past, and that their resources were exhausted. He has fallen a victim to the disastrous prophecy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, that the mission of the hon. Member for East Mayo to Australia would not defray his personal expenses. In an unlucky hour the hon. Member for South Hunts believed that the ground was clear for the Tory policy of 20 years, coercion in Ireland, with its much more important pendant of 20 years' purchase for the Irish landlord. In an unlucky hour for him he started out on his adventures as the champion of the landlords and the conqueror of the Plan of Campaign, and he has had his adventures. Tough customer as the hon. Member may be, he has met tougher customers still; he has tackled Tipperary and he has caught a Tartar, and to judge by appearances he does not seem to be quite satisfied. With regard to myself, the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh has charged me with some policy of vengefulness against the hon. Member for South Hunts. I can assure him that so far from that being the case I never had the pleasure of beholding the hon. Member until he was pointed out to me on Friday night. My only feeling is one of commiseration for him in his present plight, and for the misery and suffering he has wantonly brought upon a body of tenantry who never wronged him, and whom his own agent has described as the victims of monstrous rack-renting. During the past two weeks Canon Keller and myself have had the opportunity of showing the facts to English audiences, and we have had the advantage of his following us and replying to us. The hon. Member has had assistance, also, from that respectable body represented by Mr. Houston, which has established such a title to be heard as a pattern of truth and honour and honesty. I beg the hon. Member's pardon; I believe that the hon. Member has not had the assistance of that body, but of the Liberal Union. For my own part, I have never heard of the Liberal Union. He has had the assistance also of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who I rather suspect is the Liberal Union of Ireland himself. That hon. Member seems to be taking up the *rôle* of public orator for every rack-renting landlord in distress in Ireland. He went to Manchester; but instead of arguing the matter with the people of that city he said, "It is time that somebody should take this man (meaning myself) by the throat." I should have imagined there had been enough of taking me by the throat, both literally and figuratively, within the past few years; and it is rather a bad compliment to the hon. Member's friend and patron, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, to suggest the process should now be begun all over again. But I do not at all resent the hon. Member's metaphors from the New Cut. If, however, he is going to follow me in this debate, I should like to remind the House of the

wrigglings of the hon. Member upon this very question within the last few years. In 1886 he opposed the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork on the ground that there was really no particular crisis in Ireland at all, and that the farmers were very well off. But the Plan of Campaign in the following winter, and possibly some hints from the tenant-farmers of Tyrone, taught him the bitter urgency of that crisis. He did not think the Bill of the next Session half Radical enough; and hon. Members will remember, when the House of Lords threw out an Amendment which was not very important, the hon. Member's theatrical cry of "God help the Irish farmers," and they will remember also how the hon. Member threw up his engagements—Achilles sulked in his tent until Achilles's brother-in-law was appointed a Land Commissioner at a salary of about £900 a year. I only mention these things as two contemporary facts. The fact stands that the hon. Gentleman, who in 1886 opposed the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork, and in 1887 thought the Land Bill not half sweeping enough, in 1888 devoted himself to the hateful work of attempting to deprive the tenants of Ireland of the benefits of the Land Act. That is the record of the hon. Gentleman's work. For the last two years no emergency man in Ireland has been doing the landlords' humblest work more persistently—I do not like to say more venomously, but I feel bound to add with more splendid, unfailing and unvarying ill-luck, than the hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether the hon. Member is responsible for the brilliant banking arrangements on the Coolgreany estate; but I do know that the hon. Member is responsible for helping Mr. Olphert to desolate a whole country side, with the result that Mr. Olphert is begging, but unrepentant, to-day. I do not think Mr. Olphert was deeply enamoured of the advice of the hon. Gentleman; but poor creatures as may be the Ulster dead-heads, who figure as the mutes in a circle of Ulster minstrels, in which the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh is the banjo, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone the bones, I am rather inclined to think that at this moment Mr. Olphert would prefer the stupidity of the average Ulster deadhead to the mischievous activity of the hon. Member who bears the integrity of the British Empire on his shoulders. Let me now come back to the struggle on the Ponsonby estate. The facts are too plain and too strong for hon. Gentlemen opposite. Can the hon. Member for South Hunts deny that his own agent, who was employed by the syndicate, has himself, in a letter which is extant, acknowledged that the rents on that estate are exorbitant and indefensible? Let him read that letter to the House. It is a private letter, which was never intended for publication, but whenever we unearth guilt our publications are, at all events, genuine. We have no forged letters. The tenants have impregnable justice on their side to begin with. Further, can the hon. Member deny that the tenants offered and the landlord refused arbitration, because, as the Tory Recorder of Cork said, arbitration would involve a victory for the Plan of Campaign? If the Plan of Campaign is the fantastic swindle which the hon. Member for North Armagh has described, why is he afraid of arbitration, unless hon. Members know in their hearts that any victory for justice or truth must involve a victory for the Plan of Campaign? Can the hon. Member for South Hunts deny that Mr. Ponsonby's late agent stated in a letter that the whole thing was on the point of settlement between the landlord and his tenants when the hon. Member and his syndicate stepped in and wrecked that prospect of a settlement? Upon the hon. Member rests the responsibility and the guilt of clearing the whole estate of its wronged and rack-rented population. Let our opponents deal with these points; they are the marrow of the case. If they are dumb, if they are hazy on these points, what becomes of the miserable mystifications which the hon. Member addressed to the representatives of his Tipperary tenantry, who came over to London at their own expense and implored him and entreated him to withdraw from this inhuman and devilish work. These few words were quoted by the hon. Member, who forgets what the answer was of the hon. Member for South Hunts, the answer which he paraphrased himself in Manchester the other night, when he said he replied to them that he would "see them hanged first." What are those miserable points compared with the points that I have laid before the

House? What are they to the talk about some wretched complimentary address presented about 20 years ago, written, of course, by the estate bailiff of Mr. Ponsonby, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had not come to the rescue of the tenants, who were as helpless and servile as a flock of sheep. Again, I say, let them answer these points. We have justice on the tenants' side to begin with, readiness for arbitration all along, and a settlement which wou'd have been concluded only for the hon. Member's interference. If they can offer any satisfactory answer to these points, I venture to ask this House, when those Tipperary men's money is going to be used for the destruction of their fellow-countrymen on the Ponsonby estate, whether ever men were better justified in resenting and resisting; and I need hardly ask whether in the whole of history there were ever men who resisted more gloriously, more unflinchingly, and more valiantly, even when the whole force of the Coercion Act has been added to the weapons the hon. Gentleman already had at his command? The hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson) has raised the cry of intimidation producing this result. I think I shall have very little difficulty in showing that of all others this is the most disastrous plea that could possibly be raised by the friends of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Because it places them in this dilemma. In the first place, they will have to show what possible motive the people of Tipperary could have for intimidating themselves into giving up everything they possess in the world; and then, even if hon. Members could prove that they were such idiots, such lunatics, the Chief Secretary would be in the position of confessing publicly that the people of one small Irish town are more than a match for himself and his Coercion Acts and for all his bayonets, and are able to defy and to defeat all the terrors of eviction and coercion without, on their part, shedding one drop of blood. Now, first, as to this wild, this preposterous theory that the people are being forced into this fight against their will. I should not care to be the man who would walk down to intimidate and force the people of Tipperary, as the Chief Secretary and the Member for South Hunts ought to have discovered by this time. Take a specimen case. Mr. O'Brien Dalton, one of the tenants, has surrendered his property without a blow, without resistance, property which, it is admitted, was worth £4,000, rather than pay £40 to this work of extermination; a sum which was a mere bagatelle to a man in his position. What possible motive could that man have except the noblest motive that ever warmed an Irish heart—that ever warmed a human heart—to save his countrymen from ruin, to keep his money from being employed for the destruction of his poor, homeless fellow-countrymen? Now, let me ask who it is who is carrying on intimidation? In Heaven's name, who is it that could intimidate a man to make that sacrifice? Remember this: from beginning to end there has not been a single public meeting with bands and banners and contingents from other places. The right of meeting is absolutely at an end, even in the graveyard. The very funeral processions are proclaimed as illegal assemblies, and the proclamations are posted on the church gates while the coffin is being borne to its resting place. This whole fight from beginning to end has been carried on by the men of Tipperary themselves. I myself and my hon. Friend the Member for East York were absolutely the only outsiders of any sort or kind who addressed the people of Tipperary before they took action, and both of us the very first time we opened our mouths were prosecuted, though the Government dared not proceed with the prosecution. Where is the intimidation? As to dishonesty, it exists on the part of the landlord who has been taking £10,000 worth of property—who has robbed the tenants of it, because they would not subscribe a few pounds to help the work of extermination. What possible motive have these tenants in combining, except the motive which would prompt any body of Englishmen to stand shoulder to shoulder before they allow their rights to be trampled down by their employers? There was never a more glorious, a more unselfish, a more heroic Trades Union than that of the gallant men of Tipperary, against which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and the hon. Member for South Hunts are diverting all their forces and directing them in vain. But let us take the other alternative; let us admit

for the sake of argument that there is intimidation, what then becomes, of the right hon. Gentleman's boast? Here is one small Irish town in which, at the present moment, there are over 100 armed policemen and 700 soldiers—an armed man for every male adult in the whole population. There is a larger force in that little town than it takes to police such mighty cities as Manchester and Birmingham. Is it the case of the Coercionists that with all these forces at their back, with magistrates who can send men to gaol for winking and nodding, magistrates who only the other day sent a man to gaol for twelve months for simply saying to his own cousin, "Bridget, why should you serve the police?" although the Chief Secretary's own soldiers—the Manchester Regiment—had been guilty of the graver offence in the same town of boycotting the canteen in which the policemen were supplied; is it the case of the Coercionists, I say, that with all these terrifying forces at their back the right hon. Gentleman, after six months' struggle, is utterly hopeless in the presence of an unarmed people in a small Irish town? I could understand it if the Chief Secretary could point to one single murder or any bloodshed committed by the people in the whole course of this struggle. But, no; the hon. Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) may get up in this House and talk in general terms—he always does speak in general terms on such occasions—of crime and intimidation; but when such people are brought to book, apart from the one-night riots in Tipperary when some panes of glass were broken and powder squibs thrown about the streets by a number of unruly boys—[*Ministerial cheers.*]—yes, boys they must have been that an armed body of thirty-six policemen fired at, for of the five persons injured in the crowd the oldest was 20, the boy that was shot dead was 14, and two of the others were only 12 years of age—I say, apart from that disturbance, in respect of which no policeman had a single wound to show for himself, I defy the Chief Secretary or his Friend the hon. and gallant Member to point to a single policeman or bailiff or other officer of the law—I will not say killed, but even wounded, in the course of this tremendous struggle which has involved the depopulation of a whole town. Not a murder, and yet we have that marvellous spectacle unsurpassed in the annals of the world for heroism—the spectacle of those men day by day, week after week, and month after month, giving up their magnificent shops and warehouses without a blow, without a penny of compensation, street after street being reduced to the condition of a desert, and hundreds of tenants sacrificing thousands of pounds worth of property rather than contribute a single pound towards the work of extermination. Why, Mr. Smith-Barry's own manager there resigned his position with £300 a year rather than associate himself with the cruel work. Not a gallon of milk will be supplied to Mr. Smith-Barry's family, not a firkin of butter ever enters his market, not a man will deal with him in his quarries, and in a little time, if he does not get sick of the work, not a single human step will tread the streets of the town except armed policemen and emergency men. The whole business, the whole population of this town are moving away to the new town we are building for them. They will have their new butter market, their new weigh-yard, their new shops and warehouses—in fact, a new Tipperary from top to bottom. And is the House of Commons asked to believe that all this can happen day after day in a town with a force of 800 police and soldiers, to punish the slightest encroachment of the law, if such were attempted? Are we asked to believe that all this comes about purely through the medium of some sort of intimidation of which no one can give the slightest explanation? Ah! there has been intimidation in Ireland, but it is the people who have been intimidated. There have been murders, but the people were the victims, and the murderers are walking free this moment. But let the Chief Secretary try his worst. He has failed in Tipperary as he has failed everywhere else in a way so gross, so notorious to every urchin in Ireland that really there has been nothing more ludicrous heard of in England since the day Sir John Falstaff related his gallant exploits at Gadshill. We have all heard of the shuffling of the coercion thimbles by which certain proclamations in Ireland are withdrawn, and others substituted, and in such a way that nobody except lawyers, and

very few of those can understand under which thimble the pea is; but, as a matter of fact, nobody cares a button. Let me give an instance of what the trick of the loop about proclamations comes to. In County Roscommon proclamations under certain clauses of the Crimes Act were withdrawn. Was that because the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had won in that county? No; but because in every single struggle we are carrying on under the Plan of Campaign in that county we have victoriously carried the day in spite of all the right hon. Gentleman's proclamations and suppressions and prosecutions. On every estate in that county on which the Plan has been adopted we have had an unbroken series of victories right under the Chief Secretary's guns. And now because we have no more worlds to conquer there the right hon. Gentleman turns round and coolly tells the English people that County Roscommon is in so satisfactory a state that he can withdraw his proclamations, the fact being that it is in a satisfactory state simply and solely because he and his coercion and his proclamations have been defied and defeated, and hunted up hill and down dale through that county until there is nothing left for us to thrash. We have thrashed the Chief Secretary in the National League, we have thrashed him in the Plan of Campaign, and we have thrashed him in the constituencies. And whenever this Government goes to the British people at the General Election, as some day they will have to do, they will go with the reputation of thousands upon thousands of cruel deeds in Ireland, but of not one successful piece of tyranny in the whole lot. In one respect, perhaps, coercion has been a success. The right hon. Gentleman has brought suffering upon thousands and thousands, but it has been of immense advantage to our cause. There is one portion of the Amendment with which I rather disagree. It states that—

> "the happy growth of peaceful and amicable relations between the peoples of Ireland and Great Britain has been greviously impeded"

by coercion. Coercion has done nothing of the sort. It has quickened and intensified the happy growth of those relations. It has taught the Irish people that if they have defamers on this side of the Channel they have also got millions of earnest and devoted friends. The last few years have been years of darkness and suffering among the Irish people, but they have taught us how to know and to value our friends. We owe this largely to the blunders, the cruelties, and the sneers of the Chief Secretary. I believe whenever the Speech from the Throne contains, as it soon may contain, a final message of pacification and satisfaction of the aspirations of the Irish people, next to the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, whose genius has commended to the heart and intellect of the British nation the abstract justice and wisdom of Home Rule, we shall have to thank the Chief Secretary, whose follies have made Home Rule inevitable.

*(5.23) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South): I shall deal with the arguments of the hon. Member for North-East Cork in due time, but I wish first to refer to a personal matter. The hon. Member quoted, or rather misquoted, from the report of a speech I delivered in Manchester on Saturday night week, and intimated that I had advised personal violence being applied to the hon. Member. [MR. W. O'BRIEN: "Not at all."] What I said was this: I was dealing with the facts and the arguments of the hon. Member, and I said it was time that someone, so to speak—and these words he left out—should take this man by the throat.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I hope the hon. Member will allow me to say I never saw those words in the report. I never could maintain that language, which was employed metaphorically, was meant to be taken in any other way.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am glad to hear that, because if I had used the language literally it would have been most reprehensible, but it would have been milk and water compared with the phrases which the newspaper of the hon. Member is pouring forth upon his political opponents every week. That newspaper has exhausted the whole vocabulary of political blackguardism. The hon. and gallant Member for Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) said on Friday night that the force of these debates waned as the years rolled on. That is perfectly true. It is proverbially impossible to make bricks without straw, and but for the

speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork the case against the Government in regard to Ireland would be as weak as the case against them in regard to Portugal. A comparison was set up by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) on Friday night between the coercion of Lord Spencer and the coercion of the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour). I hear the coercion of Lord Spencer all but justified now on these Benches. I heard it said that coercion was required to meet the crime and the secret conspiracy which burrowed then under Dublin Castle. But did Lord Spencer and his Chief Secretary, who is now sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, get any more assistance from the hon. Member for Cork and his party in dealing with that crime and secret conspiracy in 1882 and 1883 than the right hon. Gentleman opposite gets now? Not one bit. Not only were hon. Members below the Gangway not content with standing idly by in 1882, watching the contest between the law and the League, but they charged Lord Spencer with murder and with being in league with informers, and they tried to blacken not only his public but his private character, and that of his Chief Secretary.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: No, never [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"]. Let any man say so outside the House.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Well, I will leave the right hon. Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan) to deny it. [Sir G. TREVELYAN was understood to deny.] Well, then, I must have strangely misread *United Ireland*. Now, eight years after, hon. Members are pleading justification for the Act of 1882. I do not think there has been anything like it since Saul of Tarsus, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," was changed into Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. Well, I have heard Mr. Forster lauded, I have seen Lord Spencer publicly embraced at the Eighty Club, and I see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton tolerated on these Benches. There may be great things in store for the Chief Secretary yet, if he only mends his ways and bends his neck to the yoke as other statesmen have done. There is a marked difference—the hon. Member for Cork is right—between the Crimes Act of 1882 and that of 1887. The Act of 1887 was passed under entirely different circumstances from tha of 1882. The Act of 1882 was passed in a panic in the face of appalling crime and of a secret and terrible conspiracy. When the Act of 1887 was passed, my recollection is that no one ever declared that crime had increased to an extent that had never been known before. It was passed because agrarian crime was rapidly increasing, because intimidation was rampant, because individual freedom had ceased to exist, and because jurors had constantly and notoriously violated the oaths they had taken. The hon. Member for Cork has stated that this Act of 1887 has been worked with a severity which was totally unnecessary, and that the crimes of 1880 and 1882, having passed away, there was no ground for applying that Crimes Act with the severity which had characterised its administration. But I wish to ask, why have those crimes, and why has that intimidation ceased to a great extent to exist? What, I ask, was James Fitzmaurice shot for? I suppose some hon. Members think that because he was shot in 1886 his case ought not to be referred to. Then, I ask, what was Cornelius Murphy shot for, and why were scores of other League victims shot? The Crimes Act of 1887 was passed in view of intimidation and its results, and if those results do not now follow with the same unerring precision as formerly we have not to thank hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) sitting on the Front Treasury Bench. The hon. Member for Cork was very severe in denouncing what he termed Press prosecutions. He tried to lead the House to believe that these newspaper editors had been in the main prosecuted for publishing reports of the suppressed branches of the Land League and for inserting certain letters in their papers. On this point I am free to say that I wish the clause of the Crimes Act which authorised punishment for reporting meetings of the suppressed branches of the League had not been inserted; but still that is not what newspaper editors are being prosecuted for now. The hon. Member for Cork has said there were 16 cases in which prosecutions took place under the clauses of the Act directed against Press offences. I will give you but one instance out of the 16 of what those prosecutions

were, and this instance will well illustrate the cruelty of the system of boycotting. The Mayor of Sligo is the editor of the *Sligo Champion*, and he was convicted of what is called a Press offence and sent to gaol. What was he sent to gaol for? Was it for publishing a report of a suppressed branch of the League, or a letter, or a report of a meeting? Nothing of the kind. I will read to the House part of the Judgment given by Mr. O'Connor Morris, the Chairman of the County of Sligo, and a gentleman against whom hon. Members below the Gangway have not brought any charge. On the contrary, he has rather been held up as a pattern Judge, because he has almost invariably made the prisoners whom he has sentenced under the Crimes Act first-class misdemeanants. He says—and I quote from the *Sligo Champion*—

"It arose in this way. A man named M'Dermott went to America, leaving his wife and family unprovided for, and to Coffey, who was a shopkeeper as well as a farmer, a certain amount became due for shop debts. Whether it was fair or unfair, Coffey was desirous to get the farm rented by the M'Dermotts in order to get back his debts. He gave a sum amounting to over £200 for it. His Honour asked—Was there anything wrong in Coffey bidding for this farm, morally, socially, or legally? The Common Law of the land, as well as common sense, would say it was a perfectly blameless and legitimate transaction, and 10 years ago that would have been the opinion of every one in Ireland. Whatever view certain people might take of it, was it a legal act?"

Two years ago Coffey, who simply bought a farm, was rigidly boycotted, and the editor of the *Sligo Champion* wrote an article vindicating such boycotting, and advocating its being carried out to its utmost limit. That was what the Mayor of Sligo was sent to gaol for, and not because he published a report of a suppressed branch or other meeting. Then, let us take the case of Tipperary. The hon. Member for Cork has stated that these prosecutions have been carried on in perfectly peaceful counties, and he pictures the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as carrying the brand of disturbance into places that have hitherto been quiet and free from excitement. I say, therefore, let us take Tipperary as a sample of a peaceful county. There is not the slightest doubt that the County of Tipperary two yeas ago was one of the quietest counties in Ireland, nor that it was a prosperous and peaceable county one year ago. How did it happen that the peace of that county was invaded? Its peace was invaded not by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, but by hon. Members below the Gangway. I hold in my hand a copy of the *Tipperary Nationalist*, which says—

"Tipperary, it must be confessed, was not quite up to the mark in sustaining the reputation which the fathers of the present generation achieved for the premier county."

This means that Tipperary was peaceful, quiet, and contented. The Nationalism of Tipperary was not the Nationalism of the present day, but that which John Mitchell propounded when he landed there 10 years ago, and told them that he understood by Home Rule "the sovereign independence of Ireland." These hon. Members went down to Tipperary, and in the Press and on every public platform they hurled reproaches against that county for its quiet and peaceful condition, and deliberately lashed it into fury and the people into action. They have had their desire, and at the present moment Tipperary is like a town across which an avenging army has marched. I say, then, that none of these Press prosecutions have been for the minor offences which the hon. Member for Cork put before the House, but rather offences inciting to intimidation and to boycotting. This is the only liberty of the Press which has been restrained or interfered with by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the administration of the Crimes Act. I am aware that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan) objects to punishment for incitement. He has stated that crime does not always follow incitement, and that it is dangerous to punish it. But I would remind the House that on the 24th May, 1882, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian used these words in this House—

"In our opinion not only is incitement to intimidation—especially if addressed to large masses and with influence at its back—not only is it a thing to be included as well as intimidation, but it is a thing of far greater responsibility and far greater legal and moral guilt than the mere execution of intimidation which has been inspired and suggested from high quarters."

I put the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian

against that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, and I think that of all the speeches that have been made in the course of this debate, that of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir G. Trevelyan) was the weakest. I am not going to quote his action in the years 1882 and 1883. I believe most thoroughly that he was sincere at that time. I am certain he is sincere to-day, and believes that he is right; but I do not profess to be able to square the circle, nor do I understand how the right hon. Gentleman can harmonise his position in 1886 with that which he takes in 1890. I shall, however, deal with his speech on its merits, and I would call attention to a curious mistake he made with regard to the Land Act of 1887. On Friday last, and in the country previously, he referred to the notices of eviction served under that Act, totalling them up to 12,000, and practically making out that they were all evictions—at any rate, that in their effects they were tantamount to evictions.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Yes, if the six months' right of redemption was not used.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No doubt the Act of 1887 materially changed the law with regard to evictions, but what was the system that was previously followed? The right hon. Gentleman knows what it was, because he himself evicted more tenants than the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. The system was this: The landlord obtained an ejectment decree, and if the tenant was to be evicted he was turned out without notice at all. He might be, and often was, re-admitted as a caretaker, but the physical eviction had already actually taken place. What the Act of 1887 did was this: it made the man a caretaker whenever a registered notice was served upon him. The mere service of that notice converted a tenant into a caretaker, and all his rights as a tenant ceased. The right hon. Gentleman has said 12,000 notices were served, but what was the number of evictions? There were 2,000 actual evictions in the years 1888-9, as against the 12,000 notices. If hon. Members will reduce this to a Rule of Three sum it will work thus: Given 12,000 notices served under the Act, with 2,000 evictions following, what has become of the balance of 10,000? Something must have happened to them. They must either have settled with their landlords or they must now be living rent free. The moment the notices were served on them they ceased to be tenants, and therefore could not pay rent; and if 10,000 of them have been left in their holdings, they must either have settled with the landlords or be living rent free, which would exactly suit hon. Members below the Gangway. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of duress under the Ashbourne Act; but he did not give a single case of duress, although he asserted that duress existed. I ask him to give us one case. The hon. Member for Longford declared not so very long ago that the Commissioners were carrying out their work in an admirable manner, and he had not one word to say against them. But now the right hon. Member comes down to the House and talks about the duress on purchasers without giving a single case. ["What about Draperstown?"] Why, the Commissioners refused to carry out the Draperstown proposal, and that is the very best argument in favour of the Ashbourne Act. The right hon. Gentleman said outside this House, and he repeated it on Friday night, that the hon. Member for North Monaghan had been put into gaol for advising the tenants not to buy certain lands.

*SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I stated in the House on Friday the facts of the case in which an indictment had been brought against the hon. Member for North Monaghan on another matter as well; but the Government, by indicting him for giving advice to the tenants, showed that they considered it a punishable offence. I quite acknowledge that the hon. Member was not put into gaol on that indictment.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am glad of that acknowledgment. Let the House understand that the hon. Member for North Monaghan was prosecuting the Plan of Campaign on the Smithwick estate in Kilkenny. What is the argument of the hon. Member for North-East Cork? I admit that I opposed the Tenant Relief Bill of the hon. Member for Cork in 1886, and I am not going to repeat the reasons why I opposed it. If another such Bill were brought in I would again

oppose it, and I plead guilty to the indictment of the hon. Member for North-East Cork. I did think the Bill of 1887, as it came down from the House of Lords, was defective, and I did my best to improve it, and succeeded. I will admit his third count in the indictment, too. I have laboured ever since against that system which he has been responsible for, and which has been declared by the highest Court in Ireland to be an illegal conspiracy.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I was certainly tried for it as an illegal conspiracy, and was not committed.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: All I can say is that Chief Baron Palles spoke of it as an illegal conspiracy.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I speak of a jury of my countrymen.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Chief Baron Palles declared the Plan of Campaign to be illegal in its very essence. I promptly admit that I have laboured as hard as I could during the past 18 months against that Plan of Campaign, and in doing so I have had the entire approbation of those I represent in this House. Now I come to the facts of the Ponsonby estate, and let me say that I think the hon. Member for North-East Cork treated them very gingerly. There were plenty of denunciations of the hon. Member for South Hunts and of myself in his speech, but there were very few facts regarding the Ponsonby estate. The charge of the hon. Member is that these tenants were rack-rented. I am not going to quote any address to the landlords. I quite agree with the hon. Member that it was probably drawn up by the bailiff—I do not care a fig. But I ask: have these rents been changed within living memory? There is no charge of a grasping, greedy, commercial landlord buying this estate and going over to Ireland forthwith and raising the rent and grinding down the tenant. The real fact is, that the rents have not been raised within living memory; and it is absurd on the part of any one knowing Ireland to say that rents paid during and since the famine can be called rack-rent. This House in 1881 devoted a great deal of time to passing an Act for the express purpose of dealing with rack-rented estates, and is it possible to believe that the Ponsonby tenants were rack-rented after the year 1881? If so, why did not these tenants leap into the Land Court to have their rents revised? What is the answer to that? Some of them did—27 of them, I think. What was the reduction made by the Land Court set up by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian? A reduction of 13 per cent.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Because the Land Commissioners were very much of the same character as the hon. Member's brother-in-law.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: That charge simply means that Lord Spencer packed the Land Court—Lord Spencer whose boots you have declared your readiness to blacken. He it was who saw every one of of these Commissioners before they were appointed, who examined into their antecedents and their qualifications; and when you tell me that the Court is packed, I say, if that be true, then Lord Spencer ought to be drummed out of the Liberal Party.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Will the hon. Member allow me to remind him that the greater number of the Land Courts were appointed not by Lord Spencer, but by his successor?

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman not so constantly to interrupt the hon. Member.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am referring to the year 1882, when Lord Spencer was in office, and when these Members were appointed directly after personal examination by Lord Spencer. Then I am told that one reason why they did not go into the Land Court was because of the arrears. Yes, and if this could be pleaded on the Ponsonby estate, I would admit it. But you are not at liberty to plead that excuse. In the year 1886 Mr. Ponsonby made a direct offer to these tenants of a clear receipt up to the 29th March, 1886, which swept away every farthing of arrears then due. The next charge is that the landlord has confiscated the rights and property of these Ponsonby tenants. Well, I am going to take the pattern case of the hon. Member, or rather the pattern case of Canon Keller, that of Martin Loughlin. It amounts to this, that Loughlin was a judicial tenant, and when he got his rent fixed he also got the value of his tenant right assessed, and it amounted, I think, to £800. Loughlin was evicted; he lost the whole of it,

and then it was said—"The landlord confiscated the tenant's interest." The facts, told to an English audience, would not be understood, but I ask the hon. Member, was Martin Loughlin protected by the Act of 1870, or was he not? I say that he was thoroughly protected. But it is said by Canon Keller that the landlord pleaded that he was willing to let Loughlin sell, and that that put him out of Court. Well, I throw the Act of 1870 aside, and where do we stand? Whether the landlord was willing or not to let Loughlin sell his interest, the Act of 1881 gave him the right to sell. Who prevented his selling? Not the right hon. Gentleman, not the Crimes Act—it was the leaders of the Plan of Campaign, who hold the creed that no man must buy or take an evicted farm. Who were the confiscators of Loughlin's £800? Not Her Majesty's Government, not the landlord, but the men who prevented his using the very Act which this House passed to protect him. The statement of the hon. Member for North-East Cork amounts to this: The Plan of Campaign had been in operation on the Ponsonby estate for something like four years. The battle had been fought out and there was some chance of a settlement. Negotiations went on for the sale of the estate under the Ashbourne Act. Mr. Brunker, the old agent of the property, who lived in Dublin, was sent down to negotiate the sale, and the charge against the hon. Member for South Hunts is, that at a critical moment, he interfered. The charge against the hon. Member for South Hunts is one of interference, and the charge is made by a Member who has interfered in almost every property in Ireland. The tenants have a perfect right to combine; does the hon. Member dény the right of the landlords to combine?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: No, certainly not.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Then why does the hon. Gentleman make this attack on the hon. Member for South Hunts.? I say that the tenants on the Ponsonby or any other estate have a right to combine, but the landlords ought to have the same right. The charge against the hon. Member opposite is that he interfered on the Ponsonby estate, and prevented the bargain being consummated. That is the whole charge. Well, now, I have taken it at its worst, and I say it is just that the tenants should have the right to combine, but the landlords ought to have the same right to combine and decide as to the price of the land they are selling. What course did the hon. Member for North East Cork take? The bargain was not consummated, the lands were not sold. The hon. Member for North-East Cork then went to Clonakilty, and declared that there was only one way of punishing the hon. Member for South Hunts, and that was to attack him personally. Let me show the House a little bit of the hon. Member's handiwork. Here is a letter from a Mr. Phillips, who is a Tipperary tenant of the hon. Member for South Hunts. Mr. Phillips writes:—

"I hold 270 acres of land from Mr. Smith-Barry, at a rent of £340, under lease and tenant right, which, with my improvements, I value at £1,000. The Land League has decided that all tenants must be prepared to give up their farms and allow themselves to be evicted. They are clearing off everything, and because I refuse to do this, and forfeit my £1,000, I am boycotted in the most determined manner. I am refused the common necessaries of life, and have to get everything from a distance. Blacksmiths refuse to work for me, and labourers have given notice to leave my employment. Heretofore people were boycotted for taking farms; I am boycotted for not giving up mine which I have held for 25 years. A neighbour of mine—an Englishman—is undergoing the same treatment. We are the only Protestant tenants on the estate."

The House has heard a great deal from the hon. Member for North-East Cork of the success of himself and his friends in Tipperary. Is this one of their successes? Because a man with legal and moral rights, which cannot be questioned, who has no difference with his landlord, and who has no complaint against him, will not go out into the world and make himself a pauper and a beggar and allow his family to beg or starve, he must be boycotted, deprived of the necessaries of life, and ruined in mind, body, and estate. Then, look at the condition of things in the town of Youghal. When the hon. Member for North-East Cork was sent to gaol for some offence, a majority of the shopkeepers of that town determined to shut their shops out of sympathy for him—a course of action which they had a perfect right to adopt. But 20 shopkeepers of the town, who thought that the hon. Member had been rightly and justly punished, felt tha they could not close their shops withou

being guilty of the most arrant hypocrisy, and they therefore held a meeting, and resolved not to close their shops. And what followed? Because these men dared to exercise the ordinary rights of citizenship and to think and act for themselves they were rigidly boycotted, their shops were picketed, and not a soul was permitted to cross their thresholds. I myself helped to collect subscriptions. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I think it was quite as honourable as sending round the hat in the way hon. Members do. I helped to collect subscriptions to keep some of the poorer of these shopkeepers. What right has any League or Association and, still less, any single man to organize a system of intimidation like this, which strikes at all human freedom and proposes to put an end to all private judgment? This is something very different from the patriotism of the olden times. Allow me to read to the House an extract from the writings of a man whose patriotism will not be questioned by hon. Members below the Gangway. He wrote:—

"Conciliation of all sects, classes, and parties who oppose us and who still hesitate, is essential to moral force, for if, instead of leading a man to your opinions by substantial kindness, by zealous love, and by candid and wise teaching, you insult his tastes and his prejudices, and force him either to adopt your cause or to resist it; if instead of slow persuasion your weapons are bullying and intolerance, then your professions of moral force will promptly be resisted by every man of public spirit."

Who was the writer of these words? Thomas Davis, a man at whose feet I suppose most of the hon. Members below the Gangway would be content to sit, but whose maxims they have totally forgotten. Is there anything of that spirit in the treatment of Mr. Phillips, in the boycotting of the Youghal shopkeepers? Not a bit, and I want to know why the Liberal Party support such contemptible tyranny as this? In the town of Tipperary, where these enormities are taking place, there is no grievance, and the House will have observed that the hon. Member for North-East Cork does not venture to hint that the hon. Member for South Hunts is a rack-renting landlord. No such charge can be made against him. Indeed, the hon. and learned Member for Hackney, in his great speech before the Special Commission, actually singled him out as a good landlord—one who was not only considerate in the matter of rent, but who took a real and active interest in the welfare of his tenants. Let the House clearly understand the issue that is being painfully and laboriously fought out in Ireland. On the one hand we have a great organisation, with immense funds at its disposal, determined to achieve a certain result. That organisation has stopped at nothing in the past; it will stop at nothing in the future. In the olden time we had it on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that crime dogged its footsteps. The tours of its agents were stained with blood; the more it worked, the wider its ramifications, the heavier grew the record of agrarian crime. This, at all events, we can now say on authority. The law and the League has come into deadly conflict, and the law has triumphed. Murder has ceased to a large extent; and why? Because the murderers have been either hanged or driven into exile. But what has taken the place of that condition of things? There has been substituted for it a far crueller tyranny. Men and women who offend the League are not now murdered outright so often. They are simply starved to death or into surrender. They are not so frequently injured in person; they are simply ruined in mind, body, and estate. Their property is not so frequently destroyed, nor is their cattle so frequently maimed. Those people who desire to be honest, to fulfil their legal obligations, to think and act for themselves in public affairs, are simply left severely alone; treated as the leper was treated of old, neither allowed to buy nor to sell; prevented in many cases from attending market or mass; their children driven from school, and their whole lives poisoned and blasted. This is what the hon. Member for Cork calls depriving boycotting of its vices, and this is what the Liberal Party, with its noble traditions, was demeaning itself by supporting. The Liberal Party of which I have read and which I have known has championed civil liberty the world over; they have stood for freedom of opinion, freedom of judgment, freedom of action everywhere. The oppressed have never turned to them in vain. All that seems to have passed away. The Liberals of this country have allied themselves with a Party that never had a single Liberal instinct, and which only

five years ago under the seal of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) declared the Liberal party to be a party of perfidy. This party is now engaged in attempting to stamp out all individual freedom in Ireland. Private judgment is suppressed in Ireland in a manner which would put the old inquisitors to shame; it is attempted to assassinate all freedom of thought and all personal independence. This is not freedom; it is slavery. You may dignify it with the name of justice to Ireland, and men may persuade themselves that they are working for justice to Ireland. But justice depends upon the maintenance of the Constitution, the enforcement of the law, and the righting of Irish wrongs; and it is because Her Majesty's Government have given good guarantees that this is their policy that I shall vote against this Amendment.

(6.15) *MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to attempt to follow the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) or my hon. Friend who opened the debate, into the questions concerning the management of the Ponsonby estate or the personal conduct of the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Smith Barry). I wish to do now what I did some time ago when I was in the Sister Isle examining for myself the state of affairs there—studiously and deliberately to refrain from entering into any personal or local questions and to confine myself to judging of the general condition of the mind of the people of Ireland. But at the close of his speech the hon. Member for South Tyrone announced certain propositions of a far reaching and extensive, and, I will add, extravagant character. First of all he spoke of the crimes of murder and violence which had been reduced by the hanging of the murderers. I know not what murderers have been hanged in pursuance of the coercive policy of the present Chief Secretary. Then the hon. Member said that a newer and far crueller tyranny than any tyranny of old was now being brought to bear; and how did he define that tyranny? Why, he said that the people who were engaged in it deal with those with whom they politically differ by leaving them severely alone. The policy has been to leave people severely alone, to boycott them, if you prefer the phrase. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Do hon. Members who cheer mean to acquiesce in the proposition that boycotting, in the sense of leaving people severely alone, is worse than the old method of violence, and murder itself? The thing is preposterous and ridiculous, and I am amazed at a Member of this House concluding his oration by a proposition of that description. If to leave those who do not sympathise with the people severely alone be so terrible a punishment, whom must those be who inflict the punishment but the bulk and mass of the people, because nothing but action of that kind on the part of the great mass of the population could by any conceivable possibility or hypothesis have such an end. I will not go into those detailed questions because the subject before the House to-night is the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I have noted so far in this debate a circumstance not usual I believe in Irish discussions in this House, and that is that there is one fact on which we are all absolutely in agreement. That fact is the improved state of Ireland, the diminution of agrarian offences and the improved relations of the Irish people with us in this country and with those who live in their own land. I want to ask whether this is not the very first proposition of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr, Parnell), and whether the House does not unanimously agree with him on that point? I can speak to a great deal of the change that has taken place from what I have seen myself. That change must be due to adequate and appropriate causes, and I believe those causes to be the improvement in the position of the tenants under recent legislation, better harvests and higher prices, and the hopes inspired by the policy of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). How can coercion, however administered, appease the Irish people? It is so extraordinary a proposition, so unreasoning and unreasonable an hypothesis that we can only say the wish must be father to the thought. It is not a new policy. If you had had measures for ameliorating the condition of the tenants, and if on the other hand you had had a strong Coercion Act administered in the old style, and not a second class Coercion Act like that of the right hon. Gentleman

(Mr. A. J. Balfour) you might have set up some claim either to have appeased or cowed the Irish people. At this very moment in every county in Ireland you have a tenants' league voluntarily taxing itself in order to form a common fund wherewith to fight the battle of all the tenants of Ireland against the landlords who have combined against them. Under these circumstances I want to know where has been the right hon. Gentleman's success? There is one thing his Act, and his policy, and administration can do and have done. They can irritate. I marvel at the patience and moderation of the Irish people. When I look at the Coercion Act and its administration I am sometimes tempted to say that the measure was constructed and devised in order to irritate and goad an enthusiastic and impulsive people into acts of violence against the law. I do not, of course, attribute such a motive, but I cannot understand anyone failing to perceive that there is much in the Act and its administration which seems almost nicely calculated to produce that result. I have never changed my feelings with regard to the Crimes Act. I have always felt and feel now that that Act was, on the part of its authors, an act of contempt against the very principles of law—that it was in itself the very greatest possible illegality. I say that no National League or Land League has ever produced so gross an act of illegality—speaking of the spirit of law—as this House has committed in passing the Crimes Act. We were told that the Crimes Act did not create a single new offence, and that it was all a question of procedure. Under that Act the Lord Lieutenant, a political partisan, of his own motion, without hearing any evidence, may determine and resolve that a political Association is dangerous, and, by proclaiming it, can make it illegal. The next moment, without any other circumstances whatever, everybody connected in any way with that Association becomes a criminal under the Act. And then we are told that no new offences are created. My right hon. Friend, the Member for Bridgeton (Sir George Trevelyan), in his speech on Friday last put in the clearest way before the House the operation of the Crimes Act in regard to the creation of new offences. The Crimes Act is an Act which sets up an arbitrary power disguised under the cloak and pretence of law. The Government were not content only with giving the power to supersede the law to the Lord Lieutenant, but they abolished trial by jury, and put cases, some of them cases of constructive conspiracy, requiring the wisest judgment, into the hands of removable, promotable, non-legal, and dependent magistrates. You will say it is only a question of procedure, but in one sense all law comes back to be procedure. If you endow any human being with the power by his judgment to supersede the law, and if also you do not take care that your interpreters of the law have some real knowledge of it, and that they are impartial, judicially minded, and independent, then law itself soon ceases to exist. A word or two on the subject of the tenants. I cannot follow the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Russell) into the details of the cases he has been bringing before the House, or the details of the law, and I do not intend to do so, but there are certain things I see clearly, and I think not incorrectly, in regard to the tenants, and these I wish to state to the House. The Attorney General for Ireland said there was no case in regard to the tenants. Now, I ask this question. In what proportion of the tenancies of Ireland have there been judicial decrees for settlement or reduction of rents or agreements outside the Court founded on similar judicial decrees in similar cases? If I am not misinformed those cases do not amount to more than half the number of the tenancies of Ireland. I think I shall not be contradicted in that as a statement of fact. Well, if the cases are not settled for half the tenants of Ireland, if it is true—and it is indubitable—that the Government have determined and positively decided to refuse to deal with the question of arrears, I want to know how any man can urge that the tenants have no grievance now or that no *duresse* can be put upon them under the Ashbourne Act? Why, when we came to deal with the Highland Crofters we dealt very differently with the question of arrears there. I was looking over a Return a few months ago—it was the last Return then, I do not know whether another

Return has been issued since—and there I found that among the Crofters the figures showed an average reduction of 29 per cent. in rents, but 68 per cent. in arrears! Nobody can fail to understand that if a poor man is over-rented by the year that the accumulations of arrears are certain to crush him, and that if he has a mode of escaping by buying, with the assistance of the State, his holding from the landlord, the fact of the existence of these arrears may be used by the agent to compel him to pay a higher price than he would otherwise pay, and so the help of the State and the credit of the State goes to assist the landlord and not the tenant in these transactions. Now I put it to the Government whether they should not seek some better way, whether we are not bound to seek some better way? I say, first of all, this Act cannot have appeased, because it has irritated. I say it has not cowed; you have had evidence of that to-night. It would be ridiculous that a nation should, after a century's experience how to resist and defeat Coercion Acts, be cowed by the comparatively feeble and not very powerful Act of the present day, and with the hope for the future which Irishmen now entertain. What I should say would be this. That the true policy, the true and beneficial policy for the Government, and right in our minds, would be to press on the settlement of rents. The Land Courts are over-worked and cases are vastly in arrear. My first proposition is, then, press on the settlement of judicial rents. Next, I say, let the Government give themselves power to deal with arrears. Then, I say, when you have settled the rents and the arrears you can enter upon and settle the comparative values of the interest of landlord and tenant. But until then you will not be in a position to deal with the terms of a future Purchase Act. Then with regard to the general political question, I venture to say the Government would be wise, that not only would it be right from our point of view but wise from theirs, to allow free speech and free meeting in a way such freedom is not allowed in Ireland. I quite agree that offences deserving punishment ought to be punished, as also incitement to commit those offences, but I maintain that the Irish people have a right to combine, have a right to meet and to speak and to agitate against coercion, against landlord oppression, and in favour of Home Rule. Who can say that the Irish people are left perfectly free to combine, to meet, and to speak for these objects? If you will accord these rights, retaining the power to prosecute for real and dangerous offences, offences of violence or of intimidation; if you will do that you will leave nothing but a strictly constitutional movement against your policy of Coercion and in favour of our policy of Home Rule, and you have no right to object to a constitutional movement and agitation. Now, the Attorney General for Ireland the other night ridiculed the supposed effect of the policy of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. He quoted certain worthless figures from the statistics of agrarian crime for a few months before the declaration of the Home Rule Scheme and a few months after. Sir, it takes time for a great policy to work and show its effect, but there is no doubt about the effect of the policy of my right hon. Friend on the Irish mind, though that policy has been defeated in this House. The evidence of the hon. Member for Cork is worth infinitely more than the poor statistics and figures of the Attorney General for Ireland. Let me give the House some of the impressions I derived from a recent short visit to Ireland and a word or two on my experience there. I attended a number of meetings, and among them some of the largest meetings held in Ireland of late years. I hear an hon. Member whisper "No right of public meeting," but I will come to that. I spoke with perfect freedom. I attacked the policy of the Government. I denounced it. I endeavoured to give the people hope. I encouraged them to patience with our sympathy. I was not shadowed by the police, neither I or the friends who went with me. If my eye caught the eye of a constable it was he turned aside, not I. I have heard that the police had instructions that we were not likely to make dangerous speeches, and that they were to leave us alone; that we were to be boycotted, left severely alone; and they followed these instructions. Well, but I have a question to put to the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary. He behaved handsomely to me and those who went with me. We had no trouble.

I do not even think the police reported us. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman trusted to the newspaper reports and found nothing dangerous in our speeches, or we should have heard from him. But the question I have to put to the right hon. Gentleman is this, if he conceded to me and my friends this liberty, why does he refuse it to the representatives of the Irish people? He would say, or he would like to say, that the cases are not parallel, but I defy the right hon. Gentleman to prove, and if he tries to maintain it he can be answered, that Irish Members have not been imprisoned for less than I deliberately said? This is a distinct challenge I address to the right hon. Gentleman. I say I went there knowing the law, I went there intending to exercise my right and not to exceed the law, and I say I did not exceed the law, and yet Irish Members have been tried, convicted, and imprisoned for saying less than I said on these occasions. At every meeting I attended there was absolute order. They were vast meetings, some of them meetings of the whole country side, horsemen and pedestrians gathering together. In my younger days I was familiar with meetings on National questions, and I say, speaking of these meetings in Ireland, that they inspired me with the feeling that nothing but a National question could have brought them about. The Irish question is a National question and you will never defeat it; you will never succeed in stamping it and the National instinct out of the spirit of the Irish people. I wonder right hon. and hon. Gentlemen cannot carry their memory or their reading back to the days of 1848, and that they do not see how futile it is to attempt to set themselves against the patriotic instinct of an awakened people. I wonder, turning back to those days, that they have not learned that this National instinct is a reasonable and conservative instinct. I am not applying the word in the party sense—a truly Conservative principle and instinct in the human mind. I say you may safely deal with this instinct, you may learn from experience of the past, from the lessons of history, that you will run no risk in respecting one of the highest instincts God ever implanted in the human breast. It is ungenerous folly to pretend that anyone who is actuated by this National instinct of self-government desires absolute separation from the Government of this country. I have spoken of the orderly character of these meetings, and I would like to say something of the sentiments and tone of mind I perceived among those tens of thousands who attended there. There was every evidence of that reconciliation with the English people which you cannot pretend that your policy is calculated to bring about, but which has been brought about despite your policy, despite the administration of your Coercion Act in Ireland. This reconciliation has been brought about not by a change of law, simply by the promise of a better future given by my right hon. Friend, and endorsed by the Liberal Party, because the Irish people know and feel that it is not in the annals of the Liberal Party that it has ever taken in hand a great cause like this and failed sooner or later to bring it to a successful issue. I say I found that feeling towards this country, and I found everywhere a determination that we should remain an United Kingdom. I did not find a mere acceptance of this, I found it when announced as a proposition accepted with as great enthusiasm as the proposition directed to self-government. Their burning wish is to be one with us, on the terms of a subordinate but National Government and Parliament. How blindly foolish it is not to be delighted to take action and make terms of peace to heal the feud of centuries on these conditions. I found loyalty among them; that loyalty you are so fond of denying. I will give an instance from an incident that occurred at that mighty meeting at Mallow which I attended; it will throw a light on this question of loyalty which has been strained and taxed and tried for centuries past to such an extent that if the Irish people were disloyal we could not be surprised. That they are not so is due to the policy of my right hon. Friend and his Party. On that occasion, at Mallow, a speaker, a member of this House, was comparing the meeting and its peaceable orderly character with a meeting some years ago when His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was there. There was a crowd of Irish people at the station to present a

memorial, I think, of some grievances to His Royal Highness. There was a moment when the local authorities lost their heads and were within a very little of attacking the people. Fortunately, the officer in command had a cooler head than they had, and the thing passed off without an incident of such a character, which would have been doubly regretable because of the presence of His Royal Highness. The speaker compared that meeting with the meeting then being held, and the comparison was a perfectly fitting and right comparison to make. But it occurred to me that it was capable of misunderstanding and misrepresentation; it occurred to me that people might say—we are so ready to think evil of each other—that this was a disloyal utterance, and that somebody ought to have protested against it. I was determined that it should be made clear, and when the speeches were over, I sprang to the front of the platform and demanded a few more moments. What I said to the vast crowd was this: I want you to look straight at this question of loyalty; listen to me and tell me whether you agree with me. I said the Sovereign of this Realm is no party politician; she acts on the advice of her constitutional Ministers. I said the Prince of Wales, the Heir to the Throne, ought not to be a party politician and is not a party politician; there is no difference in his attitude towards Members on one side of the House or the other, and therefore I call on you, determined as you are, and we are, that there shall remain one United Kingdom, I call on you with me to say, "God Bless the Queen of this United Land." More than ten thousand voices shouted unanimous acclaim. Now this was a mere incident, take it for what it is worth, but does it not show that there is in Ireland a mind and a temper at this time a tendency, a desire for union and reconciliation, and a capacity for loyalty which perhaps you have not suspected, but which you ought not to be sorry to know. I say that what Irishmen are we have made them. They are the work of our hands. They are the result of mistaken policy, not of yours only but the policy of the past of this country. We would change that result; you would perpetuate it. Whatever there is bad and weak in Ireland is of our doing. Whatever is good is due to that saving instinct of patriotism and nationality you fear so much. If it were not for that, if the whole question of Ireland were agrarian, there would be a different tale to tell. It is because Irishmen think not only of their farms but their country that they have become capable of some moderate and constitutional courses. Irrespective of party, we ought to sympathise with that feeling. I do not think the Government will deny it, because they are proposing this Session to introduce measures which they hope will operate in this sense to satisfy the Irish mind and appease Irish discontent. You are perfectly right to bring these measures forward, framing them according to your own light and views. We will discuss them fairly, fully, and freely; but will they reconcile the Irish people and consolidate the Union? I believe not. I am an opponent of the Government, but I believe with the profoundest conviction that you will absolutely fail, for I am convinced that on the other hand the wise policy, the wise, conciliatory, just and sympathetic policy of my right hon. Friend, and the party which is proud beyond expression to acknowledge him as their leader, that this policy, which has already consolidated the National Party in Ireland, making it supreme over all counsels and suggestions of violence, that policy which has already created a moral union of our peoples, will ere long become incorporated in the law, and when incorporated in the law will result in a permanent, effective, and complete cure, a true and lasting union of the peoples of the United Kingdom.

(6.55.) *Mr. G. WYNDHAM (Dover): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down prefaced his remarks by saying that he felt himself better fitted to address the House on the general aspect of the situation in Ireland than on the particular details which have been brought under the notice of the House by the two hon. Gentlemen who preceded him in debate. Sir, the very reverse is my case. I hope it is just possible I may be able to adduce a few facts that may lead the House to reconsider the opinions that would naturally be derived from the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork; but I am aware that I am wholly unable to discuss the general question of alternative

policies with which the right hon. Gentleman concluded his speech. I was glad to notice that he, following the example of other speakers, admits that the state of Ireland shows a very marked improvement, an improvement described in the Amendment which the House is now considering as "long continued." Perhaps the epithet to English minds does not appear altogether applicable to a period little exceeding three years. Opposite causes have been alleged from opposite sides of the House in order to account for this "long-continued" improvement,; but though we may differ as to the cause, I trust we all hope that the effect may attain the more ample proportions to which we are accustomed on this side of the water. One factor in this improvement has been noticed by the right hon. Gentleman, to which I cannot assent. He alleges that boycotting has altered its character and consists now merely in letting persons severely alone. If that be so, I ask who are the victims of agrarian outrage, which, it is true in very curtailed numbers, still stand in the Reports that come before the Government? I understand that in every case, or in nearly every case, for that is denoted by the use of the very word agrarian, the victim of outrage is a poor farmer, a cattle dealer, or other person who has excited the anger of those taking part in the agrarian movement now existing in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman attributed the improvement to the efforts of hon. Members below the Gangway. We attribute it in a large measure to the steady administration of the law, because these outrages, although less numerous than they were—they are, I believe, little more than one-half of the number that occurred when the Government came into office—are still of the same nature; therefore I think it is most probable that the diminution, since it is only one of degree and not of kind, is attributable to the so-called coercive measures of the Government. Now, in discussing the Crimes Act the right hon. Gentleman discovered that the two most obnoxious features in it were, in the first place, that branches of the League had been suppressed—and he described the act of attending meetings of such branches as a new crime—and, in the second place, that certain offences could be tried by Resident Magistrates. Now Sir, the measure of exasperation to which the Irish people are subjected on these counts will, I think, somewhat surprise the House if they have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and to the other speeches which have been directed against these two particular provisions. I find that out of 597 convictions under the Act last year, the total number of persons convicted for taking part in proceedings of suppressed branches of the League was one man. The right hon. Gentleman amplified the list of those who had suffered under this provision of the Act by saying that not only the persons who had attended the meetings, but that the speakers, the editors of newspapers who reported the proceedings, and even the boys who sold the newspapers, were all liable to prosecution and imprisonment. Sir, I find that the total number of persons convicted during last year for reporting the proceedings of suppressed branches of the League was also one man. These two solitary individuals, therefore, form a very large factor in the case of hon. Gentlemen opposite. And I find that the rest of the facts upon which they base their case are in very close proportion to those I have already given the House. Before leaving the subject of the small ratio borne by convictions in connexion with suppressed branches to convictions for other offences, I should like to touch upon a kindred matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division has addressed a great portion of his speech to an attack upon prosecutions directed against persons for inciting to crime, as distinguished from prosecutions directed against persons committing crime. Now out of the total of 597 cases to which I have already referred, I find that 589 persons were convicted for committing crime, for criminal conspiracy, intimidation, riot, and assaults on sheriff's officers and the police, while the number convicted for inciting to crime was six only. The other provision of the Crimes Act which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax selected for attack was the power of resident magistrates to try these offences. But it seems to me that the remarks savoured rather of two or three years ago than of the present

day; for just as I have been able to show that there were but few prosecutions in connection with suppressed branches, so it may also be shown that the clause giving to resident magistrates summary jurisdiction over charges of conspiracy and intimidation has been so curtailed in its operation that it now only affects a little over one million of the four or five million inhabitants of Ireland. With regard to the general view which the right hon. Gentleman took of affairs in Ireland, and the advice which he gave to this Government as to the proper course to pursue in the future, I have little to say. But I do propose to offer to the House some information which I possess. I notice that he has again favoured the House with the experience he gained during the visits he and other hon. Members paid to Ireland in the course of the recess, in order to refresh their views upon the Irish Question. I see, too, that his experience has been the same as that of other right hon. and hon. Gentlemen. He found that, in his person, liberty of speech and the right of meeting were respected. And yet, in spite of this experience, right hon. and hon. Gentlemen are convinced that these liberties do not exist, and that exceptions are made in their favour, in order to mislead the public as to the true state of Ireland. I think in that they are mistaken. The right hon. Gentleman informed the House that when he visited Ireland he did not intend to exceed the law. As to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, who made the same point in the debate last year, through another person—and not with his consent, I believe—similar information was conveyed to the Government. The difference between these right hon. Gentlemen, and those who have brought themselves within the meshes of the law, is that the latter deliberately express the intention again and again of breaking the law. But apart from the announcement of their intention to abide within the law, the Government were well aware that in any speech which the right hon. Gentlemen made they would neither counsel nor give any support of any kind to intimidation, nor would they be guilty of any incitement to crime, for which other speakers have been proceeded against. There is one other point I desire to notice, because it will lead up to the few remarks I wish to make upon the speech delivered by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork. Amongst other difficulties which right hon. Gentlemen opposite see in the present situation in Ireland is the alleged fact that arrears compel tenants to pay higher prices for their holdings than they would otherwise be disposed to pay. It is constantly asserted that the arrears question is the one point upon which this Government have failed, and we are told that if they were to settle that, the agrarian difficulty would practically cease to exist. The solid facts brought before the House to sustain this charge have been largely drawn from the Ponsonby estate and the estate of Tipperary town, and we may presume, therefore, that in the Ponsonby estate hon. Gentlemen find their best arguments against the Government. But how far can they discover on the Ponsonby estate any ground for the sweeping allegations which are generally put forward, not to justify—for that is impossible—but to palliate the adoption of criminal methods. On the Ponsonby estate the Plan of Campaign has existed for some years. The Plan of Campaign has been described as a criminal conspiracy, not only by Chief Baron Palles, but also by Mr. Justice O'Brien, who stated that it was clearly and distinctly illegal, upon all principles known to the Common Law. Now, in order to justify the adoption of that illegal conspiracy the House will surely require vastly stronger reasons than have been brought before it to-night by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. It would be supposed, from what hon. Members opposite have said, that every one of the errors of judgment which have been attributed by them to Irish landlords is rampant on the Ponsonby estate. The facts, however, are altogether different. As to the charge of rack-renting, while it is true that there has been a slight rise of rent in individual cases, it is also true that the total rent-roll has been only increased by a sum of little over £100 since the years of the famine; and it is likewise true that in consequence of the charges which the landlord has taken upon himself the net increase is a little more than £50—a small sum for a landlord who has expended £5,000 of his own money on the estate, and has procured another £5,000 from the Board of Works to put

into it. Those who have had any dealings in land know that a man is entitled to expect some small return on capital outlay, and certainly a paltry £50 is not a very large interest on a capital of £10,000. This entirely disposes of the charge that by small increases of rent, carried on over a long period of years, the landlord has succeeded in confiscating the tenant's improvements. Therefore we must turn our eyes to the immediate past to find any excuse for the adoption of this illegal conspiracy. It is sometimes alleged that by the rejection of the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork ample warrant was given to the tenants to protect themselves by methods unknown to the law. But that Bill, if it had passed, would have touched only one-fourth of the tenants of the Ponsonby estate; so it is clear that if the tenants were compelled thus to act in self-defence in the absence of the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork, they would equally have had to act in like manner if the Bill had been passed. I will not go into details as to the conduct of this landlord towards his tenants; but I may say that the fact that evictions have been very rare upon the estate shows conclusively that the landlord has made no effort to exterminate his tenantry, as it is sometimes called, and has no design of converting his property into grazing land. It has been generally admitted, both by those who acted on the part of the landlord and those who acted on behalf of the tenants, that the ultimate solution of the difficulty which had been brought about by the Plan of Campaign must be in the adoption of some scheme of purchase; and it has been stated by the hon. Member for North-East Cork that such a solution had been almost arrived at on the Ponsonby estate when the hon. Member for Huntingdon intervened, and, as the hon. Member puts it, "wrecked the settlement." But, Sir, the settlement never was on the verge of completion. There was a discrepancy between the offers made on behalf of Mr. Ponsonby and of his tenants, not, as has been stated, of £4,000 or £5,000, but of £20,000. I am aware that the opposite has been alleged on the authority of Canon Keller. Hon. Gentlemen may think that they must either believe Canon Keller and disbelieve Members of that House, or believe hon. Members and disbelieve Canon Keller; but they are not reduced to that very disagreeable issue. They may avoid it by considering that two offers have been spoken of in the course of this controversy; the offer which Mr. Brunker, the agent, made and the offer which Canon Keller understood him to make. But of these the first is evidently the only one of any material interest, since it is the only one authorised by the landlord, and the sum mentioned in this offer exceeded by over £20,000 the sum which Canon Keller was prepared to give. It will, therefore, be seen that there was no prospect of a solution when the hon. Member for Huntingdon intervened. So far from wrecking a settlement on the verge of completion, he it was who induced the landlord, when an absolute deadlock existed, to make the offer of a settlement, which will commend itself to the minds of all reasonable men. That settlement was wrecked, not by the Member for Huntingdon; but by those who control the operations of the Plan of Campaign. The offer was that those tenants who had not gone into the Courts, and who constituted with only 27 exceptions the whole of the tenantry on the estate, should pay an instalment less by 32 per cent. from the old rent. Now, the original demand under the Plan of Campaign was a reduction of 35 per cent., so that the difference was one of only 3 per cent. But it may be said that arrears stood in the way. The House will judge whether Mr. Ponsonby adopted an intractable attitude on this question. Any tenant whose rent was £100 would have had to pay at that time £400; but, so far from standing stubbornly on his rights, Mr. Ponsonby was ready to accept £80, and extinguish £320. Which of the two parties in this case acted as the faithful servants of the tenants—the landlord, who had not received a single penny for four years, and who was prepared to extinguish £320, or four-fifths of the amount, or the controllers of the Plan of Campaign, who during that time received £65 a year and yet refused to extinguish the remaining £80, or only one fifth of the arrears due? If it be true that the amount poured in burnt a hole in the war chest, then I think they might have fallen back on the £40,000

collected for the Tenants' Defence Association, largely with a view to meeting the exigencies of the Ponsonby tenants. There is only one other matter in regard to which I shall claim the indulgence of the House. The Member for Cork censured, in no measured terms, a letter dealing with Press prosecutions, for which the Chief Secretary was officially, but for which I am alone personally, responsible. The Member for the City of Cork described the statements contained in that letter as most misleading, and selected one statement for special condemnation as the most unfounded ever made on the authority of an Irish Minister. I am prepared to abide by every word in that letter. I imagine the passage to which the hon. Member referred is the one in which it is stated that,

> "No persons connected with the Press have, during the present Administration, been proceeded against, even though they may have broken the law, unless by their illegal conduct they interfered with the civil rights of persons entitled to protection by law."

The hon. Member said that in the last two years Press prosecutions had been in every case, except one, not for editorial comments, but for such offences as reporting meetings of suppressed branches of the League. I will test the accuracy of that statement by examining the Press prosecutions of the last year. I find that out of 13 prosecutions directed against the Press last year, in five cases the illegal matter was contained in reports of suppressed branches, in one case in a leaderette, and in seven cases in editorial comments. Since the hon. Member draws a distinction, which I do not recognise, between cases in which the illegal matter occurs in reports of suppressed branches and those in which it occurs in editorial articles, I have shown that he is in error in supposing that the case I selected was the only example of the latter. In the letter censured by him I selected the case of Mr. M'Enery not on that account, but to illustrate the proposition that intimidation through the Press is exactly on all fours with intimidation outside the Press. The victim was a man named Ryan, who had been subjected to boycotting for a period of four years. At the end of the year 1888 a meeting was held for the sole purpose of whipping up that boycotting. Speakers at that meeting were sent to prison for the speeches they delivered, and the result was that Ryan enjoyed comparative peace, until Mr. M'Enery's paper commenced publishing weekly articles holding him up to execration and directing his neighbours to ruin him in his business. If it was illegal to intimidate Ryan—to insist on his being boycotted—outside the Press, it was equally illegal to bring about a like result by other means. To prove that I was entitled to select this case as typical of the policy of the Government I have only to point out that in 12 cases out of the 13 tried last year the charge was incitement to intimidation or intimidation. Is the Government to allow illegal acts to pass unpunished because they are afraid of the public resentment which can be called up by an appeal to the liberty of the Press, which, under the circumstances, nobody is entitled to make? A well-known County Court Judge recently declared that a newspaper writer had no right to make his paper an instrument for attacking individuals. I think the Government have done only their duty in these 13 cases, in 12 of which persons were held up to obloquy by name. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said the last Administration did not interfere with the Press to the same extent as this Government has done. That is true. But why? Not because they took a different view of the law, but because they attached more importance to the kind of outcry which can be raised by appeals to the liberty of the Press than, I am thankful to say, does the Government of to-day. If it were otherwise we should expect to find a great distinction between the kind of cases in which they moved and the kind of cases in which the Government are moving. What, however, is the distinction or difference between the offence for which Mr. Walsh (Mayor of Wexford) was prosecuted last year, and the offence for which he was punished under Lord Spencer? His offence in the latter case was not that he published a report of a suppressed branch, but that he reported a meeting of the Ladies Land League. And the matter he published was by no means of a violent character. The notice merely expressed sorrow that a certain man held a grabbed farm, from which the tenant was evicted a year previously. Nothing

could be milder than that, but nothing more illegal considering the state of Ireland. The power conferred upon the Government in these matters is exercised, not merely to protect private persons, but also in the interests of the public peace. In cases of libel and intimidation it is the duty of Government to act, for if it failed to do so it would be difficult to censure the victim of a newspaper attack for taking the law into his own hands and breaking the head of his cowardly assailant. But in Ireland the consequences of intimidatory notices in the Press are more serious than in an ordinary case of libel in this country. What we fear is not so much that the victim will take the law into his own hands, as that he will suffer, perhaps in his person, probably in his property, and sometimes — in rare cases, I will admit—in his life. To show that I do not exaggerate the risks to which persons held up to obliquy in Ireland are exposed, I may refer to an outrage which occurred only the other day, when shots were fired into a house and a servant girl received a bullet in her back, from the effects of which she now lies in a precarious condition. This statement, which appeared in the papers of February 11th, has been fully confirmed. Such is the fate which overtakes those persons who are, as is sometimes said by the Irish papers, put in the pillory of public opinion. I think it is idle to say that it makes any difference whether these offences are committed through the Press or not. You might as well shoot a man with a bow and arrow instead of a gun, and then complain that you are condemned for archery. I am sincerely grateful to the House for listening with so much kindness to a speech which must have seemed somewhat offensive to some Members. And, in conclusion, I will only say that while the present Government possesses many titles to the esteem and support of those who sit behind them, I think that I shall be expressing the opinion of their followers when I maintain that that which appeals more nearly to our loyalty than any other feature of their administration is this—that they interposed to defend the Curtins, the Connells, the Hegartys, and the Ryans of Irish life whom hon. Members below the Gangway and the powerful organisation which they control seem bent upon grinding to the dust.

(7.32.) *SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) : I think I may be allowed to congratulate the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down on the able manner in which he has addressed the House in a maiden speech. I trust that there will ever exist in this House that feeling of *esprit de corps* which enables us to congratulate hon. Gentlemen, especially those young in years, who on their entrance to this House give so abundant a promise of becoming valuable additions to its debating power. I find no fault with the hon. Gentleman's speech beyond this—that he seems to have been dealing with what I must call the smaller details of the Irish Question, those which affect the law and the Government of the day, while he apologises for those things which are the effects of a policy which I think will not be very long maintained. I have endeavoured, in looking at this great question, not to shrink from the difficulties by which it is surrounded. There are in Ireland a very large proportion of very small landowners, who we have been told by the Fortescue and the Devonshire Commissions are not able to hold their own. Certainly the evidence of the Blue Books before us tends to show that this large class of small holders have been the victims of a certain class of landowners who have taken advantage of the improvements made by their tenants to raise their rents. There is also the fact, as shown by the Cowper Commission, that there exists in Ireland an impoverished set of landlords; indeed, we have been shown by evidence there, that not one-half of the landowners are able to deal with their own affairs. This is a problem which every Administration, whether advocating a scheme of local government for Ireland, or a moral government by force of law, will have to deal. In considering this question I have endeavoured to look at what is the actual position of Ireland at the present day, and one naturally asks oneself the question, what is the result of what has hitherto been done? I have examined various public sources of information, and am unable to find anything which presents a very flattering picture. The picture we have of that country is any-

thing but satisfactory to any of us. We find that there are disloyalty and discontent, together with a large amount of poverty, amongst the people, and that the laws under which they live are unsatisfactory to the large majority. But I do not find any evidence in the usual sources of information that the manner in which Ireland is being governed is adding in any way to the material prosperity of the country. The last speaker has stated the population of Ireland as being five millions. In my time it was nearly 30 per cent., or 40 per cent, above five millions. In 1874 it was 5,298,000 ; in 1882, 5,097,000 ; in 1886, 4,889,498 ; in 1888, 4,777,545 ; in 1889, 4,716,000. These figures are obtained from the Government computation which has been placed in our hands. But we also find that while Ireland has been going down since 1874, by something like half a million, Scotland, which began upon a smaller basis of population proportionately, has increased to a very large extent—the population of Scotland, in 1874, being 3,477,000, while in 1889 it had increased to 4,077,000. Then, again, if we look at the Irish police, we find that in 1859-60 the cost was about £700,000, but that it has risen in 1889-90 to 1,439,000, or just double what it was in 1859-60. Now let us contrast the proportions of police to population, and in doing so I would take two towns, namely—Leeds, with a population of 309,000, and Dublin, with a population of 349,000, the acreage of the two places being equal. Leeds has 421 police constables ; in Dublin the number is 1,105. Then as to costs, in Leeds the constabulary charges amount to £37,117, in Dublin to £150,531. Then again if we take police rateable value we find that in Leeds it is 7½d. in the £1, while in Dublin it amounts to 2s. 6d. We will next take the proportion of police to inhabitants. In Birmingham there is one policeman to every 7,287 inhabitants ; in Bradford, one policeman to every 880 ; in Dundee, one to every 874 ; in Sunderland, one to every 1,000 ; and in Dublin, one to every 296 inhabitants. In the meantime there has been a steady increase in the number of soldiers in Ireland, until at the present moment there are 26,854, supplemented by 12,000 policemen. This cannot be a satisfactory state of things to any one who is desirous of promoting the true prosperity of that country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has furnished us with Reports in which he has endeavoured to show the material prosperity ef Ireland by means of the Bank Returns. Looking to the Joint Stock Bank deposits, I find that in 1876 there are £32,815,000, in 1886 £29,223,000 and in 1889 £31,205,000, so that they have risen £2,000,000 since 1886, but are less by upwards of a million and a half than in 1876. The Post Office Savings Bank deposits have, however, gone up £800,000 between 1886 and 1889, but then comes a very curious result in respect of the Government of India Stocks, which in 1871 are put at £36,927,000, while in 1889 the amount is stated at £28,219,000. In 1886 the amount was £30,484,000, so that they have gone down nearly £2,000,000 since the present Government took office. Then if we look at the agricultural crops we find that the increased yield per acre has been very considerable during recent years, but in 1889 there is a decrease in the acreage of wheat and oats as against the previous year of 51,500 acres. There is an increase in barley of 17,000 acres, but there is a large decrease in the acreage of potatoes and vetches amounting together to 21,000 acres, the decrease in potatoes alone being 19,000 acres. There is, however, a small increase in the acreage of turnips and carrots, namely 6,500 acres. These figures relating to a purely agricultural country show a great decrease in the elements of prosperity so far as the acreage under cultivation is concerned. In regard to horses and mules and cattle, the horses have increased by 8,000 since 1880 and there has been a large increase over the year 1888 in the number of asses ; what that arises from I cannot say. In cattle there has been a decrease of 5,251, a slight increase in the number of sheep, while in pigs there has been a decrease of 17,000 in 1889 as against 1888. From these statistics it is quite plain that the agricultural interests of the poor in Ireland have not been thriving during the period the present Government has been in power. The hon. Member who just sat down and one or two other speakers have referred to the statistics of agrarian outrage. I have been enabled to go through the contents of the two Returns laid on the Table last year, although not

yet in the hands of hon. Members, but as they are upon the Table there can be no objection to my using them. I find that when the present Government took office in the December quarter of 1886 there were only 80 agrarian outrages, putting on one side those under the head of threatening letters and "threats made otherwise." During that quarter there was no murder at all; in the next year during the September quarter, under the Coercion Act, there were 138 outrages, while in the December quarter the number was 103. In 1888, two years after the accession of the present Government, the cases went down in the March quarter to 62; in the June quarter they numbered 82; in the September quarter 90, and in the December quarter 66. In 1889 the Return is smaller: March 56, June 78, September 98, December 58. These figures plainly show that the Coercion Act has had no effect whatever on agrarian outrages in Ireland. The prosperity of the farmers is despite Coercion, and arises from the fact that the country brings out a great quantity of young stock, which is largely increased in value. I am perfectly certain, further, that the sympathy which has been shown in this country with the Irish people in their troubles has had an enormous effect in doing away with crime. The Irish are a shrewd people, and they well know that much of our sympathy would be withdrawn if there were any attempt to achieve by force and murder the solution of this question, to which some of us have set our minds. But there is another point, and I think clearly a most serious one,—I refer to the tenants and subtenants whose tenancies have been determined by the eviction notices under Section 7 of the Act of 1887, "the eviction-made-easy Clause," as I ventnred to call it on one occasion in the House. In March, 1888, there were 1,581 eviction notices; June, 1,975; September, 1,965; December, 1,010. There were about 14,000 notices of eviction under Clause 7 of the Act of 1887 during the two years. But another Return was laid on the Table of the House with respect to these evictions which I think the country ought to understand and appreciate. It is the Return showing the number of civil bills and ejectments in title for non-payment of rent, over holdings entered at quarter sessions, and writs for recovery of rent and possession, issued from the Superior Courts, for five counties of Ireland—Clare, Cork, Galway, Kerry, and Mayo. In Clare, in 1885, there were 419; in 1886, 666; in 1887, 908; in 1888, 923, showing a constant increase of these notices and writs for recovery of rent. In Cork in 1885, 1,524; 1886, 2,518; 1887, 2,023; and 1888, 2,467. In Galway, 1885, 804; 1886, 1,188; 1887, 1,202; and 1888, 1,559. In Kerry, 1885, 1,191; 1886, 2,084; 1887, 1,574; and in 1888, 1,162. In Mayo, 1885, 784; 1886, 1,264; 1887, 1,174; and in 1888, 1,838. There is no Return in the Library that I am aware of which gives similar figures for 1889. These figures show the frightful condition of these poor people, who have spent their lives and their money in building their homes and improving their holdings, and under the pressure of such an enormous number of evictions it is impossible to have a contented and happy country. The poor people are on the horns of a dilemma. They do not know whether they are caretakers for many weeks, or whether they are to be turned out into the cold before many days. The figures which I have quoted show very distinctly that there is a steadily decreasing population, and a steadily increasing cost for pauperism. There is also a steadily increasing charge for police, which is quite out of all proportion to other districts of the United Kingdom. There is, too, an increasing military occupation. There is a standstill of mercantile improvement, and I fear that the linen trade and other industries are very much affected. There is a decrease of the land under crops, and there is little or no improvement in horses or cattle in comparison with the prices. I would ask right hon. Gentlemen whether their laws have increased the loyalty of the people of Ireland, taken as a whole? There is no man on earth can answer that question satisfactorily. The people of Ireland are more discontented, or as fully discontented as they were. We have been carrying on the Government of the country in a manner which is against the wishes of 85 out of 103 of its representatives, and it cannot be claimed that such a mode of Government is according to our Constitution. We have always before us the fact that

we are governing Ireland against the wishes of her people, and of nearly all her corporate bodies and municipalities. What has the Government done to remedy this state of things? The question of arrears has freguently been brought up. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down seemed to think that there is not much in the question of arrears, but I believe we should not now be discussing Ireland had the subject been dealt with. The greatquestion which Irish Members ask is, why do not the Government deal with the question of arrears? The returns in respect of the Crofters show that their arrears have been cancelled to the extent, in some cases, of 26, 50, and even 75 per cent. But in no instance have the arrears of the Irish tenants come under legislative action. Your attempt to put down the National League has failed, and I ask whether any man will maintain that the government of Dublin Castle is a satisfactory government? I come, now, to the working of the Ashbourne Act. I was very much opposed to the proposals of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian on the question of land purchase, but I regard those proposals as much more satisfactory than the proposals of the Government in relation to the extension of the Ashbourne Act. Either a very large demand is going to be made on the taxpayers of this country to buy out the Irish landlords, making the English and the Scotch people practically the landlords of Ireland, or else we are going to raise a new source of discontent in that country. The tenant who is able to buy his holding at the present moment will sit at 20 per cent. less rent than the tenant who is not able to purchase, and in 40 years he will become the owner, while the tenant who is not able to purchase will have paid 20 per cent. more rent and remains a tenant still. All I can say is that it seems to me that the Government are on the horns of a dilemma, and they will be unable to maintain peace between neighbouring tenants if part of the country is purchased under Lord Ashbourne's Act and all the rest is left in the hands of the landlords and tenants. I have taken the trouble to analyse the manner in which our money has been dealt with under the Ashbourne Act, and I find a very extraordinary state of things. Where has the money gone? Eight proprietors in Ulster have got £1,584,000; in Munster, one landlord has obtained £109,770; in Leinster, three landlords, £320,579; in Connaught, two landlords, £51,803. It seems to me that the money has gone where it is least wanted, and the impoverished districts have not been benefitted. But, Sir, I have a more s rious charge to make against Her Majesty's Government than this. You have added to the demoralisation of the Irish people, in regard to respect for law, by the trumpery offences which have been made the subject of severe punishment under the powers of the Coercion Act—a man sent to gaol for having smiled and winked at another man in the market place, to stop his buying pigs, and an old man and woman imprisoned by two Justices for singing in the streets—"We shall have good times when the landlords go." What is the policy of Her Majesty's Government? Why to get rid of the landlords and buy them out, and these people were only singing a song in confirmation of the views of Her Majesty's Government. There is another consequence. All these hon. Gentlemen, whom you have made by your law criminals, are received with open arms by the people of England. At the public meetings that I have attended all that has been wanted has been an Irishman, and if the Irishman has been by the right hon. Gentleman's law on a plank bed he is always much more acceptable to the meetings. These are things that ought not to be. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear.] But they are consequences of the right hon. Gentleman's policy. It is he who has made these men who are apprehended as criminals heroes, and who has drawn sympathy for them from all parts of the civilised world. It is he who has done infinite harm not only to present but to all future Government in Ireland. To make these men martyrs is about the worst thing you can do if you desire to preserve law and order. I thank the House for having listened to me. What I am anxious for is that, whether we adopt Home Rule or not, something should be done to raise the whole tone of feeling with regard to law in Ireland.

Local County Councils are talked of for Ireland, but it seems to me that it would be very difficult indeed to govern that country by such means as you can adopt in England or Scotland. In many of the poorer districts of Ireland you will be unable to find a population able to undertake the management of public business, therefore, your only resource will be to give to Ireland the management of their own affairs in an Irish, but always a subordinate, Parliament.

*(8.38). MR. A. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): The last speaker made one or two comparisons between Scotland and Ireland which I think it desirable at once to meet. The hon. Member alleged that while the population of Ireland had been steadily decreasing, that of Scotland had been increasing. I think if he had considered the figures a little more carefully, he would have found that they contributed nothing to the advancement of his cause. The agricultural population of Scotland has not been increasing. The whole increase has been in the industrial population. This increase of commercial population has taken place wherever Scotchmen have gone. It has not been confined to Scotland alone. In the North-East of Ireland, where you have a population of Scotch extraction, you find exactly the same commercial enterprise, and exactly the same commercial increase, and there is no town of Scotland which can show a more striking increase of prosperity and population than the town of Belfast. The hon. Member also dwelt on what he alleged to be the different treatment meted out to the Irish tenants and the Crofters in Scotland, complaining that the arrears of the Irish tenants had not been dealt with as the arrears of the Crofters had been, The two cases were, however, dealt with in the same way. It was found necessary in the case of the Irish tenants to pass an Arrears Act, so as to make it impossible for any man to be kept out of the advantages of the Land Courts on account of his arrears. In the same way, when the Crofters of Scotland were admitted to the privileges of the Land Courts they were allowed to have their arrears dealt with by special legislation. That was a fair and reasonable arrangement to make on the establishment of the Land Courts, but it seems to me that any periodical repetition of arrears legislation would be as undesirable in Scotland as in Ireland. Nothing could be more damaging to the character of the tenants of either country than to allow them to suppose that if they allow arrears to accumulate they will, in the long run, reap a great advantage, because the Government will step in and diminish the amount they have to pay. As to the hon. Member's statistics concerning the prosperity of Ireland, I do not think they need much examination to prove that the commercial condition of Ireland has largely improved. We have the Dublin Chamber of Commerce not only alluding to that improvement, but tracing it very largely to the action of the present Government. The last speaker used one illustration, which I do not think he would have employed if he had known the searching criticism to which it has already been exposed. He spoke of ballad singers, who it is alleged have been punished for singing—"We'll have good times in Ireland when the landlords go." This was cited as an illustration of the tyranny employed under the Crimes Act. When, however, the matter is investigated it is found that these people were summoned, not under the Crimes Act at all, but under the Vagrancy Act, precisely as they would have been in England or Scotland. They were old offenders and they were tried not by those magistrates who are termed "removables," but by the ordinary justices of the peace, and, as it happens, by justices who were appointed by Earl Spencer. When an Amendment to the Address is moved by the leader of the Nationalist Party concerning the invasion of the liberty of the Irish people, we are, I thiuk, entitled to expect that he will bring forward the very strongest examples of the oppression which is said to be exercised in Ireland. That those examples would not be difficult to find one would certainly imagine from the statement of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) that there are thousands of cases of oppression in Ireland which would be worthy of Russian despotism, only that they are more mean in their character. What are the sort of examples that have been brought before us? The whole weight of the speech of the

hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) rested on the charge that the Government suppressed boycotting, and upon the alleged interference with the freedom of the Press. We need not go outside the speeches which have been delivered by Nationalist Members during this debate to realise that boycotting does interfere, and terribly interfere with the liberties of the Irish people whenever it is practised. The hon. Member for East Waterford (Mr. P. J. Power) told us that boycotting was a terror to the land grabbers, and gave with great satisfaction an account of a man who came forward and offered an abject apology, offered to make any public or private reparation, and to pay any fine that might be imposed by any properly-constituted tribunal if he were re-admitted to the League. It cannot be contended that such a statement is consistent with the existence of a state of freedom. Boycotting is not only suppressed in Ireland, but exactly the same kind of boycotting is illegal in this country as well. In adjudicating on the Salford boycotting case, an English Judge declared that a conspiracy which prevents a man carrying on his business is an offence against the English law. That decision would have covered the case of Feeley as fully as it covered the cases of Bellew and Fitzgerald. If interference with the carrying on of a man's lawful business were produced, to use the words of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), by nods and winks and smiling a humbugging kind of smile, it would be treated in Ireland and this country in the same manner. The second count in the indictment brought against the Government was the alleged interference with the liberty of the Press. The hon. Member for Cork has complained that editors of newspapers are prosecuted for reports of the meetings of suppressed branches of the National League, and draws a distinction between their responsibility for such reports and for leading articles. He told us, however, in the same speech, of the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin being prosecuted for such a report, although there was no proof of the reported meeting having been held. I pass over the fact that the hon. Member for Cork did not think the fact of a meeting being reported in the newspaper of his hon. Friend the Member for College Green (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) proved that such a meeting had taken place. The point I wish to draw attention to is that if in such a case you are not to hold the editor of a newspaper responsible when individuals are held up for the purposes of intimidation nobody can be made amenable for intimidatory language so used. Therefore if the Government refrained from taking action in all cases where the offence was merely connected with the report of the National League meeting the Government would be entirely unable to discharge its duty of protecting individual citizens from systematic intimidation. Something was said as to the tenants who adopted the Plan of Campaign being unfairly used because they were put outside the law. It seems to me that people who adopt the Plan of Campaign put themselves outside the law and that people who adopt such a policy in any civilised country would equally find themselves outside the law. If the tenants of an English landlord in an English county made for themselves a conspiracy of that sort such a conspiracy would be outside and against the law. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton (Sir George Trevelyan) said the police should use their influence to preserve order and that they should be present and pleasant. The right hon. Gentleman had a special opportunity of judging not only of the difficulties of the task of the Constabulary but of the obsolute impossibility of the task he sought to impose upon them. We had an interesting experiment tried. One of the most attractive and persuasive of English gentlemen went over to Ireland a few years ago. He tried to administer the law and at the same time to conciliate the people. And the leading organ of the Nationalist Party described him as "the poorest, meanest, pitifullest creature who had ever held sway in Ireland in the name of England." We cannot doubt with such words in our mind that the right hon. Gentleman failed to be pleasant when he was present in Ireland. He failed through no fault of his own. He failed because he was connected with that law which is so strongly objected to by a considerable section of the Irish people. The enmity directed against the Con-

stabulary is similar to the enmity which was directed against him. The Constabulary could not serve opposing masters; they could not please those who vilified the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton, and at the same time carry out the policy which had to be carried out during the right hon. Gentleman's administration, and which the present Government had still to persevere with. I rejoice in the evidence that this debate has afforded that the game of law and order is not up. Law and order are advancing in Ireland, and along with their advance, the bounds of individual freedom are being widened. I trust the time is not far distant when every individual Irishman, to whatever class or party he belongs, will be secure in the fearless enjoyment of all the great blessings which liberty can afford.

(8.57.) MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I think we must all be of opinion that it would have been far better if the observations to which we have just listened had been delivered from the other side of the House. Anyhow, of one thing I am certain, and that is, that the Members of the Party to which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cameron Corbett) belongs will soon have to re-consider their position, and have to abandon the name which they at present give themselves. Unionists they are not; Liberals they are not, because more illiberal sentiments than those to which we have just listened I have seldom heard uttered in the House of Commons. I was very much struck with the hon. Gentleman's argument with reference to the Irish people not being entitled to the same consideration as the Crofters in the matter of arrears of rent. As I understood it, the hon. Member's argument is that, because the Irish tenants did not get relief in this respect when the Land Act of 1887 was passed they are not entitled to it now. Why did not the Irish tenants get relief from arrears in 1887? Because the hon. Member and his friends opposed the relief. We claim for the Irish tenants what has been given to the Crofter tenants of Scotland and which, if it had been given, would certainly have prevented a great deal of the trouble and vexation and irritation to which the Government of Ireland have been subjected. I have always been struck with the idea that if in a Land Court a rent is reduced, it is reduced because it is too high. I heard a remarkable case that illustrates this. I saw a tenant evicted from a farm the rent of which had been reduced from £57 to £36 by the Court. But there were four year's accumulation of arrears of the old rent, and the man was ejected on these accumulations of an old rent which the Land Court had declared unjust. Now how, in the name of common sense, can any man support a policy that subjects people to ejectment upon a rent the Court declares unjust? How any man can persuade himself with any feeling for justice that the people of Ireland are not entitled to the same consideration the Crofters of Scotland are I cannot understand. I was very much struck with the remarks of my hon. Friend on boycotting. I am against boycotting. I do not believe in it at all, but I am as much opposed to it in England as in Ireland. But where there is one case of boycotting in Ireland there are ten cases in England. I could detain the House for hours giving instances and illustrations; and, in my opinion, boycotting is more cruel, or at least it is as cruel, in England as in Ireland. But we shall get rid of all boycotting when we do justice to the people of Ireland. It is the outcome of a bad system, and one comfort I draw from these debates is that we are nearing the end of this system. No one can have listened to this debate without feeling that to a great extent argument has been exhausted. Certainly argument has been exhausted on that side, and, to a large extent, it is so on our side. I may allow one exception. I think the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. Wyndham) has put as much of a new face on the subject as it is capable of. I listened to his remarkable speech with interest, and I hope as days go on, and that power which the hon. Member undoubtedly possesses is matured by age and experience, that the hon. Member will become a great acquisition to the House. I think he said everything new that could be said for the Party opposite, but what did it all amount to? To this: That the prosecutions we complain of, and which have deprived the Irish people of their liberty, have not been so numerous and severe as they have been described to be. But suppose we on this side admit that even? The matter is not one of degree, it is a matter of right and

wrong, and I maintain that whether it is a question of one or one hundred prosecutions a Government has no right to prosecute the Press for publishing reports of meetings that have taken place, every one of which reports might be published in an English paper without the slightest objection. How can you call yours a policy of equality and justice when what is done continually in England cannot be done in Ireland without subjecting a man to prosecution and persecution? Then the hon. Member says landlords are not so bad as they have been described to be, and that that is so even in regard to the Ponsonby Estate and others that have been the subject of controversy. Well, I have no doubt there are exaggerations on both sides and on all questions. I do not pretend that everything that is said on our side can be supported by actual facts, but suppose that only half of what has been described is correct is it not our duty and is this not the time for this House to find a remedy? There is one point that especially calls for attention in such a debate as this, the claim, that I strongly challenge, made by the Chief Secretary that his policy is improving the condition of the people. Nothing could be more misleading, nothing more absurd was ever stated. How can you improve a nation by this repulsive policy? I drew my political milk from the pail of the great statesman who used to sit in this House, and who once used the magnificent phrase that "force is no remedy." It is because I firmly believe in the truth of that that I cannot believe and do not expect that there will be any improvement in the condition of Ireland arising from the policy of which we now complain. The lessons of history teach us that repressive laws all down the history of the world have been failures for the improvement of the people, and experience forbids us to expect happiness or contentment so long as this state of things exists. Instead of leading to all we want to see, it results in eviction, agitation, and constant complaint. Our debates show the amount of strife engendered by the attempt to hold people down against their will. There is one thing that pleases me in this Debate—the anxious desire evinced more than ever before for a union between the peoples of England and Ireland. That is one of the brightest and happiest assurances for the future. I will not dwell on the cause of that. I believe the cause is mainly the desire on the part of a large party—not the majority in this House for the moment, but a majority in the country, as you will find when an appeal is made to the electors—a desire and a determination on the part of this party that the present state of things shall not exist much longer. The next General Election will reverse the present policy, and then we shall have a closer drawing together and a true union of the peoples. I am sometimes asked why the government of Ireland does not succeed as the government of Scotland does? There is a great distinction in the conditions of union. The agreement with Scotland was unanimous; it was arrived at with the consent of both parties. There was a sitting down together at a table of representatives of each side, and the shrewdness of the Scotch people was allowed to have its way in refusing to give up their own laws and customs, in many particulars. But from beginning to end the union with Ireland was a forced union. Hence the difference in result. Give the people of Ireland the same right to self-government as is recognised in this House so far as the Scotch people are concerned, and the strife and irritation which have existed too long will disappear. Meanwhile, this Amendment points in the right direction. We have been told of a Local Government Bill for Ireland, but how can you give Local Government under a Coercion Law? The two principles will not agree; you must choose between them. I agree that a system of Local Government will help to remove the evils of Ireland, but you cannot apply it with success so long as it is connected with a coercion policy. It reminds me of what the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth once said, that we go to Ireland holding in one hand a stick for punishment and in the other a bag of money for bribery. That is a union of measures that will never succeed. We must have a union which will recognise the right of the people to make their local laws in accordance with their own views. Do that, and the result will be a more healthy, more prosperous, more contented state of things than can accompany any other line of policy you can adopt. There are several other reasons why I

object to your policy. It is most costly. I do not think the people of England quite appreciate this—that every Irish man, woman, and child, including babies, costs for government 25s. per head! Is there another such a fact in the history of the world? There is no other country in the world where five millions of people cost six millions sterling annually to be looked after. The fact that the English and Irish people are paying this should appeal to the pocket side of the question, and I believe the people of England are awakening to the fact that we are keeping up this costly machinery to enable a few landlords to exact rents to which they have no just claim. It is not only costly, but cruel, and I believe it is tainting the English name all over the world. Wherever I go Ireland is pointed out as the dark spot in English administration. Believing as I do that the Anglo-Saxon race have the greatest mission in the world, I, for one, am anxious that this dark stain on the reputation of our race should be erased, and therefore I am desirous to bring Ireland as much into accord with the law of this country as any section of the Empire. I believe from my heart that when this miserable, wretched coercive policy is put an end to, and we have adopted the statesmanlike, and I will say Christianlike, policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, all will be struck with wonder and surprise that it has taken so long to get to a point we ought to have reached long ago. For these reasons among many others I shall vote for the Amendment as a step in the direction we wish to go.

*(9.15.) MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): We have had from this side of the House from two hon. Members who reflect the opinion of the other side very strong, and, because unwilling, all the stronger testimony to the utterly hollow nature of that paragraph of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, which deals with the condition of Ireland, and to which the Amendment of my hon. Friend is directed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in what he intended to be a bitter attack upon the Irish people and their representatives, did, in fact, draw up a formidable indictment against the present administration of affairs in Ireland, because from first to last, until his concluding words, there ran through his speech this refrain—that the Government's Irish policy is a failure, and that the combination of the people is a thing with which we must grapple, thereby acknowledging that after three years of coercion the Government are only at the beginning of their difficult task; thus he acknowledged, that which is acknowledged by most people at the present time. The Chief Secretary has embarked on a Sisyphean-like task, and when he fancies he has carried his burden to the top of the hill, it recoils, and he has to commence his odious and discreditable task over again. It simply comes to this the more the right hon. Gentleman succeeds in his work of coercion the further off he is from ultimate success; the more he finds success in his method of pacification the less are the people of Ireland pacified. The speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. Russell), as well as that of the hon. Member for the Tradeston Division (Mr. Corbett), both carry out the same argument, that you must go on coercing the people of Ireland, that you cannot afford to relax your efforts, that the people are doubly dosed with original sin, that, in fact, the one result of coercion is to make the perpetuation of coercion imperative. What are the tests of success we should apply? Shall we take the test of the feelings of the people of Ireland? If so, is it not notorious, and not to be denied even by the Chief Secretary, that he is further off than ever from winning the affections of the people of Ireland, and that there is greater contempt for law as at present administered in Ireland than, perhaps, at any time during the past half century? Will it not be acknowledg ed that the present policy has done more to provoke disorder all over Ireland than the policy of any Chief Secretary who has undertaken government for generations past? The right hon. Gentleman brings forward as a test the prosperity of Ireland. Well, I wonder that he and his supporters have not claimed some credit for the improved character of the weather, and consequent better harvests for two years past. I wonder he does not take credit for control of the climatic conditions that have resulted in an alleviation of the condition of the agricultural interest in Ireland, for his argument comes to this and nothing else, when he

talks of increase in the deposit of the Joint Stock Banks and Savings Banks in Ireland, that people have a little more money because prices have been better somewhat. If this contention were not followed up by acts of cowardice and cruelty no contention could be more absurdly whimsical. This increase of deposits is due to circumstances as foreign to the Coercion Act as eclipses of the moon, the action of the tides, or any other cause entirely beyond the wit of man or the ingenuity of the Chief Secretary. I noticed that in his speech the hon. Member for South Tyrone made a series of very serious charges against the inhabitants of a certain portion of East Cork, and he contrived in the fewest possible words to convey the largest amount of misrepresentation the case could possibly bear. He referred to boycotting in the town of Youghal in connection with the imprisonment of my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork. On that occasion there was no boycotting save that of exclusive dealing, and I will prove that in a few words to the satisfaction of the House. My hon. Friend was condemned to imprisonment and treated with a cruelty and barbarity that would reflect shame on the administration of any Government. He was dragged about by force, his beard and hair were cut, and in short he was treated in such a manner that universal indignation was excited throughout Ireland, The Chief Secretary so far recognised this feeling as intense and widespread that at a banquet a night or two after, the gentlemen who attended were afraid or ashamed to give their names in the ordinary manner to the reporters, were ashamed to admit reporters in an honourable open manner to a banquet given in the Metropolis of Ireland. The callous and sinister nature of the remarks made by the Chief Secretary on the occasion on a subject that should have been one of reproach to any man of refined feeling, excited to the highest pitch the feelings of the people of Ireland, and under these conditions all over Ireland for three or four days shopkeepers voluntarily shut up their establishments. The proceeding was almost universal. In Cork, a certain number of shopkeepers were exceptions. There was no intimidation. There may have been private comment on their action but nobody interfered with the right of any person to give proper expression to his disapproval. In Youghal, which is close to the Ponsonby Estate, the people's feelings rose to the most excited pitch, and houses, but more especially shops, were shuttered. I believe for a period of three or four days, a certain number of persons, 17 in number I think, not 20 as the hon. Member said, out of a rather populous town, did not acquiesce in the expression of popular detestation; did not shutter their windows. And then the hon. Member endeavours to make out there was an attempt to intimidate these people. Now, the interference was of this character. The people were excited, loving my hon. Friend as they do, and all the more because of the persecution to which he was subjected, and of their own free will avoided these houses. They exercised their Common Law right; no matter what a trained and ingenious lawyer may say, they have an indefeasible right to deal where they wish to give the preference, and they avoided those houses where the proprietors had not shuttered their windows. Further than this there was no intimidation or combination or anything of the kind. It was an entirely spontaneous action on the part of the people. There was no picketting of the shops. I have it on the authority of the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, the parish priest, and leading men of the town, that nothing of the kind was attempted. When the matter was referred to in the meeting of the National League in the town, that meeting denounced any attempt to interfere with the right of those men to show their dissent from the majority of their fellow townsmen. But that which is one of the least respectable elements of argument in the speeches of the hon. Member displays itself. He contrives to introduce the sectarian element, and he says these 17 persons were Protestants. Perhaps they were, but it has nothing to do with the case, for several Protestant Nationalists shuttered their windows, not because they were Protestants, but because they were Nationalists, and disapproved of the inhuman treatment my hon. Friend had received. The fact is that Protestant Nationalists who did shutter their windows were in turn boycotted by local landlords and their supporters in the very

same way, But what does it all come to? I agree with the generous expression of sentiment from the hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. Cossham), boycotting should be denounced, and in the present state of society ought not to exist. But taking the conditions of society in Ireland as they exist, this boycotting I have alluded to is a defensive weapon used by the people of Ireland for the protection of their property and their families. It is not used, as it is in England, for the basest of all political purposes, for crushing political opponents, used by the wealthy against the poor, used by the Primrose League against poor shopkeepers, used by Tories against their Radical and Liberal opponents. Boycotting is to be deplored, but much more so is that the case in the villages and towns of Norfolk and Cambridge, where, I know, of scores of cases where it has been used against Liberals and Radicals, who dare not come on public platforms and avow their principles, but steal stealthily to the polls and there give an honest vote. They dare not openly express their sentiments without securing a sentence of social exclusion from the local landlords and branch of the Primrose League. Boycotting is more to be condemned with such cases than when it it is the act of a people fighting for the right to exist against unscrupulous landlordism. The hon. Member who made his maiden speech to-night, and who is, I believe, the Private Secretary to the Chief Secretary, said that Irish landlords are not so bad as they are painted. Perhaps they are not. But to-night we are not attacking the landlord system, and certainly not individual landlords, but when it comes to a contention that there is any parity between landlords in England and in Ireland, that is a contention so indefensible in argument that I need not refer to it further. We are led by the hon. Member for Dover gradually up to the main propositions in the argument of the Attorney General for Ireland, and I now refer to that part of his argument to which he addressed all his ingenuity—when he said my hon. Friend the Member for Cork does not appreciate the fact that boycotting even to the verge of starvation, if unaccompanied by intimidation and undue influence, cannot be punished under the Crimes Act. It can be made the subject of indictment under the Common Law.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): The word that I used was conspiracy.

*Mr. FLYNN: I am quoting from the *Times* report, which I thought even yet could be relied upon, But I take the right hon. Gentleman's disclaimer. Well, if this can be done why is it not done? There was a case of conspiracy at Liverpool, but though there were elements in that prosecution not to the credit of English administration of the law, at any rate the accused had the protection of a jury. Were they not prosecuted under the Common Law? If you have equal laws and if these offences in Ireland can be made subject to indictment under Common Law, why are they not? If any of my constituents are accused of conspiracy why are they not indicted before a jury? The ex-Attorney General, now Chief Justice, knows very well the process of manipulation for a special jury; why have you not tried that for the past three years? The Attorney General went on to say:—

> "If magistrates confuse the two kinds of boycotting and deal under the Crimes Act with a conspiracy punishable at Common Law, their decision can be reviewed and set right, as in the Killeagh case."

I suppose it is because there is to be a gradual abandonment of the Crimes Act in Ireland that in so large a proportion of cases we are getting back to the musty statute of Edward III., for observe that when one part of the machinery for the administration of law breaks down, gets out of order, or its wheels get clogged, you furbish up some old machinery and make it exactly fit the same class of offences, make it do the same dirty work. I suppose it is because these decisions of magistrates have been received in this way that a respectable friend of mine last week got six months imprisonment (in default of giving bail) for trying to influence a certain man, and to influence him without intimidation or anything of that kind. Hon. Gentlemen will say, "This is one of the unworthy quibbles with which these arguments abound; it is all very well to call it a punishment, but it is no punishment to ask a man to give bail." But

we have the opinion of Chief Baron Pallas on that point. He once said nothing on earth would induce him to be bound to be of good behaviour under these circumstances for a longer or a shorter period; and it is in default of giving such bail that these men have got six months' imprisonment under the rusty Statute of Edward III. This illustrates at what a cheap rate the Irish Administration values the right of liberty of the subject in Ireland. My friend, and others like him, got six months' imprisonment without appeal—a thing which would have been impossible under the Coercion Act. But the Coercion Act will not suffice in every case. The Chief Secretary has resorted to an obsolete statute, and this statute during two years of the right hon. Gentleman's *régime* has been put in operation more frequently than during the 20 years preceding his rule. And this is the progress the right hon. Gentleman is making with law and order. Let us test the statement of the Irish Attorney General, that to conspire to bring people to the verge of starvation, if the conspiracy is unaccompanied with intimidation and undue influence, is not an offence under the Crimes Act. But it has been dealt with under that Act. I know it from what occurred in my own constituency, where a local landlord, who was refused supplies, was advised by a district inspector to wait on certain shopkeepers and demand certain goods, and where, because the shopkeepers refused to supply the goods, they were prosecuted and imprisoned. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary must know something about the cases that occurred at Cashel. Two members of the local police force the other day accompanied an emergency man, who is in care of one of Smith-Barry's evicted farms in the district, to several of the principal shops, demanding to be served with provisions and other necessaries. Almost in every case a blunt refusal was given. Amongst the shops visited were those of Mr. Patrick Condon, baker; the Messrs. Connolly, bakers; Mr. Michael Dargan, publican and grocer; Mr. Patrick Griffin, flour and meal merchant; Messrs. Maher Brothers, drapers, &c. In some of the shops threats of prosecutions and imprisonment were made to the shopkeepers, but without avail. "The authorities," said a newspaper correspondent,—

> "appear to be itching for a prosecution here, and since the beginning of the Smith-Barry dispute, some three or four months ago, the constitution of the local force has been much altered. Inoffensive, easy-going men have been exchanged for those who have been prominent in working up cases of a similar nature in other districts."

Well, these were cases in which there was no intimidation, and in which the threats came not from the shopkeepers but from the other side; but, nevertheless, many of the shopkeepers have been sent to prison. It does not matter what words are used to clothe the ridiculous summonses. It is the actual offence we are bound to look at, and the evidence brought forward in the Courts in support of the charges. We are getting from bad to worse in Ireland in regard to these matters. At one time, if a man had a complaint to make, he either went to the magistrates for a summons, or to the local police barracks; but now, unfortunately, it has become the custom for the local police, no doubt acting under the instructions of the Chief Secretary, to get up these cases on their own initiative, and, after three years of this system, the Chief Secretary is boasting of the success of his administration. Truly had the hon. Member for Cork described the right hon. Gentleman's policy as one of exasperation, for it was one of exasperation tempered by contempt on the part of the bulk of the Irish people for the mean, shabby, and despicable way in which the Coercion Act is carried out. To show how the Police Force are used for the purpose of getting up prosecutions, we have only to look at the circular prepared by the late Captain Plunkett and issued to the District Inspector about the time of his death. That document runs as follows:—

> "BOYCOTTING.
>
> "D. I.
>
> "In any prominent case of boycotting in your district, especially in the case where the person boycotted is under Police protection, the proper steps to take are:—
>
> "I. Get person boycotted to consent to go with police and demand supplies from those who have refused or are likely to refuse him, and more especially if such person refusing is a publican.
>
> "II. If he consents send with him one or two intelligent policemen, with instructions to note carefully anything said and done,

and whether the article or articles asked for are in the shops for sale.

"III. If refused by two or more the boycotted person and the police should at once make informations setting forth what took place, and submit them to me for directions.

"IV. It is absolutely necessary that there should be a distinct refusal, and not an evasive one, and it does not follow that the persons refusing to supply the boycotted individual should be all traders or shop-keepers. The smith may refuse to shoe his horse, the baker to supply bread, the provision-dealer flour, the coal merchant coal, and all can be prosecuted for conspiracy. If three or more persons refuse to supply they should not cease asking, but go to others. It is advisable to have as many refusals as possible to show the conspiracy.

"T. O. PLUNKETT, D.M.

"December, 1887."

Where, I ask, is intimidation if it is not on the side of the police? If the police had set out with the avowed object of exasperating the people of Ireland they could not have succeeded better than they have done. There is another point, which illustrates the spirit which has guided the right hon. Gentleman's administration. The Manchester Martyrs celebrations, which occur in November, and which have ceased to have reference to present politics, are proclaimed by the Government, and we have had more baton charging and more disorderly scenes on the part of the police of late than we have had at any time since 1881. The Chief Secretary claims that the relations between the Government and the people have improved. If he thinks so let him put it to the test. There will be elections in West Waterford and in one of the divisions of Tipperary. If he thinks his policy has been successful and has secured the approval of an influential section of the Irish people, let him put up nominees at these elections to represent his idea of law and order, and let us see whether his minority is increased or whether the people are not more emphatic in denouncing his parody on constitutional administration. If you believe in your policy, if you really believe in the words you put into the Royal Speech, I ask you to test it in any part of Ireland. If you succeed we shall then acknowledge that you are right and we are wrong, and that the coercive policy has some chance of success.

Mr. Flynn

(9.48). *MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, East): The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) has argued that the tranquility of the Irish people arises very largely from a feeling of hope, and not from the firm and just administration of Irish affairs by Her Majesty's present Government. But I think my right hon. Friend the Attorney General for Ireland pulverised that argument when he reminded us of the fact that in the interregnum between the introduction of the Home Rule Bill and its rejection by the House the statistics of crime show an enormous preponderance over those of the present time. The hon. Member who a short time ago addressed the House from the opposite side spoke of "the material depression" in Irish affairs. I think he could hardly be conversant with the fact that trade and commerce have greatly improved, as is shown by the returns of railway and other companies. Hon. Members opposite have said that my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh (Col. Saunderson) is supported only by a handful of Orangemen in the North of Ireland. The Orangemen of Ulster are not a mere handful of men, and they are the exponents of a feeling which pervades, I should say, a million of the population of the country, whilst at least two millions of people out of the entire population are in entire accord with Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member who last spoke challenged the Chief Secretary to test the opinions of the constituencies in the South of Ireland; but, on the other hand, I challenge Gentlemen opposite to contest such a constituency as North Antrim. If the principle of proportional voting were to be applied to Ireland, the number of loyal representatives of that country would be increased from 18 to 40. I believe that so far as the elements of industrial enterprise and stability and obedience to the law are concerned, those who are in accord with the views of Her Majesty's present advisers represent a very large and continually growing section in Ireland. I have no hesitation in saying that while Her Majesty's Government by a policy of continuous firmness and justice have restored tranquillity to the Irish people, and have shattered that conspiracy which intimidated and prevented material progress, the condition of things

is day by day growing better. I believe that what we want is to have just laws administered justly and fairly, and to have the law of contract observed. The area of agitation is daily growing narrower and narrower, and within a comparatively short period—or long before we reach the end of 20 years of firm and just Government—we shall have a condition of things which all the supporters of justice and order wish to see inaugurated in the Sister Country. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), adverted the other day to the formation of the magisterial tribunal in Ireland. I am free to say that I am in entire agreement with hon. Gentlemen in so far as the men who act as Resident Magistrates are not men trained in the law. I do not think the Magisterial Bench should be a place of refuge for worn-out officials and officers of the Irish Constabulary. I think the magistrates ought to be trained in the fair and just and impartial administration of the law. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the Resident Magistrates are not the creation of Her Majesty's present Government, and that a large proportion of those who now occupied seats on the Bench were appointed by former Governments. It must also be remembered that their decisions have been very seldom impugned by higher tribunals. I should, however, prefer, as a matter of principle, that men trained in the law should occupy these positions. With regard to the relations of the Royal Irish Constabulary to the people, I am prepared to say that as far as my experience has enabled me to judge of the civic capacity of the police, they are not a competent police force properly so-called. I cannot forget, however, that when some years ago the relations of the police force to the population was impugned, the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway rushed to the rescue, and expressed their unbounded confidence in the manner in which those men serve the Crown. I believe if the constabulary throughout Ireland were constituted on the basis of the Metropolitan Police, it would be a more efficient force. It is the duty of a police force to be on terms of sympathy with the people, to be slow to resort to menace, and so to discharge its functions that conflicts with the people shall very seldom occur. Generally speaking, the Irish Constabulary ought to give far more attention to such matters as are within the purview of the Metropolitan Police and less to military pomp and circumstance. I hold that the constabulary might be a good deal improved, and I am also clearly of opinion that the Magisterial Bench might with justice be reformed. The marked improvements to be seen in Ireland in the observance of the law, in the manner in which the people deport themselves, and in the deposits in the Savings Banks, afford indications of a prosperous future; and I hope that soon the Queen's Speech will contain nothing but congratulations on the tranquillity and happiness of that country.

(10.5.) *MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford): Mr. Speaker, I think it is matter of serious comment that we have reached nearly the end of the second day of the debate, and we have not heard any speech from the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or any other Member of the Cabinet. We have had a speech from the Attorney General for Ireland, who is always sensible, courteous, and fair. I congratulate him on achieving the post of Attorney General very much; I think the change in that post from the late occupant will be to the advantage of Ireland, and I hope his appointment is some indication of a change of policy in the administration. I shall be very much disappointed if it is not so. We have also had a speech from the hon. Member for Dover, a speech of great promise, though he necessarily went into details and disclaimed any intention of entering on the question of policy. But it does appear to me that by this time we ought to have had a speech from some Member of the Cabinet of a more general character, and entering upon the general policy, past and future, for Ireland. It is not fitting that the Chief Secretary should reserve his speech until the close of the debate, when no Member will have an opportunity of replying. So far, the defence of the Government has been solely of the character of that made by the hon. Member who has just sat down—that the improvement in Ireland is wholly due to the wise policy of the Chief Secretary, and also to the firm administration of

the Coercion Act. I am perfectly willing, after personal inquiries, to concede that the condition of Ireland is greatly improved. My right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax stated that he had attended a great number of meetings in Ireland, but that he was on no occasion shadowed by the police. He stated also that he had on many occasions spoken on Irish questions in terms for which Irish Members had been prosecuted. My own experience is contrary to that of my right hon. Friend. Wherever I went in Ireland I was shadowed by the police in the most complete manner. My movements were telegraphed from Dublin when I left that city to go anywhere, and I found on my arrival at any place a body of police prepared for me. The police followed me about in cars. When I went to the Ponsonby estate with Canon Keller I was followed by a car full of armed police. I remonstrated with the sergeant in charge of them. He said they were only patrolling the country, but on further cross-examination he informed me that he knew who I was, and that he had received orders to follow me. Then I went to Tipperary. In that interesting town I was followed by a considerable number of people to the house where I was staying. There, not unnaturally, I was called upon to say a few words to the crowd. Almost immediately there appeared, as if by magic, a force of police armed with rifles and bayonets, under the charge of Colonel Cadell. I had, therefore, to make my observations under the very disagreeable apprehension of a conflict, which was almost menaced by this body of armed police. Such a condition of things is as absurd as it possibly can be. There was not the slightest possible danger of conflict except such as might be provoked by the police. At Galway I attended the tenants' convention, to which a police reporter applied for admission. As it was a private meeting his application was refused, although I did my best to secure his presence, as I did not wish it to be supposed that I was afraid to speak before a police reporter. Later I went to Drogheda for the purpose of receiving the freedom of the city—an occasion when it might have been supposed one would not be subjected to these attentions. I must say I do not admire the taste of the Chief Secretary in making that an occasion for the presence of a police reporter. Application, however, was made that he should be admitted; the Mayor refused the application; but when I said it would be more pleasing to me that the police reporter should be present, he was admitted. While in Drogheda I also received an unexpected address from the tenants of Lord Massereene, and the presence of a police reporter, I must say, only induced me to speak my mind more fully. I have no doubt it was thought by the Chief Secretary, or those who manage these affairs in Dublin, that the sending of a police reporter on this occasion would deter me from speaking my mind. But I spoke fully on the subject, even as I have spoken in this House and in other parts of the country. I said that, in my opinion, the tenants of Lord Massereene were perfectly justified in standing by their combination and refusing to come to terms with their landlord until all these evicted tenants were replaced. I did not feel any risk at the moment in speaking in that manner, because I was convinced that the Chief Secretary would take no notice. At the same time, some of my hon. Friends, Irish Members, who have spoken in Ireland in terms less strong than I used, have been sent to prison. I could quote several cases on that point, but there is one to which I should like specially to call attention—that of the hon. Member for North Cork on the 25th February, 1888, when he was prosecuted for a speech he had made. It is not necessary to go at length into what he said, because the magistrate, in giving his decision, after quoting parts of Mr. Flynn' speech, said—

> "So far these remarks mean a simple narration of historical facts, but there is the unfortunate observation of Mr. Flynn. 'I beg of you to remember the words of a great English orator, and stick firm to your just and lawful combination, and do not be driven from that either by the intimidation of the Government of the Castle, or by the open violence of the bludgermen.' We consider that the speech has been correctly interpreted by the Crown, and that, on the whole, it amounts to an incitement of certain tenants."

He convicted him, and sentenced him to imprisonment as a common criminal for this very moderate speech. I cannot think how, if the Chief Secretary compared the speech which I made at

Drogheda with that made by the hon. Member for North Cork, he could think the one and not the other a subject for criminal indictment. But it throws an unpleasant light upon the matter, and many Members for Ireland have been prosecuted, convicted, and sent to prison, to sleep on the plank bed, and to live on prison fare. If that is a sample of just administration, I am very much mistaken in my view of it. Now, Sir, I am surprised this course should be adopted. I am still more surprised, having regard to what took place last year on the subject. It will be recollected that I brought this matter of the "shadowing" of Members before the House, and in the course of the debate the Chief Secretary replied to me across the Table in language which certainly is very unusual when used by one Member of the Front Bench to another—language for which he was called to account, evidently by his Chief, the leader of the House, and for which he made something like an apology in the course of the debate.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken. I was not called to account by anybody. I thought, perhaps, I had hurt the right hon. Gentleman's feelings, and it was, therefore, I made the observation he has alluded to. I have since regretted it.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The right hon. Gentleman regrets the apology?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I can only say that from all appearance the right hon. Gentleman had been called to account for those words by the First Lord of the Treasury. He certainly did make an apology, but it was a very lame one; it hardly amounted to an apology, and I do not think he has any need to regret that he made it. It was the poorest apology ever made. I am glad to add my testimony to that of other Members in the course of this debate, as the result of my own observation, that undoubtedly a great improvement has taken place in the condition of Ireland. But my impression is that the improvement is due to other causes than the administration of the Coercion Act. It is chiefly owing to increased agricultural prosperity, arising from two good harvests, and to the settlement of grave disputes between landlords and tenants. I shall presently show that the Coercion Act has not only had no effect in bringing about a settlement of these disputes, but that it has had an exactly contrary effect. Then hope has risen higher in the hearts of the people that the day is not far distant when they will manage their own affairs in a Parliament of their own. If the Coercion Act had been directed against crime only they would not have opposed it as they did. If that Act had produced any good effect it would be found in the larger number of convictions in proportion to the crimes reported. But the statistics show no improvement in this respect. I have not the statistics of 1889, but I find that whereas in 1886, when there was no Coercion Act, 540 agrarian crimes were reported, out of which there were only 54 convictions; in 1888 the agrarian crimes reported were reduced to 344, but the convictions were only 32, a smaller proportion than in 1886. There are some crimes of which it is difficult to say whether they are purely agrarian. Of incendiary fires, in 1886 there were 103, with only five convictions. In 1888 there were 75, with only three convictions. In 1886 there were 75 cases of killing and maiming cattle and only three convictions; and in 1888 55 cases, with only two convictions. These figures do not tend to show that any diminution in crime has been due to the Coercion Act. But, Sir, after all, everyone knows that the Coercion Act has not been directed against crime; it has been directed against combination, and practically the whole and sole use made of it during the last three years has been to put down combination on the part of the tenants and to assist the landlords in collecting arrears of rent. As far as I can ascertain, there have been something like 3,000 prosecutions and convictions under the Coercion Act, and some hundreds more under the Statute of Edward III., which has been used to a larger extent and degree than has ever been the case before. The probability is that something like 3,500 prosecutions have taken place under these two Acts of Parliament. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to say that 95 per cent of these prosecutions are not directed to the great disputes between landlords and tenants, such as where the tenants have combined, as in 1886, for the purpose of resisting the

full payment of the rent in consequence of the pressure of agricultural distress in that year. I ask the Chief Secretary what evidence he can produce to show that these 3,000 or 4,000 prosecutions have had any success in putting down these combinations or in bringing these disputes to a satisfactory conclusion. My strong conviction is that he cannot show anything of the kind. The *modus operandi* of the Chief Secretary is this: wherever combination or disputes exist the first step taken is to proclaim the district; then prosecutions are issued against persons who are, or who have been, members of the local Land League, or who have attended meetings in the remotest degree connected with the League. Then, if meetings of the tenants are called, they are proclaimed as illegal, and the next step is to institute Star Chamber inquiries, the tenants being brought before that tribunal and pressure employed to make the farmers give evidence against their brother tenants with a view of breaking up the combination. The next step is to use the Acts to prosecute those who resort to boycotting, and the mode in which it is done is this: A policeman goes round with a boycotted person to various shops in the district and demands goods, when, if they are refused, prosecutions are instituted, and the shopkeepers are sent to gaol. Then, when any of these persons come out of gaol and demonstrations take place, further prosecutions are instituted on the ground that these demonstrations are held to be illegal meetings. The result is that in these various ways different batches of people are sent to prison as common criminals for the express purpose of breaking up the existing combination, and of thus settling existing disputes. In the single dispute between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants, no fewer than 170 persons were sent to prison. In the Olphert case upwards of 200 persons went to gaol, and in the Leader dispute the number was upwards of 80, similar proportions being observable in a number of other cases. I believe I am right in saying that many hundreds of persons have been sent to prison for being members of local Land Leagues or attending meetings of Land League branches. The hon. Member for Dover has said that in the past year only one person was convicted under the Coercion Act of being present at a Land League meeting—that may be true. But it appears that during the past year the authorities thought it better to take proceedings under the Statute of Edward III., and large numbers of people were sent to prison under that Statute for being present at meetings of the Land League. I will give an illustration which came under my own notice. In the town of Castlereagh no fewer than 18 persons were prosecuted under the Statute of Edward III. for being present at meetings of the local Land League. There was no evidence that the meetings were held; but the magistrate called upon the defendants to give bail to be of good behaviour, and in default to go to prison for three months. The 18 were sent to prison for refusing to give bail under this Statute of Edward III. It will be asked, "Why did they not give bail?" The answer has been given by Chief Baron Palles, who stated from the Bench that nothing would induce him to give bail in preference to going to gaol for an offence which he had not committed. But what evidence is there that these proceedings have had the slightest effect in inducing people to give up becoming members of the League? In those districts where prosecutions of this nature have been most numerous, the only effect has been to increase the number of members joining the local branch of the National League. Father Kennedy, the parish priest of the district in which the Leader estate is situated, and where prosecutions have been very rife, wrote recently a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, in which he said—

"In no previous year have we had such a number of members to take the field with. Thanks to our Recruiting-Sergeant Balfour every full-sized man in Meelin is enlisted at this moment under the banner of the suppressed National League. At the roll-call last Monday quite a legion of recruits pledged their support to the veteran leaguers, of whom several still bear traces of the wounds received in their various encounters with the forces of coercion. Out of this parish alone scores of men have, time after time, been dragged to gaol for having attended a political meeting. No less than 120 coercion summonses have been issued with a view to the suppression of this branch."

I believe there is no doubt as to the accuracy of that statement, and that the issue of these 120 summonses has had

the effect of increasing the membership of that particular branch of the League from 185 to 314. I will ask again what has been the success of these proceedings? Now, there have been numerous proceedings against the Press of the last three years for reporting the meetings of the National League. The hon. Member for Dover has stated that all the Press prosecutions, save one, during the past year were for "intimidation." But this is no refutation of the assertion that the prosecutions were for the mere reporting, without editorial comment, the proceedings of local branches of the League. The hon. Member will excuse me if I say that the Government devised a plan of prosecuting under the head of intimidation for merely reporting the proceedings of the League. If a boycotting resolution was passed by a branch and this was published in the local paper, the editor, if prosecuted, was charged with "intimidation," though his act was merely that of publishing a report of the proceedings at a meeting of the branch League. The Mayor of Wexford was prosecuted for intimidating certain persons unknown, but the only proof in support of the prosecution was that he had reported in his paper a resolution passed at a meeting of a branch of the National League. What he did publish was merely a narrative of what occurred at the meeting, in a paragraph in an obscure part of the paper; the defendant made no comment on it, but for inserting the paragraph he was sent to prison as a common criminal. All these prosecutions against the Press, save one, during the past year were of this nature. What evidence is there that these prosecutions have been of the slightest avail? They have not stopped the publication of such reports. Notwithstanding such prosecutions all the Nationalist papers continue to publish these reports. Similarly, the Star Chamber inquiries have been quite fruitless. Tenants would not give evidence, and no successful prosecution has taken place as a result of such inquiries. I challenge the Chief Secretary to produce a single case of successful prosecution arising out of proceedings under the Star Chamber Clauses in respect of combinations. I now come to the question of boycotting. As I understand it the Government take a great deal of credit to themselves for the diminution in boycotting, but I should like to know if it can be said that that diminution is in any way due to the proceedings under the Crimes Act. So far as I have observed that part of the Act has proved a failure. Since the Killeagh case in 1888, in which the Judge held that it was not merely necessary, in order to found a prosecution and obtain a conviction, to give evidence of refusal to sell, but that it was also necessary to show there had been actual conspiracy to compel and induce others in the way of intimidation or undue influence. Since that decision there have been very few prosecutions, it being impossible to convict. The Act has, consequently, proved almost a dead letter as against boycotting. Thus, in Tipperary lately eight householders were severely boycotted, and in Youghal 20 shop-keepers, but no prosecutions were undertaken, for it was known by the Government that they could not be maintained. The only prosecution in Tipperary was that of an editor, although some hundreds of persons were engaged in boycotting the shop-keepers. Now I ask the Chief Secretary to name any case in which any conbination has been broken up by the Coercion Act? Has the Plan of Campaign been put down by it? I will not deny that a very large number of disputes have been brought to a conclusion. I think that that is a most fortunate circumstance, but they have been brought to a conclusion by direct agreement between landlord and tenant, or in other cases by a resort to arbitration. And in those cases, I believe, in which settlements have been come to the landlord has conceded the very thing which in the first instance he refused, and the refusal of which led to the combination. I believe that in every case the settlement has been arrived at on the understanding that the evicted tenants should be replaced in their holdings, and the same result has been obtained in the cases in which there was arbitration, while the arbitrator also awarded an abatement of rent equal to, if not in excess of, that which they originally demanded. But for coercion these settlements would have been arrived at at a much earlier date, and those few disputes which are still going on would have been adjusted.

It is because the landlords believe themselves to be supported by the Coercion Act that they are prevented coming to a final settlement. With regard to the existing disputes, I wish to point out that the present condition of things is totally different from that which prevailed at the inception of the dispute. Now the landlords are prepared to make concessions in the shape of rent abatements, which they originally refused, and this is so on the Clanricarde, Massereene, Tottenham, and Ponsonby Estates. Even the hon. Member for South Huntingdon has made an offer of terms to the tenants on the Ponsonby estate equal to if not better than the terms demanded before the dispute began. The tenants admit that they would gladly accept the offer, but they point out they are bound in honour to stand by the evicted men if they will not come to terms, unless the hon. Member for South Huntingdon is prepared to re-instate those tenants. Lord Clanricarde, in his case, refused to re-instate any of the 111 tenants he has already evicted, but he, too, makes offers to the other tenants which they would gladly accept, and which they are only deterred from accepting because of the refusal of re-instatement. Lord Massereene and Colonel Tottenham, while willing to re-instate some of the men they have evicted, are not prepared to re-instate the leaders. They say that the leaders of the tenants already evicted are responsible for the dispute which has occurred, and, although they give the terms originally demanded by the tenants, the thing which causes the continuance of the dispute is this refusal to reinstate the leaders. The hon. Member for South Huntingdon, while willing to re-instate evicted tenants, will only do so on terms which they cannot possibly fulfil. These tenants, it must be remembered, have been out of their holdings for two or three years; their houses have been battered down, or they are in a state of dilapidation caused by emergency men. The farms have been derelict for two or three years; they have gone out of cultivation, and I believe I am right in saying that the hon. Member for South Huntingdon, while willing to re-instate the tenants, will not forego the costs, and also insists on payment of the arrears of rent which have accumulated during the period the tenants had been out of the holdings; neither will he agree to re-build the houses which had been battered down. The tenants still in possession, thinking not of themselves, but of the evicted men, have declined to be parties to an arrangement which cannot possibly be fulfilled. One point seems to come out clearly in the present state of things, and that is, that the existing disputes are being carried on in a spirit of vindictiveness by the landlords. For the most part the landlords are now being supported by syndicates of landlords, or by subscriptions handed to them on condition that they do not give way, but insist upon terms which will secure a victory against the tenants. The hon. Member for Dover devoted a great deal of his speech to a defence of the action of the hon. Member for South Huntingdon. I think he would have done better—seeing that he is so closely connected with the Government—if he had shown a little more impartiality in the matter of this dispute. His is another proof that the Government have thrown the whole of their influence on the side of the landlords in this case, and that, I believe, is clearly borne out by the history of the case. No step, indeed, is now taken by Mr. Ponsonby or by the hon. Member for South Huntingdon without the advice, support, or approval of the Government. The hon. Member for Dover, in giving an account of the dispute, omitted to mention the most essential feature of the whole thing, and that was, the motive of the hon. Member for South Huntingdon in forming a syndicate of landlords. The hon. Member for South Huntingdon told us that the estate was bought by himself and a few friends for the express purpose of defeating the Plan of Campaign, and he added that they hoped to inflict such a lesson on those who had taken part in the Plan as would deter other tenants upon other estates from embarking in a like adventure. The hon. Member evidently bought the estate for political purposes; he bought it for the purpose of inflicting punishment upon the tenants, in the interests of all landlords, and with the view of preventing other tenants from combining for the purpose of obtaining a reduction of rent. By a strange invention of logic immediately after

effecting the purchase, the hon. Member made an offer to the tenants of the very abatement which they had originally demanded, and the refusal of which had caused the disputes. By so doing he practically admitted the justice of the tenants' demands. All these proceedings go to show that there has been a vindictive exercise of the rights of property, and I believe it will come out in every other case of dispute that there is the same kind of vindictiveness. Last year I had some negotiations with the hon. Member for South Tyrone on the subject of the Olphert dispute. It appeared to me to be one which could be settled by negotiations, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone seemed to be anxious to facilitate such arrangement. But eventually Mr. Olphert refused to go any further, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone afterwards told me that the main reason for that refusal was that Mr. Olphert had received subscriptions from other landlords in the district, who had made it a condition that he should not give way to the tenants without achieving a victory over the combination. I say it is another illustration of the vindictiveness shown against the tenants. Although the landlord was most probably prepared to refer the matter to arbitration, yet the other landlords in the district were not willing that that course should be pursued unless a substantial victory was obtained against the combination of the tenants. In the same way, in the case of Lord Clanricarde, it is certain, on his own admission in the letters which he sent to the *Freeman's Journal*, that he is actuated by vindictive feelings against the tenants, and that he believes that he has received a legacy of hatred from his father, and is bound to treat them in that spirit. What I hold under these conditions is that, in the first place, the tenants in any dispute, who have combined together, are bound as honourable men, to stand by the evicted men and to insist upon the re-instatement of the evicted men as a condition of a settlement. The other point I wish to insist upon is that the Government is not justified in allowing the vindictive exercise of rights, and in supporting the wholesale evictions which are uncalled for in these estates where the remaining disputes exist. I cannot doubt that if they were to use their personal influence with their landlords the difficulty would be removed, but if not, they ought to legislate with the object of removing it. Arbitration, voluntary or compulsory, is the remedy for this difficulty. The tenants, on their part, are perfectly prepared for arbitration, and are anxious to bring their disputes to a conclusion. The House, I think, ought to understand how serious is this difficulty. There are 900 of these evicted tenants—they are all living in huts or outhouses within sight of their former holdings, except on the Coolgreany and Massereene estates, where a certain number of sickly Protestant plants, as they are called, have been bribed into taking the evicted farms. The holdings of these evicted men are still untenanted. They are being supported by contributions drawn from the whole of Ireland, and there can be no doubt that this support will be continued till their re-instatement takes place. If the wholesale evictions on the Clanricarde, Olphert, and Ponsonby and other estates take place, the number of these evicted tenants will be trebled. They must, and will in the future still more, constitute a most serious difficulty for the Irish Government. I would ask the Chief Secretary what he contemplates doing in respect of them? I think it would be a wise course on the part of the Government to take time by the forelock, and to provide in some way for compulsory arbitration. In conclusion, let me say that, in my opinion, the Coercion Act has been used wholly and solely for the purpose of putting down combination, used with an incredible meanness, and in absolute contempt of every constitutional right and every principle of justice. But it has not succeeded in putting down a single combination, and my conviction is that if it had not been for coercion the disputes would long ago have been settled. On the other hand, coercion affords no promise in the future of settling these disputes, and the Queen's Speech affords no indication of the intention of the Government to deal with this question, which, in my opinion, is one of such enormous importance, and which ought to be settled in accordance with the almost unanimous wish of the Irish people.

(11.5.) *Mr. SMITH-BARRY (Huntingdonshire, S.): When I came down to the House this afternoon I expected that a strong attack would be made upon me with regard to my connection with the Ponsonby estate. I confess that I find my task much easier than I expected. There seems to be very little in the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork to which I need refer. What there was in it was fully answered by the hon. Member for South Tyrone and the hon. Member for Dover. As to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I will say that I have nothing to be ashamed of in the remarks I addressed to my constituents last year. Now, I shall not go at greater length than I can help into the details of the dispute on the Ponsonby estate. I have gone into them fully on a previous occasion. I have shown that the rents that were being exacted by Mr. Ponsonby were fair and just rents. The charge of rack-renting has completely broken down, and the best proof of that is that a certain number of tenants went into the Courts soon after the Act of 1881 was passed, and were, in the words of Canon Keller, "So disgusted with the paltry reductions given by the Sub-Commission that they did not consider it worth the trouble or the expense to submit their cases to them." I know that Canon Keller has said that the Sub-Commission Courts were packed Courts. If so, they were packed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Many landlords have not been very well satisfied with the reductions made by the Sub-Commission Courts. They consider that the reductions were excessive, and the tenants consider that they were not sufficient. Probably impartial people will, under these circumstances, think that the reductions made were very nearly fair. With regard to the reduction offered by Mr. Ponsonby at the time the Plan of Campaign was started on his estate in 1886, the reductions were 20 per cent., which were fully equal to the reductions made by the Sub-Commissioners *plus* the reductions afterwards made by the Land Commissioners under the schedule of the Act of 1887. Therefore, the charge that the reductions offered then by Mr. Ponsonby were inadequate clearly falls to the ground. But Mr. Ponsonby was prepared to give further reductions in individual cases, and was prepared to remit a considerable amount of arrears. Amongst the charges made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork there was one with regard to a letter—a stolen letter—written by my agent, with regard to a small portion of the estate. My agent wrote a confidential letter, stating his opinion of the value of the land over which he had been. He stated that the rent of some of that land, he thought, would be reduced 30 per cent. if the tenants went into the Land Court. He stated in his letter that some of the land was let at 20s. per acre ["Read"], and that he thought that the rent would probably be reduced to 12s. or 13s. But it turned out that the land this gentleman had seen, and which he supposed to be rented at 20s., was really let at 15s. an acre; so that, calculating the reduction on that very land, it would have brought it down to the value which this gentleman considered might be put upon it by the Land Court. But if the tenants were to get such a large reduction as had been stated all over the estate by going into the Sub-Commissioners' Court why had they not gone into the Courts? That is the very thing Mr. Ponsonby has been asking them to do for some years past. It is clear that either the tenants thought that this gentleman was wrong in his calculation, or they were aware that they had much better remain as they were. The next point is with regard to the negotiations for sale which were being carried on between Mr. Brunker and Canon Keller. I am supposed to have stepped in and stopped negotiations when they were just on the point of being satisfactorily concluded. That point has been answered satisfactorily by the hon. Member for Dover. I have said before, and I repeat it now, that the difference was not, as stated by Canon Keller and the advisers of the tenants, £4,000, but £20,000; and the sum offered to Mr. Ponsonby was such that neither he nor his trustee—for he was only a limited owner—could accept, and, Mr. Brunker having written to him to say that he must be prepared to send an answer without delay, negotiations were then broken off. At that point I myself stepped in. I maintain that I had a perfect right to step in and save*

any gentleman from running the risk of being crushed by an illegal conspiracy. Then it has been asked why do we not submit these questions to arbitration. No proposal for arbitration has been submitted to Mr. Ponsonby under which he would not have been bound by such conditions that no landlord could ever accept. Besides that, we hold that the Courts are the proper arbitrators. The Courts are amply sufficient to deal with this case. Not only that, but I really cannot understand how hon. Gentlemen opposite can have, I was almost going to say, the impertinence to ask any landlord to submit to arbitration after the result of the great arbitration on the Vandeleur estate. What has happened there? The rents on the Vandeleur estate were submitted to the arbitration of the hon. and learned Member for Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), who submitted an elaborate award, which was stated by hon. Gentlemen opposite to be a complete victory for the Plan of Campaign. Whether that is so or not I cannot say; but, at any rate, it was so in their view. One would have naturally supposed that, such being the case, the tenants would have accepted the award and fulfilled all its conditions; but they have declined to do so, and of the very first instalment, due on the 25th of last October, only a portion has been paid. [An hon. MEMBER: It is untrue.] It is absolutely true, and I can prove it up to the hilt. I ask how we on the Ponsonby estate, or any gentleman who has an estate under the Plan of Campaign, can be expected to submit to arbitration when the award of such an arbitrator as the hon. and learned Member for Hackney was set at naught and not carried out? Very much the same thing had happened on the Hill estate in Donegal. In such a state of things it is idle to talk of arbitration. After these negotiations with Mr. Brunker, and after I myself and this much-abused syndicate stepped in to assist Mr. Ponsonby through his difficulties, an offer was made to the tenants, the terms of which the hon. Member for North-East Cork and Canon Keller have carefully avoided mentioning, though they have been all round the country abusing me. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has given some sort of reason why the tenants have not accepted that offer; but the offer has remained practically unattacked by any hon. Member opposite who has spoken on this question. That offer was such that the rents of the judicial tenants would have been reduced at once by 32 per cent., and by paying instalments they were to have all their arrears and costs and everything else wiped out. To the non-judicial tenants the same terms were offered. By this offer nearly £22,000 of arrears would have been extinguished, and the right right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford has just said he considered that offer quite equal to the demands of the Plan of Campaign. But I want to know, if the right hon. Gentleman considered that offer equal to the terms demanded by the Plan of Campaign, why did not the right hon. Gentleman and his friends recommend the tenants to accept it? Why should they encourage the tenants to resist it and put the landlords in the extremely painful position of having to resort to eviction, because every other means of settling the dispute was impossible. It is said that no terms were offered to the evicted tenants. That was pointed out immediately after the offer was made, and a letter was sent round to the estate bailiff, published in the newspapers, and circulated among the tenants as far as possible considering the existence of the Plan of Campaign, in which the evicted tenants and care takers were told they should be treated in a similar way to the other tenants provided they paid the costs incurred by the landlord, or, if they could not do that, that they might pay 3 per cent upon those costs—3 per cent upon a few pounds. We know what money is at the disposal of the Tenants' Defence Association, and I should have thought this would have been a most excellent and admirable way of disposing of some of it. With regard to the destroyed houses, the demand is made that those houses should be restored at the expense of the landlord. Hon. Gentlemen know perfectly well that nearly all those houses have not been destroyed by the landlord, but have been gutted by the tenants themselves. This is not a question of hardship between Mr. Ponsonby and his tenants; it is but one episode in the great Plan of Campaign. This is a fight forced upon Mr. Ponsonby,

not because he is an unjust or rack-renting landlord, but because he happens to be selected out of a number as one to try the Plan of Campaign upon. We Cork landlords, when we saw the Plan of Campaign started, said, "This is an attack, not upon one, but upon all of us. It is a combination, not merely of the tenants, it is a new development of the old Land League, it is a conspiracy to impoverish and expel the Irish landlords." We saw that then, and we have had our opinion very fully and thoroughly endorsed by a tribunal which the great majority of this House would respect. This is a combination, if you please, of landlords to fight the Plan of Campaign. Be it so; I maintain the landlords have an absolute right to combine. I have never denied the right of the tenants or of any other body of men to combine, provided that the combination be for a legal object, and carried out in a legal manner. I should like to quote a speech made in this House on the Irish Land agitation in 1882—

"Unfortunately, for many reasons, the landlords in many parts of Ireland were supine and were not enforcing their rights. [*A laugh.*] Now hon. Members might laugh, but that was really so. Personally he thought there was nothing of greater importance than that the landlords of Ireland should press their rights firmly and bravely, but with justice and moderation."

That is an extract from a speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). The Cork landlords did combine to assist Mr. Ponsonby, but first of all we held a meeting, and we considered most carefully before we decided to help Mr. Ponsonby. We found he had a just and proper case and that his hands were clean, and we decided to support him, and I am proud to think we have done so. One would be led to suppose that my own interference on this estate began, not in 1886, but in 1889, when the negotiations between Mr. Brunker, and Canon Keller and Mr. Ponsonby were going on—that I had possibly dropped from the clouds. Perhaps I may be permitted to quote a passage from a speech made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork at a place called Inchiquin on the Ponsonby estate on the 6th of March, 1887, a few months after the Plan of Campaign was started. The hon. Member said—

"Don't harm a bone in their miserable carcases, for that would only be playing their game. But I do ask you publicly, every man in this great county, to draw a ring of fire around every man of those—a circle of excommunication; boycott them; stop their hunting; don't deal in the same shop with them. . . . We have come here to-day to throttle one of the vilest, one of the most atrocious conspiracies that was ever formed against the homes and the happiness of a body of industrious Irish tenants — a conspiracy to exterminate our people and to insult our priests—a conspiracy with Captain Sarsfield at the head of it, and Mr. Broadley and Mr. Smith-Barry and Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald at the tail of it. Well, the first thing I will make clear here to-day is that it is not Mr. Ponsonby we are fighting in this contest; it is a gang of landlord conspirators in Cork. . . . We have left them and their estates alone up to the present. . . . I tell them here publicly that if one of the homes on the Ponsonby estate is unroofed, that we will throttle them at their own rent offices."

Were we not right? Were we not men of ordinary common sense to think of combining in face of proceedings to attack us, and of the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork? Now I think I need say no more about the Ponsonby estate; but I should like to say a few words about an estate in which I am even more deeply interested than the Ponsonby—that is my own estate in Tipperary. That was until lately a thriving and prosperous town; its fairs were well attended, and it was doing one of the best businesses in the south of Ireland. My tenants and I got on well enough; they paid their rents readily, and in bad times I made what was considered a fair and adequate reduction. I spent a great deal of money in the place and on the estate, and the tenants no doubt spent a great deal of money there too. Here was a town in a perfect state of peace until, in the beginning of last spring, after the Ponsonby syndicate had been started, when the fight against me was originated by a letter from Canon Keller, a parish priest on the Ponsonby estate, to the parish priest in Tipperary, asking how it was that my Tipperary tenants were furnishing me with the supplies to help Mr. Ponsonby. After a short time the matter seemed to drop, until the hon. Member for North-East Cork went to Tipperary. At first his visits were without effect, but after he had gone there five times the determination to withhold rent was finally made. The contest, started by two priests, and supported by the hon. Member, was blessed by the Bishop of

the diocese, of whom the hon. Member has said that one blast upon his bugle-horn is worth 10,000 men. It was not until that blast was blown that the hon. Gentleman's eloquence succeeded in fanning the flame and starting this conspiracy. A deputation of my tenants was sent over to me urging me to withdraw from the Ponsonby syndicate, which I courteously but firmly declined to do. I considered, and I consider still it was no earthly business of theirs; I considered then and I consider still that my tenants had an equal right, which they would probably have exercised next, to say that I was sitting in this House and giving votes not in sympathy with the Irish people, and that if I continued to do so they would decline to pay me any rent. It seems to me that the analogy is perfect. I explained to my tenants that although the consequences to me might be serious, they would be far more serious to them; that my withdrawal from the Ponsonby syndicate would not have the slightest effect upon the action of Mr. Ponsonby towards his tenants, that the fight on the Ponsonby estate would go on all the same with or without me, and that their attack would be nothing but pure vindictiveness against me, because I had taken part in a fight on another estate. What has happened? The town of Tipperary, which had been so thriving and prosperous, is almost in a state of dilapidation and decay. It is a melancholy thing to see how trade has been driven away from it and how business that used to be done there is already being carried to Limerick, Waterford, and elsewhere, and if a settlement were arrived at, even now, it would take years before the town could recover the injury that has been done to it simply to gratify the vanity of the hon. Gentleman opposite and those Ministers of Religion who have aided and abetted him. I charge it against those rev. Gentlemen and the hon. Gentleman opposite that the woes that have fallen on Tipperary, the evictions that will have to take place there, the misery inflicted upon people who will be turned out of their homes, will lie at their doors. This is the way hon. Gentlemen opposite are endeavouring to develop Irish industries. That is the way in which priests of the Holy Roman Church in Ireland are inculcating the doctrines of Christian morality. For my part I have done what I believe to be my duty, not merely as an Irish landlord, but as an Irishman who loves his country. Whatever may be the fate of Tipperary, and whatever may be the result to myself, I shall continue in the course I have chosen, because I feel in my conscience that I have done what is right in this matter.

(11.40.) Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," —(*Mr. Campbell Bannerman*)—put, and agreed to.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 70.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." —(*Dr. Tanner.*)

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I do not rise to make a hostile objection to this Motion, but to express a hope that if the Second Reading is taken now the hon. Member will not press the next stage, but allow sufficient time to consider possible Amendments. I do not wish to make any bargain in respect to my Bill, which has not yet been circulated, and I am quite ready to give this Bill a fair hearing, but will the hon. Gentleman agree to put it down for Committee not earlier than next week?

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Certainly.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON (SUPERANNUATIONS) BILL.—(No. 84.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." —(*Sir R. Temple.*)

DR. TANNER: I must object that the Bill has not yet been printed.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): It has been printed, and this is a copy I have obtained from the Vote Office.

MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.): I should like to see the Bill, but it has not yet been circulated.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): There is another question of principle that arises and may arise here-

after. It is an undesirable practice for an hon. Member to simply make a Motion for a Second Reading, offering not a word of explanation as to the purpose of the Bill. There were instances last Session showing the danger of legislation without discussion. It is perhaps an unfortunate operation of the 12 o'clock rule, that if after that hour any Member makes an objection the progress of a Bill is blocked, but the hon. Baronet has twenty minutes during which he may tell something about his measure. I am opposed to the principle of pensions, and I should like to know why it is proposed to introduce a new class to be paid from the public funds. But we know absolutely nothing of the proposal.

(11.45.) *SIR RICHARD TEMPLE: With the permission of the House perhaps I may be allowed to offer a short explanation. The object of the Bill is to obtain the security of the London rates for the paying of pensions and superannuation allowances provided by a fund derived from deductions of two per cent. from the salaries of London School Board teachers. These deductions have been almost unanimously assented to by a body of teachers nearly 7,000 in number, and quite unanimously by a body of other *employés* some 3,000 in number. Further arrangement has been made with the teachers whereby a second fund will be raised for the repayment of deductions to those who leave the service of the Board without sufficient length of service to entitle them to a pension. But that is a subordinate matter. The really important part of the Bill is that for the payment of these superannuation allowances deductions are made at the rate of 2 per cent. from the salaries of all teachers and also all other *employés* of the Board. The main difficulty has been with the teachers, but that has been fully overcome and now this measure applies to all *employés*, whether teachers or not. This fund thus formed by deductions from salaries amounts already to a considerable sum. We have realised from these deductions £14,000 or £15,000 a year, and the total amount collected and deposited in safe securities amounts to nearly £40,000, and will soon reach £60,000. It has been considered that this is the sum required to commence the scheme, and that the above-mentioned rate of deduction will suffice, and we arrived at that conclusion in several ways. We have the experience of the Metropolitan Board of Works, who without establishing a fund on the same footing paid their superannuation allowances during a period of more than 20 years, and the result justifies our imitation of the arrangement. For had that Board instituted a fund with two per cent. deductions, it would have had a surplus in hand after discharging pensionary liabilities. Further, we have had the opinion of a first-rate actuary, Mr. Sprigg, who though he does not pronounce with us upon all points, the main drift of his opinion is to the same effect. Further, we have had considerable experience from the working of such a plan by Railway Companies. In these several ways we have arrived at the conclusion that 2 per cent deductions will cover all the superannuations which we desire to give on the scale provided in Act 29 Victoria, c. 31.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Without any contribution from the rates?

*SIR R. TEMPLE: Without any contribution from the rates, or any burden whatever imposed upon the ratepayers. That is an absolute condition of our arrangement. As a guarantee to our *employés* the Board are desirous that there should be the security of the rates, not, as we hope, that the rates will ever be trenched upon, but it is just conceivable—just possible—that there might be in a time of great necessity an advance from the rates required, but we have every hope that that will never happen, and we are convinced that ultimately no burden will fall upon the rates, and that is a *sine quâ non* of our arrangement. Security, however, of this absolute kind is considered necessary to give lawful stability, and hence it is we ask the assent of the House to this Bill. For the creation of the fund we have made arrangements with some 10,000 men and women, but for this security of the rates we require the sanction of Parliament. I entreat the House to look kindly and indulgently on this matter, for it is a subject of great interest to a large number of persons upon whom the strain of the work of teaching falls heavily, and who require an arrangement such as this, whereby they may have something to fall back upon when they can no longer carry on their employment

satisfactorily. Without such an allowance as our scheme will provide we cannot get rid of teachers—men or women—who, from failure of health, are unable to perform their arduous duties, while yet nothing can be alleged against them to justify their removal or supersession. The scheme, then, is needed both out of consideration towards the servants of the Board and for the efficiency of the Educational Service.

MR. CONWAY: I cannot help expressing my surprise at the speech we have just heard. The hon. Baronet was elected to the London School Board to look after the general interests of all teachers, and not of one section only. I am also within the recollection of the House when I say that last year the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education expressed sympathy in relation to a scheme of superannuation for all teachers. If it were necessary for me to do so I could repeat the arguments in favour of that view, but perhaps there is one section of this class more deserving of public sympathy in the country than another; and if there is, that class consists of the teachers not in the Board schools, but in the voluntary schools. But the hon. Baronet has not taken into consideration at all the teachers who are outside the scope of the interests of the Board. He declares there are 7,000 teachers working under the Board; but he did not tell the House that there are also 10,000 voluntary school teachers in London; that these last are ratepayers, directly or indirectly, and that if the Board teachers have the power to fall back upon the rates to bolster up this scheme, then 10,000 voluntary teachers will, in a small way, each contribute to pensioning off a section of their brethren. Not only so, but the Board teachers are the best paid set of teachers in the country. Did time allow, I could obtain from the last Report of the Committee of Council on Education the figures that bear upon this, from which it would be seen that a very big percentage of the teachers in the voluntary schools in the country receive less than £150 a year; that a large proportion receive less than £100, and some less than £50. These are the people whom we ought to look to after they come to old age, having served the country during the best years of their lives. I was reading lately in the first number of the *Review of Reviews* the article addressed by the editor to "All English speaking folk," in which he speaks of the influence of education, and the influence he would bring to bear on the good fortunes of the Empire, as work as worthy of national expenditure as the Army and Navy; and he dwells on the magnitude and importance of the work of equipping the individual citizen for his share of responsibility, and he goes on to say that no amount of money in achieving that result would be badly spent. The training of youth to become citizens is also a most important work. Yet I am sorry to say the machinery that produced such great results in the way of the diminution of crime and making the youths of our country better citizens—this machinery is lost sight of. I am sure, in regard to this question of superannuation, that if from the State surplus we could set aside some two or three millions, and make that the basis of such a scheme, we could not make a better investment. But here we have the hon. Baronet taking the best paid teachers in the country as the recipients of superannuation allowances. I know there are many of these receiving £400 a year or more, and I know one gentleman whose wife receives £250 a year. He is opposed to this scheme, because he is in favour of a general scheme from which his less fortunate brethren in London and the country shall not be excluded. But here we have an hon. Gentleman, pledged to stand up for voluntary schools, coming to the House and asking us to select those teachers in London who are best paid, and give, to them only, superannuation allowances. I hope the House will not assent to the second reading of a Bill containing such a proposal for those who do not form a moiety of the whole of the teaching class in London. If you pass this Bill the necessary result will be that you will have the school boards of Manchester, of Sheffield, and of Birmingham coming here with their Bills, and you must recognise their claim. It happens that the London School Board is a rich Corporation, and they can fall back upon the rates without any perceptible increase in the rates to individual ratepayers. But in Manchester, in Sheffield, in Birmingham, or in Liverpool, the Boards

must fall back upon the rates, with the result that the latter will be materially affected, and instead of the school boards being the popular bodies they are now considered, they will become unpopular, and people who now advocate them will rise against them. The hon. Baronet has been identified with the voluntary system; but yet he is now identifying himself in this Bill with the School Board he has stigmatised in his speeches. Since October, as he knows, I have been engaged in a paper warfare with Board teachers on this subject, with the result that the assistant masters of the Board have passed a resolution asking me to advocate a general scheme of superannuation. The hon. Baronet has not been able to get the adhesion of the School Board teachers to his scheme, except through the pressure of the Board, and not until engagements of teachers had been cancelled, and new engagements were put before them which they were compelled to sign under threat of losing their position. Now this amount of £60,000 is altogether mythical. When a scheme was brought forward for teachers in Ireland the sum of £1,300,000 was required.

It being midnight the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS DISTRIBUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in superintending the form and regulating the Distribution of Parliamentary Papers."—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I would just like to ask whether the Committee is to report on the mode of distribution? I think the House should decide how Papers should be distributed. I do not think the mode adopted last year was satisfactory; it was by no means an improvement on the system of a short list and a long list. I think we ought to have some explanation of what is intended.

A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Wigton): Last year there was a general and almost an unanimous expression of opinion in favour of some alteration in the distribution. It is to be observed the Committee is not only to regulate the distribution of Papers, but also to take practical part in the control of the form and expense of Papers in consultation with the Controller of the Stationery Department and the Librarian.

Objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

VOTERS' SUCCESSIVE OCCUPATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Causton, Bill relating to Voters' successive occupation, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Causton, Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 148.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND) RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. De Cobain, Bill to amend the Poor Laws of Ireland in relation to Rating, ordered to be brought in by Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Lea, Colonel Waring, and Mr. Macartney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 149.]

SLAVERY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alfred Pease, Bill to amend the Law relating to Slavery, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Pease, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Bryce, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Anstruther.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 150.]

GUARDIANS OF THE POOR (QUALIFICATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Qualification of Guardians of the Poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. M'Laren, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 151.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 18th February, 1890.

SWEATING SYSTEM.

Ordered, That the evidence taken by the Select Committee on the Sweating System during the Sessions of 1888 and 1889 be referred to the Select Committee on the Sweating System of the present Session.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

A Bill for the appointment of a public trustee—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed.—(Nº 19.)

RESIGNATION OF THE CLERK ASSISTANT.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I have to inform your Lordships that I have received a letter from Mr. Ralph Disraeli tendering his resignation of the office of Clerk Assistant. In moving that his resignation be accepted, I desire to add that I am sure the good wishes of all your Lordships will follow Mr. Disraeli into his retirement after his long period of service in fulfilling his duties at the Table of this House.

Moved,

"That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Office to report to the House the amount of retiring allowance which, in the opinion of the Committee, should be awarded to Ralph Disraeli, Esquire."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Motion, "That the said resignation be accepted," agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Your Lordships are aware that the duty of appointing to the second and third places at the Table is provided for by Statute (5 Geo. IV., c. 82, s. 3), which vests it in the Lord Chancellor for the time being, subject to the approval of the House. A Committee of your Lordships' House went very fully, last Session, into the subject of the clerical establishment attached to the House, including the officers at the Table; and it is in accordance with their Report that the number of those officers should continue to be three. There is no question, therefore, at present as to the necessity of filling up the vacancy which has recently occurred. In considering what was the best appointment to make I need hardly assure your Lordships that I looked to the Report of that Committee with a desire to give effect on the first occasion to the principle of their suggestions, which pointed to obtaining efficiency and economy in the establishment by filling some of the places at the Table with officers selected from amongst the Clerks of the House. I felt myself at the same time bound by engagements handed down to me by my predecessors—my adherence to which was recently stated in both Houses of Parliament—to take an opportunity when it might arise of abolishing the office of Secretary of Presentations, whose duties might be otherwise provided for. I am fortunate in being able to make an appointment which will at the same time vacate that office to which I have referred and transfer to the Table one of the Clerks of the House who has served your Lordships for no less than 28 years, and has manifested a high character and ability, to which most of your Lordships on both sides of the House can testify. I feel I may confidently invite your Lordships' approval of my appointment of Mr. Thesiger. I will not trouble your Lordships with the details of the economical and departmental results of this arrangement, but will merely state that I believe your Lordships will find them to be more effective than could be arrived at by any other arrangement at the present time. An Act of Parliament will be required for disposing of certain statutory duties of the Secretary of Presentations, and I will presently ask your Lordships' leave to introduce a Bill for that purpose.

Moved to resolve,

"That this House do approve of the appointment of the Honourable Edward Peirson Thesiger, C.B., as their Lordships' Clerk Assistant, in the room of Ralph Disraeli, Esquire, resigned."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I am sorry my noble Friend Earl Granville is not present, because I know he desired to make one or two observations upon this matter. My reason for rising is to remind your Lordships that there was a Report last Session from the Black Rod Committee dealing with the Clerks of the Table, and I refer to it in order that your Lordships may clearly

understand what the point is. The Report states that the Clerk Assistant and Reading Clerk were formerly appointed by the Clerk of Parliaments; but since 1824 the Lord Chancellor for the time being, by the Statute 5 Geo. IV., cap. 82, sec. 3, had the appointment of those officers, and the Committee strongly recommend that the appointment to at least one of those clerkships should revert to the Clerk of Parliaments—who formerly had those appointments—and that he should have the right to promote one of the senior clerks to be Clerk at the Table. That change would, in the opinion of the Committee, conduce to efficiency not less than economy. The appointment now rests by statute with the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack; but I cannot help regretting that it has not been found possible or convenient to give effect to the recommendations of the Black Rod Committee. One mode in which that might have been done would have been by the promotion of the Reading Clerk to the place vacated by Mr. Disraeli, for whose resignation of his post I am sure we are all very sorry. If Mr. Bethell could have been appointed to succeed to that position, of course his place would have been open for the appointment of one of the clerks of the Department, and that, I apprehend, might have been done by the Lord Chancellor himself, without giving up the statutory rights which, of course, he possesses until an alteration is made by Act of Parliament. I merely express that regret, not the least in the world wishing to disparage Mr. Thesiger, who, I have no doubt, is a very efficient clerk indeed; but there has been a great desire expressed in the other House that we, in this House, should, as far as possible, bring our establishment within such limits as, while not impairing the efficiency of our establishment, will conduce to economy. The whole recommendations of the Black Rod Committee would conduce to those results; and I had hoped that upon the occurrence of a vacancy such as this it would have been possible to have complied with this Report. There is another point in this Report which I would mention. The Committee recommend that the appointment, which has been hitherto at £1,800 a year, with £300 allowance for a house, should be reduced to £1,500, without such allowance. I hope that change will be made. The Committee, who carefully considered these matters, were of opinion that that would be an adequate salary for this post. With those remarks I will not refer further to a matter which really rests with the Lord Chancellor, for, of course, practically the appointment is that of the noble and learned Lord alone.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, it is not very easy, when personal considerations arise, to take part in the discussion on such a matter without seeming to make comparisons between person and person. But I disclaim altogether any intention of that kind. What I think it my duty to do is to explain the grounds on which, if I had myself been in the position of my noble and learned Friend, I should have thought it right upon this occasion to make the same appointment as he has made. That is not the least by way of disparagement of any other gentleman whose services may, quite consistently with that course being taken, deserve the greatest recognition from your Lordships. But the matter, as I understand it, is this. In the first place, the recommendation of the Committee which has been referred to cannot possibly, in all respects, receive effect without an Act of Parliament, vesting the appointment of the Clerk at the Table in the Clerk of Parliaments, as the Committee proposed, and the proposition is that the privilege so given to the Clerk of Parliaments should be exercised in a certain and, as I think, an exceedingly proper manner; but, in the meantime, until an Act of Parliament is passed, the particular vacancy is to be filled up by the Lord Chancellor. I take it for granted, as my noble Friend who has just sat down has said, that it will be an appointment with a reduction of salary; and I assume therefore that the public will get the benefit of the reduction of salary that is to be effected by the change, and the further reduction which the Lord Chancellor, or at least the holder of that office for the time being, must be considered as engaged to make at any time at which a suitable and proper opportunity may offer. When I was in office the subject of the rearrangement of the Lord Chancellor's offices was much discussed with the Treasury; and after most deliberate con-

sideration it was determined to place the offices upon a footing which would involve considerable reductions in favour of the public. That could not be done all at once, because the interests of those who had long served the particular offices should not be summarily set aside. One of those offices was the Lord Chancellor's Secretary of Presentations, which had been held for upwards of 20 years by Mr. Thesiger; and I must bear my testimony—as I think everyone who has filled the office of Lord Chancellor would bear testimony—to the discretion, the diligence, and the very great value of the services which he performed during the whole of that time; in addition to which he is a very experienced clerk in the general service of the House. The arrangement made at that time was that whenever Mr. Thesiger vacated the office, as of course he might, by—I will not speak of death, that being, I hope, unlikely to happen—but, by resignation, which was again unlikely, or, there was a third way, by promotion to an office which it might be worth his while to accept—he should be deemed to be eligible for any office for which he would be legally qualified. Not many such offices are in the gift of the Lord Chancellor; I am not quite sure whether there is one except this for which Mr. Thesiger would be legally qualified; but, at all events, I must say this: I feel that I should not myself have been acting in the faith and spirit of that arrangement if, supposing an opportunity had occurred to me of bestowing on the Secretary of Presentations an office for which he was legally and otherwise well qualified, I had not taken advantage of it in the way now proposed by my noble and learned Friend—a re-arrangement which would immediately effect a saving to the public purse of £725 a year. If Mr. Thesiger had not been a person in every respect admirably qualified for the place to which it is proposed to appoint him, I believe the Lord Chancellor would not have made the appointment at the present time; but knowing that in all respects he is admirably qualified for it, though I do not say there might not be other gentlemen who would be as well qualified, I think this is an opportunity of effecting the re-arrangement contemplated. If this opportunity had been neglected, I think it is possible that many years might have elapsed before such another would recur; because Mr. Thesiger is a man who I believe will be able to give service to the public for at least as many years to come as he has done hitherto. My Lords, those are my reasons for thinking that, quite consistently with the spirit and purpose of the Report of the Select Committee, and, at the same time, carrying out the engagement which the Lord Chancellor at the time came to with the Treasury, this is an appointment which will be advantageous to the public, as I have no doubt it will also be to the House.

*THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, as I was Chairman of the Committee to which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has referred, perhaps I may be expected to make a few remarks upon their Report and recommendations. I shall not in any way refer to the present appointment, or venture to criticise adversely or otherwise the manner in which the noble and learned Lord has exercised his undoubted right. But I do venture to say that in the event of any further vacancy occurring at the Table, which I hope may be far removed, I trust the recommendation will not be lost sight of; and that it may be found possible, upon the occurrence of such a contingency, that the office of Clerk at the Table should be combined with one of the headships of Departments of this House, and the recommendation of the Committee should be carried into effect. I make those remarks, not in any way with the view of criticising the appointment made on the present occasion.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I merely wish to correct the misapprehension which I think the noble Earl is under, and I make the correction for the sake of Mr. Bethell, who is not present, but who, of course, will ascertain what has been done by your Lordships. The recommendation of your Lordships' Committee was one which would not have comprehended Mr. Bethell; and if he had been selected, I should have disregarded the recommendation of the Black Rod Committee, as he was not one of the class of persons to whom such recommendation applies.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Without desiring to recur to the appointment of Mr. Thesiger, which I think will be

advantageous, I would make one remark as to the position he will occupy. I do not apprehend that in Mr. Thesiger's position as second clerk at the Table it will be possible for him to combine with it the position of clerk in the establishment. I think that is out of the question. He will, no doubt, have that office alone; but my point is that if the Reading Clerk's office should become vacant, there might be a combination of the office of Reading Clerk with that of Clerk of the Establishment. That might, I think, be done, though my noble Friend would be much better able to speak to that than myself.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: Yes.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My noble Friend says I am right.

On Question, resolved in the affirmative.

CROWN OFFICE BILL.

A Bill to abolish the office of Secretary of Presentations, and to provide for the performance of the duties attached to that office—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 20.)

TRUST COMPANIES BILL.

A Bill to enable incorporated companies to act as executors, administrators, and trustees, and in other fiduciary capacities—Was presented by the Lord Herschell; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 21.)

APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

Moved,

That two Standing Committees be appointed, the one for the consideration of Bills relating to law and courts of justice and legal procedure, and the other for the consideration of all other Public Bills, that may be committed to them by the House, and that the first of such Committees be designated "the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.," and the second of such Committees "the Standing Committee for General Bills."—(*The Viscount Cranbrook, L. President.*)

*LORD BRABOURNE: My Lords, I gave notice last Session upon the Motion for the re-appointment of these Committees, that if such a proposition were made I should move an Amendment. I desire to say a few words to your Lordships upon the subject. When these Committees were first proposed I pointed out that the House of Commons having appointed Standing Committees because they had too much business, your Lordships were recommended to appoint them because you had too little business to transact; and I remarked at the time that there must be some strange virtue in this remedy if it were suited to every complaint. My opposition has been entirely borne out by experience. In this respect the House has already practically disfranchised itself, and will again disfranchise itself, by the appointment of these Committees, unless you choose to enact that every Member of your Lordships' House who desires shall be a Member of those Committees, and have the opportunity of attending their sittings if he pleases. In that way the hard-working Members will be able to take an interest in, and have a share in dealing with, the subjects which come before your Lordships' House. A noble Lord may be very much interested in certain Bills, which come before one Committee, and in other Bills which come before the other Committee, and if he is not a member of both Committees, he is virtually disfranchised as regards those Bills which come before that Committee of which he is not a member. This is no mere idea, but an absolute fact, because your Lordships will remember at once, from the proceedings last Session, that the discussions on Bills which take place in Commitee virtually supersede their discussion in this House. Noble Lords who wish to object to Bills which have been before a Committee of which they are not members feel themselves in a disadvantageous position. Another point with regard to the transaction of the business in this House is that in the public Press the proceedings of the Committees are generally not reported, so that the belief has been, and will again be, induced among the public that your Lordships do less business than you really do. My Lords, I do not venture to set my opinion against the array of talent on the Treasury Bench, still less do I venture to set it against the opinion of my noble Friend at the head of the Government, whose absence I greatly regret; but there is one thing to which I beg to call special attention. Last Session it happened again and again that the Grand Committees were meeting upstairs and considering Bills at the very time that your Lordships were sitting in this House. What was the consequence? I remember on one occasion my noble and

learned Friend Lord Herschell, who is an authority in this House, and who always brings to the discussion of every subject a weighty and sound opinion, had charge of two Bills, which at one of their stages he had to leave in other hands because he was at that moment engaged as Chairman of one of the Standing Committees. My Lords, let us minimise this evil. Do not let us have the scandal—for it is really little less than a scandal—that while your Lordships are meeting here solemnly going through the farce of reading through a few Bills, a large number of those who would otherwise take part in the discussion of those Bills are attending Standing Committees upstairs, where their labours are shut out from the knowledge of the public. My Lords, I should not venture to oppose the unanimous wish of the Government; in the first place, out of respect to them, and in the second because I know it would be perfectly useless. I do not object, therefore, to the appointment of Committees, but I think it would be well to add words to the effect that such Committees "shall not sit during the time the House is sitting without the special leave of the House."

Amendment moved

To add the words ("and such Committees may meet at any time except during the sittings of the House, but not without special leave during any sitting of the House.")—(*The Lord Brabourne*).

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: My Lords, I think there is great force in what has fallen from the noble Lord. I do not think that the Grand Committees, administered as they were last year, were in any sense a success. On the contrary, I think they diminished the efficiency of the legislation in your Lordships' House; and I certainly think it is anomalous that Committees should be sitting upstairs at the same time that this House, which is too often but thinly attended, is sitting below. That system withdraws from our deliberations many noble Lords who would take a part in them with great benefit to both the House and the country, and I think if such a suggestion as that made by the noble Lord were adopted great advantage would flow from it. The position of affairs here is very different indeed from that which prevails in the House of Commons; and I cannot think that measures which facilitate the despatch of business in the House of Commons are of equal advantage in your Lordships' House. I therefore trust that the Government will be able to give practical effect to the suggestions of my noble Friend.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I feel quite unable to agree with the noble Viscount who has just spoken, that the Standing Committees do not contribute to the deliberations of your Lordships' House. They have, I think, the contrary result. I believe that no change which has been made in the procedure of this House at any time has contributed more to increase its efficiency for legislation than the change made in the creation of Standing Committees. I say this having, I suppose, as carefully as anyone attended and watched the proceedings of these Committees. When these Committees were first suggested it was felt that circumstances rendered it more than ever necessary that this House should pay close attention to the details of legislation, both in Bills coming from the other House and in Bills originating here. I am not going into the circumstances which have occurred which have led to the alteration of procedure in the other House, nor am I going into the merits of the alterations which have been made; but anyone who has had experience of the proceedings of the other House must be conscious that the changes which have taken place in that House are calculated necessarily to lead to what I will call the smaller legislation—that is, the legislation which is otherwise than general, and certainly the greater part of the measures of the year—being less considered than in times gone by. Whereas formerly measures passed only after discussion in the other House, and (although it might be at a very late hour of the night) very solid and thorough discussion, at the present time it is impossible for a Bill to pass at all unless it can pass without discussion. And how is the object obtained? A Bill is brought in, and there is opposition to the details of it: it is known very well that if that opposition continues the Bill can never pass into law, and the necessary consequence is that the Mover of the Bill has to go to its opponents and put in one thing to satisfy one objector and strike out something else to satisfy another, and the Bill is ultimately passed

in the form in which it reaches your Lordships' House—a condition very often the reverse of satisfactory. Now, it has always seemed to me that one of the most important functions of this House is the revision of legislation; that you can in that respect do a work which will arouse no opposition, the utility of which will be recognised by everybody, and which, if not done by your Lordships, will remain undone. You can make legislation, in the general object of which there is a common concurrence efficient for its purpose which otherwise would remain inefficient. You can see that the measure takes such a shape that litigation will be avoided, instead of created and fostered, and it seems to me those are functions which your Lordships ought to discharge in the best manner possible. Experience has shown that those functions are not well discharged if Bills are considered, as they have been in the past, by Committees of the whole House. I say, without the slightest hesitation, and with means of knowledge, that the legislation of last Session, by means of the Standing Committees, assumed a better shape than it would otherwise have had a chance of doing if it had not undergone the revision, to which it was thus subjected. Surely, my Lords, that is a matter of great importance, but I admit that importance has often not been sufficiently recognised. The fact that the proceedings were not so fully and amply reported as they would have been if they had taken place in the House has, no doubt, tended to keep the public in ignorance of what your Lordships have done. But surely it is necessary and better for your Lordships to do the work you have to do as efficiently as you can do it. It is unfortunate that the public do not recognise it, but it is better that you should do it well. My noble Friend seems to think it more important that we should rather be seen at work legislating in this House than that we should take steps to make our work efficient. My noble Friend shakes his head. At all events, I say that has been the result. I am not going into the details of the measures which were passed last Session; but I can quote chapter and verse to show how much that legislation was improved by means of those Committees—an improvement which never could have taken place from discussions in Committees of the whole House. I will refer to only one measure of last Session, and that is the measure for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. A great deal was heard of the alteration which was made in your Lordships' House, which some people thought made the Bill less satisfactory than it would have been, namely, the provisions with regard to children between seven and 10 years of age. Your Lordships altered that Bill in the direction of making it much more effective, and the result of several hours' discussion in the Standing Committee was, I say without hesitation, to more effectually carry out the object which that Bill had in view, and it became a far more efficient measure than it was when it left the House of Commons, or than it would have been if discussed here in Committee of the whole House. Surely that is a matter of very great importance. And the same observations apply to the measures which originate in your Lordships' House, because if there can be little or no discussion of them when they go to the other House, owing to the Rules of that House, it is surely vital that we should send them there in the best form that the case admits of. Therefore, my Lords, I assert that the result of the appointment of these Standing Committees has been to enable your Lordships to discharge one of your most imperative duties in a far better and more efficient manner than they have been discharged heretofore; and it has also resulted in this, that the measures coming from the other House, and which have been passed into law, have been far better measures than they would have been if this course had not been adopted. And certainly at a time when the existence of your Lordships' House—the existence of a second Chamber at all—has become a matter of public discussion, it is of the utmost importance for us to show that we are doing good work, and that we are taking such steps as we can to make that work as efficient as it possibly can be made. Now, with regard to the objection made by the noble Lord as to the Committees sitting at the same time as the House sits. I quite feel, as I have always felt, the force of that objection; but the difficulty arises in this way: that if the House sits each day in the week at the

time it is accustomed to sit now, it is impossible for those who are engaged down to a quarter to 4 o'clock on four days in the week on the judicial business of your Lordships' House, and who on the other days very often have other public engagements, to take part in the deliberations and work of those Committees; and I am sure your Lordships will agree with me that if you were to eliminate from those Committees all the Law Lords who are engaged on work of your House of another description those deliberations would, at all events, be deprived of some elements which assist in the constitution of your Lordships' House—I will not put the matter higher than that. But, my Lords, I do not think the difficulty is an insuperable one. I have looked into the time during which the House has been occupied in its public sittings, and I find that there is really ample time, between the ordinary hour of sitting and the ordinary period of rising, for the work to be done. We only require to re-arrange the hours to meet the necessities of business here; and the suggestion I would throw out is this, as we have now some experience of the time needed for this purpose, that on one day a week the judicial business should close at half-past 3 o'clock, and that the House should not meet that day till half-past 5 o'clock. That would leave two hours for the discussions of the Standing Committees, which would be sufficient for the consideration of the measures pending before them at any particular time. If such a practice were adopted by your Lordships' House the probability is that upon those days measures only of special urgency, or of a formal character, would be put down for consideration in your Lordships' House, so that in the result possibly that particular day might be reserved for the work in Committee. I throw out that suggestion roughly for your Lordships' consideration, and I think it would remove the difficulty pointed out by the noble Lord, the force of which I quite feel, and would still leave time for work to be done which is not of that description, or not perhaps so valuable in its character. My Lords, I think there is another danger to be guarded against; and though it cannot be provided for by any rule, it can be guarded against by the practice of your Lordships' House. The discussion in Standing Committee should not supersede the debate on second reading. I think it is mischievous that because a Bill goes to one of those Standing Committees it should not undergo upon second reading a full discussion of its effect and character, so that any objection may be taken which would have been brought forward if there had been no Standing Committee in contemplation. I think it is in the highest degree desirable that a full discussion should then take place, and I am quite sure it would be an excellent means of assisting the efficiency of the new arrangement; because a full discussion on second reading clears the air very much, and shows what the concurrence of opinion is on the subject: and it would assist enormously in settling the details of the Bill to have the general light and guidance which such a discussion would afford. Therefore, I trust that, in future, second reading discussions will be as ample as though no Standing Committee were concerned. I have in my mind one occasion in particular when the result I have indicated did ensue; and I hope in future the discussions in your Lordships' House will be as full and as ample, although the Bill is going to Standing Committee, as they would have been if no such Committee had been in contemplation. Then, my Lords, another matter to which I would refer is the reporting of the proceedings of these Standing Committees. In that respect, probably, there is nothing that the House can do. It must rest with those who consult the desires and tastes of the public in making those reports. But there is one small change which I think they might make without any great difficulty, and which I think would be felt to be a great public convenience. There have been reports given of proceedings in Standing Committees sometimes of considerable length, but appearing in a part of the newspaper entirely detached from the ordinary Parliamentary report. If those who afford information to the public of what goes on would be good enough to insert at the end of the proceedings of the House such reports as they desire to furnish to the public of what is done in Standing Committee, I think it would be a convenience to the public, and of advantage to themselves. I think that

would be distinctly of advantage both as regards the proceedings and the public who take an interest in them. There is only one other matter which was alluded to by the noble Lord opposite to which I will advert. He said that a Member of this House, though not on the Committee, may nevertheless feel an interest in some matter before it to which he would desire to call the attention of the House where he is not satisfied with the course taken by the Committee. I do not think there ever was the slightest disinclination in the House, when Bills have come back from Standing Committee, to discuss any point which noble Lords desired to have discussed. On the contrary, we have discussed, when Bills have come back to this House, matters in which particular Members were interested; and I am not at all sure that we should have had a better and more satisfactory discussion in this House if there had not been a full and thorough discussion in the Standing Committee previously. I doubt very much that the discussions became less effectual on that account. I think they are rendered more, and not less effectual by the fact that there has been a controversy in the Grand Committee. I trust your Lordships will take no step which would limit or hinder the scope and operations of the Standing Committees; but that you will rather carefully support those Committees in their work, which I believe has been, and will be, of great public advantage.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: I do not know whether my noble Friend wishes to take a division on this question, but I hope he will do so. It strikes me that the suggestion that the House should meet at half-past 5 o'clock on one day in the week, and that the legal business should, on that day, be concluded at half-past 3, is a very admirable one. I trust, therefore, if I may be permitted to suggest that course, that my noble Friend will take a division on the question whether the Committees should sit at the same time as the House itself is sitting, in case the Amendment should be allowed. At the same time, I should like to point out, with regard to the efficiency of these Committees, that what has been said can only apply to the Bills which come before your Lordships' House in the earlier portion of the Session. All the important measures of last Session, which came up to this House at a later period from the House of Commons on every occasion, instead of being fully discussed in the Standing Committees, were passed through the House after the Government had moved the suspension of the Standing Orders.

LORD HERSCHELL: I beg to add, in answer to the appeal which has been made to me by the noble Earl, that if such an arrangement as I have suggested were made, I do not think there would be any great objection to the noble Lord's proposal, though I should think that in that case it would become of very minor importance, and practically the proposal would be defeated altogether.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, the noble and learned Lord has so ably and clearly stated both the recommendations and objections which can be put forward in regard to the appointment of these Committees that there is very little left to be said; but as I had the honour to be Chairman of the Committee under whose recommendation this appointment was made, I may be allowed in a few words to endorse everything that has fallen from the noble and learned Lord. I do so the more willingly, because while the noble and learned Lord showed to the House the advantage which has undoubtedly accrued to our proceedings from the appointment of the Committees, he did not appear to me to have shut his eyes to certain inconveniences, possibly amounting to defects, which have been found to exist in the present system of Standing Committees since they have been appointed in this House. I cannot agree with all that fell from my noble Friend Lord Brabourne, who moved the Amendment, in his critical remarks upon these Committees. In the first place, in regard to that phrase which he has used to-night, not for the first time, namely, that noble Lords are in some way disfranchised in consequence of the fact that measures have passed from this House during one of their stages, and have been submitted to the Standing Committee. I cannot concede that he is right. It is perfectly clear that if noble Lords who are not members of a Standing Committee, and who are not therefore able to deliberate upon a measure while it is before that Committee, wish to take part in the

discussion upon it, they have the opportunity of doing so in the discussions on Report, as has been said by the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell). My Lords, there are certain considerations which induce me to express the wish that more care and discretion may be exercised during this Session in the selection of those Bills which are to be referred to the Standing Committees. I can easily understand that in the want of experience which we had during the past Session of the working and objects of those Committees, it may not have been clearly apparent to noble Lords in charge of Bills which Bills were and which were not of a nature and character requiring the consideration of Standing Committees. I hope that in future greater care will be taken, and that the discretion which can be exercised under the Standing Order will be exercised. Then I wish also to endorse what fell from the noble and learned Lord with regard to the discussions which take place on Bills during the second reading. I have taken part in the deliberations in Committee upon Bills, and I have been much struck by the fact that in the course of those discussions noble Lords found themselves on nearly every occasion discussing in the Standing Committee the principle of the Bill, which ought to have been settled in the House on the second reading. I trust, therefore, that noble Lords in charge of Bills will not on future occasions think that because the Bills of which they are in charge will probably be referred to a Standing Committee, it is therefore unnecessary that the House should decide upon the principle of those Bills upon the second reading. With regard to the Amendment which has been moved, the necessity for which I believe was admitted by the noble and learned Lord, upon the question of the hours at which these Committees should sit, I venture to say that I entirely agree with my noble Friend behind me that not only is it exceedingly desirable that an alteration should be made for reasons of convenience, but that it tends to weaken the working powers of this House for the Standing Committees to sit at an hour when the House itself is called upon to assemble. Therefore, my Lords, I would endorse the principle upon which my noble Friend has moved his Amendment; but I would venture to suggest that it is hardly necessary that such an Amendment should be passed at the present time. I am not aware that there is in our Standing Orders any regulation of the hour at which the Standing Committees should sit; and it appears to me it is quite within the province of the House to fix the hours at which the House and the Committees should sit respectively. Of the two proposals, I confess I prefer that of the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell). I think the idea that on days when Standing Committees are appointed to sit the House itself should meet at half-past 5, whereby we should secure the services of noble and learned Lords both on Committees and for the deliberations of the House, is one which ought to be acceptable to the House, and which ought to result in a proper and adequate consideration of the business before the House. I did not rise for the purpose of opposing the Amendment of my noble Friend; but I would submit to him that no such Amendment is necessary. The discussion of this evening has shown us that there is practical unanimity on both sides of the House in favour of so arranging the hours for sitting that Standing Committees should not sit at the same time as the House sits; and I think after such an expression of opinion we might leave it to the House so to regulate its proceedings as to carry out the wishes which have apparently been so unanimously expressed this evening.

*LORD BRABOURNE: In answer to the appeal of my noble Friend, I may say that I am very unwilling to divide the House on this occasion; but what I wish is that this House should stand in the same position as the other branch of the Legislature. I contend that my Amendment leads up to the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord; and I think that Standing Committees should not, except by special leave of the House, be allowed to sit during the sittings of the House itself. It is all very well to say that what I have pointed out will not be likely to happen, but it did happen last Session again and again. In order to avoid that, it appears to me that the best way would be to pass simply, as an Amendment, the words I have read—that these Committees being appointed, they

shall not meet at the same time as the House is sitting, except by special leave.

EARL CADOGAN: Might I read out to your Lordships one of the Standing Orders, because I think my noble Friend really means by his Amendment a regulation which should take the form of a new Standing Order? It would hardly come really as an Amendment upon the appointment of the Committee. I would, therefore, call his attention to the Standing Order No. 7, page 33—

"No Motion shall be granted for making any new Standing Order or for dispensing with any Standing Order of this House unless it shall have been given in the Minutes to consider of the said Motion."

I am not quite sure whether the Amendment of my noble Friend does not take the form of a new Standing Order; and, if so, I would suggest that he should give notice of it.

*LORD BRABOURNE: It is hardly necessary, when it is simply a Motion upon the procedure of the Committee following upon the appointment of a Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The original Motion was that the Committee be appointed, and the effect of the Amendment is that of a new Standing Order; but I cannot say that I think the Amendment is out of order, because it is an Amendment upon a Motion which is certainly in order, and the Amendment appears to me to be very relevant to the Question. I can hardly say that it is out of order to move a relevant Amendment upon a Motion which is regularly before the House. At the same time, I certainly should assent to the objection that the effect of it is, though by a circuitous process, to make a new Standing Order.

*LORD BRABOURNE: My Lords, after that expression of opinion by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack I could not think of asking the House to divide, and I will therefore withdraw the Amendment, and move a Standing Order to the same effect.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Then Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

Lord Brabourne
L. Privy Seal (*E. Cadogan*).
E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. Balfour.
L. Foxford (*E. Limerick*).
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Kensington.

The Committee to meet on Friday next at Three o'clock.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 18th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

THE EDGEWARE MAGISTRATES.

MR. COBB (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that it has been the practice of some of the magistrates on the Edgeware Bench to sign summonses in blank, at the request of the magistrates' clerk, Mr. W. A. Tootell, leaving it to him to insert the names of the persons summoned, and their alleged offences, as occasion may in his opinion require; whether any conviction under such a summons is legal; how long this practice has been in force, and when the last summons was signed in blank; and whether he will call upon the Chairman of the Bench to forward to the Lord Chancellor the names of the magistrates who have followed this practice?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chairman of the Justices that it has been the practice of all the magistrates in the division in question more or less during the last 40 years occasionally to sign summonses to be filled up by the clerk, not as occasion might require, but as the nature of the complaint might justify. This course has been adopted only where convenience of the complainant would be affected, owing to the distance of his residence from that of the Justice or from other good cause. I have no authority to give an opinion on the question of law contained in the second paragraph. I propose to communicate to the Lord

Chancellor, to whom jurisdiction belongs, the facts as I have ascertained them.

THE SANITARY STATE OF HARROW WEALD.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, referring to the promise which he gave to the hon. Member for the Rugby Division of Warwickshire on the 20th of August last, he can now state what steps have since being taken with regard to the sewerage works for Harrow Weald, and what is the cause of the continued delay; whether he is aware that there have recently been cases of typhoid fever in Harrow Weald; and whether he will call the serious attention of the Hendon Rural Sanitary Authority to their neglect of duty, and urge upon them the grave importance of getting the works completed?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): At the time the previous question of the hon. Member was asked the Hendon Rural Sanitary Authority were negotiating for the purchase of additional land for the purification of the sewage. The Local Government Board have been in frequent communication with the Authority since then. The Authority ultimately proposed a scheme, to which the Board were unable to assent, and they requested that it might be re-considered, and that the Board might be informed of the result as early as possible. I now learn that some delay has been occasioned by the illness of the surveyor, but that he has met the Committee, and is preparing further plans. I have no information as to an outbreak of typhoid fever in the district. I trust that the scheme as to the works will be settled at an early date and the execution of the works expedited as much as possible, and I have so informed the Authority.

MR. COBB: This is almost precisely the same answer the right hon. Gentleman gave me last August.

*MR. RITCHIE: It is not the same, because I have given this without referring to the other. I am determined, however, that something shall be done.

H.M.S. *AJAX*.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any inquiry has been held into the cause of the bursting of a turret gun on board H.M.S. *Ajax*, after the conclusion of the Naval Manœuvres; and whether the manufacture of the gun was faulty; or whether any blame attached to any person engaged in working the gun?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD, Lancashire, Ormskirk): The gun was a muzzle-loader, which had previously fired 105 rounds. The Ordnance Committee report that the accident was caused by the premature explosion of a common shell. The manufacture of the gun was not faulty, nor is blame attributable to any one working the gun.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether complaints have reached him that some of the agents of one of the candidates, who were in attendance at the counting of the votes given in the poll taken upon the recent bye-election of a county councillor in the Husbands Bosworth Division of the County of Leicester, and made the statutory declaration of secrecy, have since communicated to outsiders the number of votes given for each candidate in each of the polling districts; whether he is aware that in some of the polling districts the number of county electors is small, being in one case only 43; and whether, in view of the fact that the disclosure of the number of votes given to each candidate tends to assist in identifying for which candidate certain electors voted, and to infringe the secrecy of the ballot, and is punishable under the 4th Section of "The Ballot Act, 1872," he will cause inquiries to be made with a view of taking some steps to prevent a repetition of this practice?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir, such a complaint has reached me, and I have communicated with the Returning Officer on the subject. He informs me that no complaint as to any one of the agents making any such communication as that referred to in the question has come to his notice. It is the fact that the number

of electors in some of the polling districts is small. If anything has been done which amounts to an infringement of Section 4 of the Ballot Act, a prosecution in respect of such alleged offence as provided by the Act will be the best means of preventing a repetition of the practice.

INDIA—LOCAL COUNCILS.

SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether any reports have been sent in by the Local Governments in India in regard to improving and extending the Local Councils within provincial limits; whether in any instances these reports recognise the propriety of admitting the representative element in these Councils; and whether the Secretary of State will lay these reports upon the Table of the House?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State has received copies of communications which have passed betweenthe Government of India and the Home Government with reference to the Local Councils. These communications are of a confidential character, and the Secretary of State cannot at present lay them on the Table.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the communications have been approved of, and whether the recommendations which have been made in regard to them are of a confidential character?

SIR W. PLOWDEN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question may I ask him to answer the second paragraph of my question?

*SIR J. GORST: It is obvious that to answer paragraph No. 2 would be stating the contents of a confidential document.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Have any of these reports been forwarded through Lord Dufferin, and are Lord Dufferin's recommendations in regard to them considered confidential by the Government?

*SIR J. GORST: No, Sir; the reports were not forwarded to Lord Dufferin.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask if some of the reports were not forwarded through Lord Dufferin?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

BENGAL BOARD OF REVENUE—APPOINTMENT OF MR. BEAMES.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the explanation which, on the 24th May last, it was stated would be asked from the Government of India respecting the appointment of Mr. J. Beames, in spite of a recorded expression of opinion by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal adverse to Mr. Beames' appointment to the Board, has been received; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

*SIR J. GORST: The explanation has arrived and can be laid on the Table of the House, if moved for. The hon. Member will see from it that the statement that the Lieutenant Governor recorded an opinion adverse to Mr. Beames' appointment is the reverse of the fact. The Lieutenant Governor recommended it.

KASHMIR.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government will, at an early date, present to the House the Papers relating to the action of the Government of India towards Kashmir since H.H. Pertab-Singh became Maharaja: and, whether, if the Maharaja of Kashmir, in the words used by the Secretary of State on 27th August last,

> "Sees it advisable to resume control of his State, and to govern it in a way which will be a benefit to his subjects and to neighbouring countries as well,"

the Government of India will facilitate his doing so?

*SIR J. GORST: The Government is anxious to give free information to the House of Commons respecting the affairs of Kashmir, and Papers recently received will be laid on the Table. The statement of the Secretary of State quoted by the hon. Member was contingent on the existing state of things in Kashmir being first remedied. The Government are anxious to show every consideration to the rights of the Maharaja consistent with a one regard to the still more sacred rights of the people of Kashmir.

NEWGATE PRISON.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department what is the present position of the negotiations between the Corporation of the City of London and the Government respecting the acquisition of the site of Newgate Prison for the erection of a new Sessions House; and whether he recently had a conference with a Committee of the Corporation upon the subject; and, if so, has he any objection to state the result of such conference?

MR. MATTHEWS: The present position of the matter is that I am trying to arrive at an arrangement with the City Authorities by which a sufficient part of the site may be given up for the erection of a new Sessions House and a part retained for prison purposes. I lately had a conference with the Committee, the result of which was that a representative of the City is now in communication with the Prison Authorities, with the view of settling the details of such arrangement.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Is it part of the arrangement that any money payment shall be made to the Corporation?

MR. MATTHEWS: No.

POSTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICES—SUNDAY BUSINESS.

MR. BOORD (Greenwich): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether it is correct that all Postal Telegraph Offices are open on Sunday from 9 to 10 a.m.; others, in addition, from 5 to 6 p.m.; whilst a limited number are open all Sunday; and whether it will be possible in future issues of the Postal Guide to indicate the hours at which the different offices are open on Sunday?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): As a general rule all head post-offices and sub post-offices at which telegraph business is transacted are open on Sundays, either from 8 to 10 a.m. or from 9 to 10 a.m. Some are open on Sundays from 5 to 6 p.m. in addition to the morning attendance, and a certain number of important offices are open throughout the day. As a rule, town receiving offices are not open at all on Sundays. Within the limits of the Post Office Guide it would be difficult to give full information regarding the hours of attendance at every office. A considerable amount of information is, however, already given at pages 312, 313, and 314 of the Guide; and I shall be glad to consider whether room can be found for further information of the kind indicated by the hon. Member.

STATE AIDED SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate how many of the 3,200 public and State-aided schools in Scotland now charge school fees in the compulsory standards; and to what uses are the funds applied which, under "The Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1883," were set apart for the payment of school fees?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The number of State aided schools in Scotland is, according to the latest Returns, 3,126. Regulations as to the relief of fees have now been approved for all these. Under these regulations fees are abolished in all the compulsory standards except in 85 schools. In 25 of these fees are abolished up to Standard IV., and are chargeable only to a proportion of the scholars in Standards IV. and V. Forty-four schools have been sanctioned as schools in which fees may be charged under paragraph 7 of the Minute of August 26; and 16 schools have not claimed any share in the fund for the relief of fees. Funds which, by schemes under the Educational Endowments Act of 1882, were allocated for the payment of school fees in the compulsory standards have to be dealt with where the scheme does not provide some alternative method of application under regulations made and approved in terms of Section 85 of the Local Government Act. Regulations have accordingly been made and approved in the case of 152 schemes. The funds so set free will generally be applied towards payment of fees beyond the compulsory standards or in the establishment of bursaries to induce children to remain longer at school.

BRITISH GUIANA.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps have been taken towards granting a measure of Constitutional Reform to the colony of British Guiana, and whether he is now

in a position to make any statement on the subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Governor's opinion has been asked on various points and the subject is under consideration, but no decision has been arrived at and no statement can at present be made.

REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to re-introduce their Bills relating to reformatories and industrial schools?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; it is the intention of the Government to introduce those Bills upon an early date.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF MR. JOHN DALY.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to a pamphlet alleging that, since the visit of Richard Pigott and other agents of the *Times* to Mr. John Daly in Chatham Prison, and the refusal of the prisoner to connect the Irish Party with dynamite outrages, Mr. Daly's treatment has changed and increased in severity; and whether he will grant a sworn inquiry into Mr. Daly's treatment; and, if not, will he permit to any Member of this House who may desire to investigate the charges the same freedom of access to the prisoner as was granted to the agents of the *Times*?

*MR. MATTHEWS: The pamphlet in question has been sent to me, and the allegations contained in it have been the subject of careful inquiry by the directors, who inform me that these allegations, and in particular the allegation that Daly's treatment has changed or increased in severity in consequence of his having refused to give evidence as suggested, are entirely without foundation. When asked by the visiting director on January 29 last as to his treatment, Daly replied that he had no complaint to make. I am advised that I have no power to grant a sworn inquiry into Daly's treatment. Neither Members of Parliament nor any other persons can be allowed access to a prisoner for the purpose of investigating matters of prison discipline. I intend to have a further special inquiry into Daly's treatment by the visitors, who are independent persons, specially appointed for the purpose of investigating any complaints of prisoners, but I have not power to grant a sworn inquiry.

MR. M. HEALY (Cork): Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to the statement that Daly was nearly poisoned by having the wrong medicine given to him?

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; my attention has been directed to that statement by the directors of the prison. It is true that the compounder of medicine did put an excessive quantity of belladonna into a dose of medicine, and he has been suspended in consequence.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast W.): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to convey that no direct facility can be afforded to Members of this House to investigate the truth or falsehood of these charges as to the treatment of Daly?

*MR. MATTHEWS: The question on the Paper is whether a Member of this House who may desire to investigate the charges shall have freedom of access to the prisoner. To give an order to any individual to investigate charges would be quite contrary to the prison rules and discipline.

MR. SEXTON: Cannot a Member of this House visit the prisoner in order to ascertain whether the charge is true or false; are lives to be endangered in consequence of a refusal to give evidence; what are the means of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of a charge?

*MR. MATTHEWS: The proper tribunal to investigate a case in which a prisoner is concerned is the visitors whose special duty it is to inquire.

MR. M. HEALY: When will the right hon. Gentleman say that he will be in a position to make an inquiry?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I will let the hon. Member know.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SUTCOMBE.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith whether there are charity lands in Sutcombe Parish the rents of which, after defraying the cost of repairs, &c., of some almshouses, are applicable in making regular payments to the inmates of the almshouses; whether the trustees have refused to let any part of these lands as allotments to the cottagers, but have leased the whole for seven years to a farmer who was not the highest bidder; whether such action constitutes a violation of the 4th section of the Allotments Extension Act of 1882, which prescribes that when the rents of charity lands are distributed in gifts of money, doles, or articles of sustenance, the lands are to be offered in the first instance in allotments; and, whether the Charity Commissioners will take action under the 10th section of the Act in order that the cottagers may get the allotments they desire?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Penrith): The rents of the lands referred to are applicable in the manner mentioned by the noble Lord. The trustees have leased the land in question for a term of seven years from Lady-day next to a farmer on the ground that his tender was the only desirable one out of five for the whole land. This action does not, in the opinion of the Charity Commissioners, constitute a violation of the 4th section of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882, inasmuch as lands, the rent of which is so applied, are held by them not to be within the meaning of that section.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) was proceeding to put a further question, when Mr. Speaker ruled that it was out of order, and that notice must be given.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON gave notice that upon an early opportunity he would call attention to the action of the Charity Commissioners.

SWAZILAND.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is true that a filibustering expedition of Boers has crossed the Limpopo River into Matabili country; if so, whether the Government intend to take any steps to protect Lobengula's kingdom; and, whether he will lay upon the Table as soon as possible a Copy of Sir Francis de Winton's Report on Swaziland?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Recent telegrams received by Her Majesty's Government from South Africa show that no such expedition has taken place. I have already stated in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for the City of London that Sir Francis de Winton's Report will be laid on the Table with other Papers in due course.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether he has received the Reports of the Irish Board of Works on the various Light Railways promoted under the Act of last Session; and, whether the Treasury will propose agreements to the promoters in time to be arranged before the approaching Spring Assizes?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I have not received the Reports referred to by the hon. and gallant Member, but no time will be lost in coming to a decision.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the *Freeman's Journal*, referring to the proceedings of the Board of Works under "The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889:"—

"The reports of the proceedings show that when Mr. James Barton, C.E., sat as a Commissioner in Galway it became his duty to inquire into the merits of four rival schemes for connecting Galway with Clifden, for one of which the engineer who prepared the plans and surveys was Mr. James Price, C.E. A few days later Mr. Barton turns up in Donegal the promoting engineer of a line in that county—which has also several competitors—before the same Mr. Price, acting as a Commissioner in Donegal;"

whether the engineers of the successful lines will be entitled to considerable sums of money in fees; and, whether he will take steps to prevent persons who have themselves pecuniary interests in schemes promoted under this Act from taking any further part in its administration?

MR. JACKSON: My attention was called to the paragraph by the hon. Member's question. Perhaps my best answer will be to refer him to an advertisement which appeared in the same paper on the 7th of January, to the effect that the Court of Inquiry into the light railway schemes for Donegal would be composed of Major General Hutchinson, R.E., Inspector of Railways to the Board of Trade; Mr. James Price, an eminent Irish engineer; Mr. Edwin Liller, a gentleman of great experience in railway business; and Mr. W. L. Micks, Inspector to the Local Government Board; while for Galway the Court was composed of Sir John Ball Greene, the Commissioner of Valuation in Ireland; Mr. James Barton, an Irish engineer of eminence; Mr. E. J. Cotton, general manager of the Belfast Northern Counties Railway; and Mr. Arthur Bourke, Local Government Board Inspector. Every possible care was taken to secure that the inquiries should be conducted and the Reports made with absolute impartiality, and, so far as I know, the conduct of the inquiry has given complete satisfaction, although, owing to the great activity in railway circles in Ireland produced by the Act, it was not possible to obtain the services of railway engineers whose professional eminence would command confidence, and who at the same time were entirely unconnected with any scheme under the Act. The fees of the engineers of successful schemes will form part of the cost of promotion, subject to the approval of the Treasury.

MR. H. STEWART: Having reference to the last paragraph of my question, does the hon. Gentleman approve of the practice of persons having a pecuniary interest in schemes promoted under this Act taking a further part in its administration.

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir; I do approve of what has been done. The question has been most carefully considered, and unless we had employed for the inquiry engineers brought over from England or some other place than Ireland, it was impossible to take any course other than that adopted. I have satisfied myself that proper precautions were taken. The chairmen of the inquiries were men of eminence and undoubted responsibility, and I have never heard one single word of complaint.

*MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Does the hon. Gentleman admit that Mr. Barton was appointed to report on Mr. Price's scheme, and Mr. Price on Mr. Barton's scheme?

MR. JACKSON: I believe it is the fact, but as far as I am able to judge, there is not the smallest reason to doubt the absolute impartiality of both of these gentlemen.

*MR. CLANCY: Will the hon. Gentleman explain how it came about that Mr. Barton was allowed to report upon Mr. Price's scheme and that Mr. Price was allowed to report upon Mr. Barton's scheme, when, according to his own statement, there were three other engineers engaged in each case?

MR. JACKSON: In both cases the engineer was selected who commanded the general confidence of the public.

*MR. CLANCY: When the estimates are brought on I will call attention to this matter.

FAIR RENTS.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many applications to fix fair rents in the counties of Down and Antrim respectively remained undisposed of on 1st of January last; how many of these were leasehold applications, and how many in respect of present tenancies, and, what number of them were served on the Land Commission prior to 1st January, 1888?

MR. MADDEN: The Land Commissioners Report that the number of fair rent applications which were undisposed of on January 1st, 1890, were from County Antrim 1,564, and from County Down 1,883. These were made up as follows:—In County Antrim there were 755 yearly and 809 leasehold tenancies. In County Down there were 1,460 yearly and 423 leasehold tenancies. Of these the

applications received prior to January 1, 1888, were, in County Antrim 178 yearly and 135 leasehold tenancies; and in County Down, 548 yearly and 67 leasehold tenancies.

NAVAL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Royal Commission, presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale Division, on Naval and Military Administration have agreed upon and presented their Report to Her Majesty; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will advise that the same be laid upon the Table, or such portions thereof as are not of a confidential character?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Preliminary reports from the Royal Commission in question have been submitted to Her Majesty. They have yet, however, to be considered by Her Majesty's Government; but I do not doubt that they will be presented to Parliament subject to the reservation which my hon. and gallant Friend makes.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is contemplated to ask Parliament to vote any moneys for the expenses of all or any of the witnesses before the Special Commission to inquire into charges and allegations against Members of Parliament and others?

MR. JACKSON: I have been asked by the First Lord of the Treasury to answer this question. No such application has been made to the Treasury, nor am I aware of any.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): May I ask the indulgence of the House while I make a personal explanation? On Friday night, in answer to the Attorney General for Ireland, who read an extended extract from the charge of Baron Dowse, I said that Baron Dowse, in open Court remarked that a Resident Magistrate could no more draw up a case than he could write a Greek ode. I think it only fair to the learned Judge, who has been a distinguished member of this House, to read the following explanation which I have received from him:—"My dear Mac Neill"——[*Ministerial laughter*] Yes. Baron Dowse is an irremovable, and therefore is undoubtedly able to address an Irish Member with courtesy.

"My dear Mac Neill"—"I observe by the morning papers that you have, no doubt unintentionally, misrepresented what I said recently in Court. There was some observation made about the delay in settling a special case, and it was stated that the Justices had to get assistance in settling the case. I remarked that country Justices might as well be asked to write a Greek ode as to state a case without assistance. I did not mention Resident Magistrates, nor did I intend to allude to them in any way. Very truly yours, W. Dowse."

My only excuse for mentioning this matter is that through a pardonable mistake I had thought the observation of Baron Dowse was made in a case which came before him, not from the ordinary Justices, but from a Coercion Court. In another case, however, which did come from a Coercion Court the learned Judge said:—

"There are several things which I have never been able to understand in the course of my life, and one is the mind of Local Justices, or how they bring their mind to bear on a case; and I am less able to understand very often the state of mind of the Justices of whose legal competence the Lord Lieutenant is satisfied."

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

Copy ordered,

"Of Return in the following form, from each Trustee Savings Banks in the United Kingdom, showing the whole of the transactions which took place in the year ended the 20th day of November 1889, so far as regards moneys placed in the hands of the Trustees of such Savings Banks for investment other than with the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, pursuant to the 16th section of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 87; also showing, at the 20th day of November 1889, the liability of the Trustees of such Savings Banks to Depositors in respect of moneys received for investment pursuant to the said 16th section of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 87, and the nature and amount, in detail, of all assets including the reserve fund (if any) held to meet the same:"—

Return of Transactions pursuant to the 16th section of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 87, and the Rule of the Savings Bank.

Dr.

	Sums Received. £ s. d.
Uninvested Balance in hands of the Treasurer at 20th November, 1888.	
Sums received from Depositors for Investment in the year ended 20th November, 1889..	
Interest received from Investments in the year ended 20th November, 1889	
Sums received for Securities Sold or Paid off in the year ended 20th November, 1889, viz. :—	

	Amount	Nature of Security	Sums Received
for	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		

Other Receipts (in detail)	
£	

Cr.

	Sums Paid. £ s. d.
Sums paid to Depositors in respect of Investments in year ended 20th November, 1889	
Sums paid to Depositors for Interest on Investments in year ended 20th November, 1889	
Sums paid for Management	
Sums paid for Commission on Purchases and Sales of Securities, year ended 20th November, 1889	
Sums paid for Securities Bought in the year ended 20th Nov., 1889, viz. :—	

	Amount	Nature of Security	Sums Paid
for	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		

Uninvested Balance in the hands of the Treasurer at the 20th Nov. 1889.	
£	

[Liability to Depositors at the 20th day of November, 1889, in respect of Moneys received for Investment pursuant to the 16th section of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 87 ... ... £

Nature and Amount, in detail, of all Assets, including the Reserve Fund (if any) held out to meet above Liability to Depositors, pursuant to the 16th section of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 87:—

Nature of Assets.	Amount of Assets.
	£
	£
	£
	£
Uninvested Balance in Treasurer's Hands	£
£	

We do hereby certify that the aforegoing is a true account.

Witness our hands this day of 189 .

——— } Two Trustees (or) Two Managers (or) a Trustee and a Manager of the said Savings Bank. Witness { Secretary or Actuary.

——— }

(in continuation of Parliamentay Paper, No. 64, of Session 1889.)"—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 51.]

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Copy ordered.—

"Of Account showing the gross amount received and the gross amount expended in respect of the Telegraph Service, from the date of the transfer of the Telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March 1889 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 39, of Session 1889."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 50.]

SAVINGS BANKS.

Return ordered—

"From each Savings Bank in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, containing, in columns, the names of the Officers, their respective salaries, and other allowances, if any; the amount of security each gives; the number of accounts remaining open; the total amount owing to depositors; the total amount invested with the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt; the rate of interest paid to depositors on the various amounts of deposit, and the average rate of interest on all accounts; the total amount of Government Stock standing to the credit of depositors; and the total amount of the separate Surplus Fund on the 20th day of November, 1889; the rate per centum per annum on the capital of the Bank for the expenses of management; the annual number of receipts from depositors; the annual number of payments; the average amount of receipts; the average amount of payments; the number and amount of annuities granted; the annual expenses of management, inclusive of all payments and salaries, for the year ended the 20th day of November, 1889; also the year in which business commenced in each Bank, and the name of the day or days, and the number of hours in the week, on which the Banks are open for the deposit and withdrawal of moneys; including in such Return a list of all such Savings Banks as, under the provisions of the Act 26 Vic. c. 14, or otherwise, have been closed and have transferred their funds, or any part thereof, to the Post Office Savings Banks; showing, in each case, the number of such Banks, as well as the number and amount of Depositors' accounts so transferred, and the amount of compensation, if any, made to all or any of the Officers of such Banks respectively; and showing also the years in which such Banks were respectively opened and closed, and the number and amount of their Depositors' balances, and the number of days and hours in each week on which the same Banks were open for public business at the close of the year next preceding the date of such closing; distinguishing the same, as in the form of the Return, for each separate county, as well as collectively, for England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and for the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 291, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Maclure.*)

EAST INDIA (AGE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE.)

Address for—

"Copy of Minutes of Dissent from the Despatch addressed to the Government of India by the Secretary of State in Council, regarding the age of Candidates for the Indian Civil Service."—(*Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

MOTION.

MEETING OF THE HOUSE (ASH WEDNESDAY).

(4.3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will meet to-morrow, at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

(4.5.) MR. CAINE (Barrow): I think the leader of the House cannot be aware of the benign influence of his administration on this venerable ecclesiastical superstition. In 1882, under the leadership of Mr. Gladstone, only 36 members could be found to protest against this annual Motion; but in 1888 the number rose to 91, and in 1889 to 112. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will now see his way to withdraw the Motion.

(4.6.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Perhaps I may be allowed to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether he has observed that in the event of a Division being taken to-night the first Motion on the Paper for to-morrow would be a Scotch Motion upon a subject of considerable importance, in which a great many of the Scotch Members take a deep interest. I have no objection to any religious form which hon. Members may wish to observe; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that so far as the Scotch Members are concerned they take no interest whatever in Ash Wednesday. Then why, in the interests of the public service, and of the business of this house, should not the extra two hours to-morrow be utilised by the Scotch Members for the discussion of Scotch affairs, while those hon. Members who wish to observe Ash Wednesday are attending church? If this Motion is passed those two hours will be absolutely wasted.

*(4.9.) MR. W. H. SMITH: As a matter of courtesy to the hon. Gentleman it is only right I should say that, although I am often charged with want of care for the traditions of the House, I feel bound to press this Motion so that the House may conform to a rule which has been observed from time immemorial. I am sure that Scotch Members will not complain if they are asked to discuss Scotch affairs at 2 o'clock instead of 12, because, as far as my observation goes, the House is generally much fuller at 2 o'clock than at 12.

(4.10.) MR. R. CHAMBERLAIN (Islington, W.): I rise, with some diffidence, to correct the right hon. Gentleman, but I think that in 1884, under the guidance of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquis of Hartington), a Motion similar to that now before the House was withdrawn, and the House met on Ash Wednesday at 12 o'clock.

(4.11.) DR. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman why he should persist in wasting the time of the House. Will he give us a distinct assurance that in regard to the remaining Amendments to the Address, he will not proceed deliberately to *cloture* them after having wasted two hours of the public time?

(4.12). The House divided:—Ayes 207; Noes, 106.—(Div. List, No. 2.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (ADJOURNED DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Speech, have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion, and to-morrow of the other Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*).

MOTION.

COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION EXPENSES.

On Motion of Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth: Bill to remove doubts as to the legality of certain Payments by County Councils, ordered to be brought in by Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir John Kennaway, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill Presented and read first time. [Bill 152]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [14th February.]—[See page 332.]

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate resumed.

*(4.22.) MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling): There are two distinct matters in respect of which the Amend-

ment before the House impugns the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland. These are, on the one hand, the manner in which they have exercised the powers of the law; and, on the other, the attitude they have adopted towards Irish tenants striving to obtain relief from what they feel to be excessive rents. With regard to the administration of the law, not only of the Crimes Act, but of those other Acts which are used as ancillary to it, such as the old and fusty statute of Edward III., and a new friend, introduced to us the other day by the Attorney General, the Towns Improvement Act, I wish to point out to the Chief Secretary and to his colleagues that after all he does not advance his case, except from the merest partisan point of view, by triumphantly asserting that things which happened now happened equally under the Liberal Administration of former years. If it is said that men are now prosecuted and punished for winking, or smiling, or for printing a paragraph of news in a paper, we are immediately reminded that under the Crimes Act of 1882 a man might be taken up and put in prison for being out of doors after sunset. If a resident magistrate gives a decision which is irreconcilable with common sense and justice, then we are told that the magistrate was appointed by Lord Spencer, or, at all events, that he escaped removal from the Bench when Lord Spencer purged the roll. Even if that argument was well grounded, it is only a rhetorical argument which appeals to Party passion, and is no justification for an entire policy of Irish government, and it is an entire policy of Irish government that we condemn. But I traverse that argument on more than one ground. In the first place, we do not claim infallibility for Lord Spencer in his judgment of the character and ability of the resident magistrates; and in the second place Lord Spencer never anticipated, when these gentlemen were appointed, that they would be intrusted with powers of summary jurisdiction in respect of some of the most delicate questions of the law. Again, the powers under the Act of 1882 were in the main applied to crime and not agrarian or political movements, which is the sole object for which the Government now employ them. In the third place these Powers, such as they were, were, in my opinion, used with a care and circumspection under Lord Spencer which are not discernible under the present Administration. Lord Spencer kept an exceedingly firm and tight hand over the action of the Law Officers of the Crown. There is no evidence of such care nowadays; but, on the contrary, we see action of the most eccentric character, and often characterised apparently by the greatest indifference. For instance, one offence committed by a man is often split up so as to constitute half a dozen offences; he is tried and punished for each of them, and he may consider himself lucky if, in addition, he is not called upon to find bail for good behaviour and to go to prison in default. We see an offence committed by several men: yet one only is prosecuted, while the rest are left alone. We have seen prosecutions vigorously begun and suddenly dropped; speeches made or paragraphs published in a newspaper, and no action taken week after week and month after month; but at length, when the matter has become quite stale, the person who made the speech or published the paragraph is proceeded against just at a time when he is engaged in some action of which the Government do not approve, or when his associates and the organisation to which he belongs are engaged in some such action. There was a remarkable instance of this in connection with the estate of Lord Clanricarde. Here there was a chain of such occurrences, culminating in the prosecution of the hon. Member for Kerry for an offence committed months before, and his consequent punishment by imprisonment which happened to occur at the very moment he was engaged in collecting rebutting evidence in that county to be submitted to the Commission at the time sitting in London. These are things which it is difficult for us to understand. I am not a lawyer, and I only take an outside view of these matters; but I believe that the course which is followed in Ireland could not possibly be followed in England or Scotland. It is my belief that if a crime is committed in England the police immediately endeavour to discover the culprit, and an inquiry is commenced without any time being lost, while if several persons have

been engaged in the offence they are all dealt with alike. That is the usual practice, I understand. There may have been exceptions, indeed we have heard rumours recently of such an exception, but we know that here the authorities are not in the habit of acting capriciously in these matters. But I observe that in cases in Ireland, where the course of the administration of justice has been unusually oppressive or eccentric, it has been urged on behalf of the Chief Secretary, either by himself or by one of his acolytes, that the matter is one which is in the hands of the Law Officers, that the law takes its course, and that he has nothing to do with it. I will take this opportunity, when I refer to those who assist the Chief Secretary, of expressing the pleasure with which we all listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Dover, and I am glad to welcome him to this House as one who gives promise of future distinction. At the same time, we are glad on another ground to see the hon. Member appear personally in the House, because his appearance dissipates the suspicion which was beginning to arise that the George Wyndham, who was so perpetually signing letters in the newspapers, was a sort of Mrs. Harris of the Irish Office, a mere *nominis umbra* under which the Chief Secretary himself could discharge some of the cynical sarcasm, which hardly befitted official communication. But reverting to the argument that responsibility in some cases lay with the Irish Law Officers, and not with the Chief Secretary, I think that nothing could be more unfortunate than that the Irish Government should adopt such a view. Although I have the highest respect for the Law Officers with whom I am acquainted, and admire the ability and zeal they display, yet I must point out that they have been nurtured in, and are saturated with, the ideas and traditions of the old system of legal administration in Ireland, which in the past has been unscrupulous and mischievous, and the cause of the greater part of the difficulties in that country. I will give a small instance which shows the sort of spirit which pervades the administration of justice in Ireland, and peoples ideas with regard to it. What could be more absurd than that when a decision or charge of a Judge is quoted by the Government as being adverse to our views it is read from the Ministerial Bench with a look of triumph directed at us, and we are informed that the Judge was appointed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, thus disclosing the fact that, in the eyes of the people of Ireland, it is expected that the views of a Judge on the Bench will be more or less coloured by his party feelings. I do not think that such a question would come up with regard to any English Judge. I think this very fact makes it all the more important that there should be efficient control over the zeal and misdirected energy of the Irish Law Officers. For the performance of this duty we look to the political Governor of Ireland. It ought to be one of his chief duties in the agitated condition of the country. But even if that were not so, the Government could not contend that they are not responsible. In the case of the present Government, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who is the principal Law Officer of the Crown, is a Member of the Cabinet, so that the contention cannot be maintained that the Law Officers alone are responsible. The Chief Secretary and his colleagues are not only high officers of State, but also Members of the Cabinet: they are responsible for the acts of their colleagues in the Cabinet—for every step taken and every prosecution instituted, for everything done in carrying out the law in Ireland; and this fact seems to me to import into the action of the Law Officers a direct political significance, because it has the sanction of a Cabinet Minister, who is responsible for these duties. When this comparison is made between the past and the present we must not omit to notice the points of difference in the situation and in the condition of Ireland, and in the object for which exceptional legislation has been granted. But what is the value of such a comparison? The whole case lies in this—that on this side of the House we have avowedly learned by experience that our old policy was wrong, and we maintain that there can be no real pacification of Ireland while the scandal exists of the alienation of the whole sympathy of the people from the administration of justice, and that scandal, by such proceedings as we have seen during the last two years, the Govern-

ment are doing their best to continue. I am not one who would deny the necessity in some cases for exceptional legislation; in some cases it may be necessary even to govern a country by martial law, suspending all civil rights. But what we on this side of the House maintain is that in Ireland at present no such necessity for any exceptional powers exist, and the Government only allege that it is necessary for one purpose. Plainly stated, that purpose is to prevent combination by tenants for the purpose of bettering their condition. If we survey Ireland at the present moment we shall find it divided into two parts, the one happily very much larger than the other. In the greater part comparative contentment and satisfaction prevails in the agricultural community, while in certain districts there is a determined war, carried on by eviction on the one hand and combination, and in many cases by boycotting on the other. There are districts where the people are contented and satisfied, in which this state of things has been produced by the combination of the tenants, because by the Plan of Campaign, or by showing their power they have secured a settlement of their claims from the landlord. Why in the smaller part of the country has there been war and strife? It is not on account of the Plan of Campaign. In many cases where it has been in force, where it has passed with what we are told is its withering and blighting influence, it has left no evil traces behind, and is already forgotten and forgiven. Where the Plan has been successful two things can be generally stated. In all cases where a settlement has been come to the tenants have been from the first willing to submit their claims to arbitration; and, secondly, the settlement which they have achieved is quite as favourable to them—if not more so—than that which they had offered to the landlord. Why is it, then, that this war is maintained on estates like the Ponsonby and Olphert estates? It is on account of the vindictive spirit in which certain landlords view the Plan of Campaign. I am ready to concede what you please about the Plan of Campaign: you may say that it is immoral, that it is illegal. Supposing all that, what are the facts? The tenants have combined in those places to strengthen themselves; being weak men against powerful men they have adopted the Plan of Campaign, which involves paying into a trust fund the money which they think reasonably payable to the landlord. The money so paid may be used, in case of necessity, to defend the rights of the tenants. That is what is pronounced to be illegal and immoral. But when it comes to be admitted that on the real merits of the dispute the tenants are right, is it to be argued that a settlement should be refused and the state of disturbance and strife prolonged because the tenants in their desperation have introduced into their proceedings that illegal element? Two things cannot be denied—first, the claim of the tenants in almost all those cases is a perfectly just claim, and accordingly the tenants are perfectly entitled to combine in order to enforce it. The hon. Member for South Hunts last night gave us a long account of his action in connection with the Ponsonby estate. Let me recite the facts. The tenants complained that their rents were too high, and combined in order to get a reduction. The whole question was on the eve of settlement, after protracted negotiations, when the Member for South Hunts and his friends stepped in and stopped them. The hon. Member contends that he and his brother landlords have a right to combine, because it affected their interests to have the Plan of Campaign successful in their neighbourhood. I admit the right to combine in those circumstances. I admit the doctrine of *proximus ardit*—that when your neighbour's house is on fire you may take steps to save your own. But the action of the hon. Member for South Hunts was naturally resented by the tenants, not only on the Ponsonby estate, but elsewhere throughout Ireland, and amongst other places on the hon. Member's own estate in Tipperary. A deputation of those tenants waited on the hon. Member in London and requested him to withdraw from the landlords' combination, The hon. Member refused that request. It is stated he said he would see them hanged first. Whether he used that expression or more courteous language I know not; but the fact remains that he based his refusal, as he told us last night, upon the plea that it was no earthly business of theirs. His doctrine, therefore, amounts to this—that landlords

are entitled to combine to help their neighbours who are in distress; but the tenants in similar circumstances are told it is no earthly business of theirs. The result is that the town of Tipperary is almost deserted, and flourishing shopkeepers and others have been content to suffer loss, having been evicted by the hon. Member for South Hunts, all because they said that if the Ponsonby syndicate were successful there would be injury done to the whole farming class in Ireland. The state of things in Tipperary at this moment is altogether unparalleled. It may be said this is in consequence of boycotting, but I cannot see that that is so in the case of Tipperary, because it is quite impossible such a state of things could be brought about unless it was supported not by the dictatorial will of one or two persons, or any body of men, but by the united feeling and sense of the whole community. It is perfectly obvious that public feeling in Tipperary is unanimous to an extent which has not been openly shown in any other part of Ireland. In London during the late dock strike, when intimidation was extensively practised, and some men actually suffered personal violence, there was an appeal made to the Home Secretary by the dock owners for assistance from the forces of the Crown, but the Home Office refused that assistance. [Mr. MATTHEWS: No.] If not the Home Office the police. [Mr. MATTHEWS: No.] At any rate, the assistance was withheld or not given. Why? Because the general sense of the community supported the strikers.

*(4.56.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): This is a matter really so important that it ought not to pass without correction. It is absolutely incorrect to say that either the Home Office or the police refused to check anything resembling violence or intimidation. The right hon. Gentleman knows as well as I do that there is an enactment qualifying the Law of Conspiracy in the case of combinations "in furtherance of a trade dispute"; but that statute stands alone, and it does not extend to agrarian disputes. I only state the words of the Statute of 1875, which takes out of the Common Law of England certain combinations in furtherance of trade disputes. That Statute applies to Ireland, and would be construed in Ireland in the same way as in England. But, on the other hand, the assistance of the police was never, throughout the dock strike, either withheld, not given, or refused in any case of violence.

*(4.58.) MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am exceedingly obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for correcting my mistake in supposing some particular action had been taken by the Home Office or the police. I am, however, bound to say I was introducing their action by way of commending it. What the right hon. Gentleman has said establishes the very contrast I was wishing to point out—namely, that what is right and proper when done in England or Ireland in a trade dispute is wrong and punishable under the methods of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—which are not tender methods—in an agrarian dispute. I think I have reason to be satisfied with the turn which has been given to that part of my argument. Going back to the Ponsonby dispute, what it comes to is that there has been no settlement, because the tenants must be punished for having joined the Plan of Campaign. The hon. Member for South Hunts says that in the dispute on the Ponsonby estate an offer of a settlement has been made to the tenants. Yes; but the terms of that offer were such as no honest or fair-minded man could think of accepting. According to the terms of that offer, the unfortunate tenants who were dealt with first and evicted from their holdings are not to share the benefits of the arrangement, but are to be left to bear the consequences of their action. Why, any set of tenants, whether Irishmen or not, would be unworthy of sympathy if they had not sufficient loyalty to stand together to see that when payment was secured those who had suffered from the very first in the effort to secure it should receive their full share. Such was the spirit in which the landlords were conducting their so-called campaign, whilst the Government were annoying the tenants and their friends by prosecuting them on niggling charges. The Chief Secretary has not the courage to attack the Plan of Campaign openly, still less has he the courage to meet his difficulties in a nobler and wiser way. He lets things

drift. He stands aside whilst Lord Clanricarde, supported by the forces of the Crown, evicts tenants wholesale. Last Session, when an appeal was made to the right hon. Gentleman by the right hon. Member for Bradford, on behalf of the Clanricarde tenantry, the Chief Secretary said—

> "It is not my business to defend Lord Clanricarde or any other creditor in this country. I do not believe he is worse than many a creditor in this country. Supposing he has acted as hundreds and thousands of creditors in London act every day of the week, is that a reason for refusing to him the protection that is given every day in London?"

That is the whole case and the whole point in dispute between us. I deny *in toto* that Lord Clanricarde as a landlord is a mere creditor in the ordinary sense of the term. The whole of our land legislation for the past 20 years has been based on the theory that a landlord's rent is not like an ordinary creditor's debt. The Chief Secretary for Ireland and his colleagues may dislike that theory, but they cannot logically denounce it now, because they have practically adopted it when legislating on the Land Question in 1887. They might have opposed it before 1887; but in that year they passed a measure in which even the Prime Minister said were anti-social principles subversive of the first rights of property. But whatever they thought of the measure they passed it; therefore, it is not for them to repudiate the whole theory of recent land legislation, which has proceeded on the principle that property in land is not like other property, and that debt in respect of land is not like other debt—the Government being entitled to step in in one case though not in the other. No one ever thought of proposing that we should fix the price of articles in which an ordinary creditor deals, and in this lies the fundamental fault and fallacy that we exposed at the time in the proposal which was made in 1887 for settling the arrears question by means of bankruptcy. We were told that the Government were willing to settle the arrears question on condition that landlords' arrears were to be put in the same category as other debts. That was rejected by this side of the House, because we recognise an essential difference between the two cases. I, therefore, protest that the language of the Chief Secretary with reference to the Clanricarde estate does not relieve him from responsibility. In the interests of Ireland, and of England and Scotland also, there should be a termination of the scandalous state of things existing on that estate. Why does not the Chief Secretary refuse to co-operate in carrying out those evictions, if it is open to him to do it, as it seemed open to his predecessor? If he holds that it is not open to him, there has been ample time during these months, and even years, to obtain powers from Parliament to exempt him from the miserable necessity of helping to devastate this large district. But I fear we cannot expect to shake or convince the right hon. Gentleman by our appeals or arguments. All we can do is to protest, by such an Amendment as that before the House, against the whole spirit and object of his policy. It is not to debates or votes in this House, but to other circumstances beyond our doors, that we look for the acceleration and accomplishment of that entire change in the mode of government in Ireland, for which, with so much hope and patience, the Irish people wait.

*(5·7.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Many singular accusations are levelled against me from time to time, in connection with my speeches in this House, by hon. Members opposite; but I think the most singular is that which was first made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork yesterday, and was repeated by some right hon. Gentlemen on the front Opposition bench, to the effect that I had no right to "hang back" in the debate, or to "lie in ambush," to use the words of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, but that my duty was to speak at the earliest possible moment, so that I might hear my speech misrepresented and dissected for the next three days. Now, I have no objection to a speech of mine being dissected; but hon. Members will perhaps recollect that this is a Vote of Censure upon Her Majesty's Government, that the Member of the Government chiefly incriminated is myself, and that the least you can do for an incriminated person is to allow him to hear the accusation against him before you oblige him to reply. In

obedience to that elementary principle of justice, I have waited through the whole course of Friday's debate, through Monday's, and through the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, in order that I might hear what is the justification for this Vote of Censure, and I am obliged to confess that I still wait. The hon. Member who began the debate appeared himself to take very little interest in the speech which he delivered to the House. The hon. Member covered but a small portion of the ground of his own Amendment; and as to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, it appeared to me to display even more violence than usual and to contain even less matter. What am I to say of the speeches delivered from the Front Opposition Bench? The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, imitating the tactics which have been habitual in this debate, made the largest accusations against the Government, but supported them by the slenderest proofs. It is now becoming the custom of hon. Members opposite to use a formula in which they couch their charges. They first make some very broad statement, and then they say, "I will give an instance," or "a very small instance" (to quote the words of the right hon. Gentleman), "to prove my proposition." Well, they give that instance, and it *is* a very small instance, and it does not prove their proposition. Two other right hon. Gentlemen have spoken from the Front Bench opposite, the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), and the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). I certainly thought that from their speeches, at all events, I should discover what were the malversations and malpractices justifying the charges brought against the Government. But those two Gentlemen were so occupied in narrating their own autumn manœuvres that they had very little time to give to the more important matters in debate. These rival managers of two strolling companies seemed chiefly absorbed in jealousy of each other. Each claimed to be the best representative of that class of itinerant politician that has played so large a part in Irish politics. The right hon. Member for Halifax was specially proud of the magnitude of the meetings which he addressed, and of the excellent receptions which they gave him. The right hon. Member for Bradford, on the other hand, was specially proud of the fact that he had been thought worthy of police surveillance during the whole time of his visit to Ireland. I am myself unable to decide between the merits of these rival aspirants to our favour. I do not know to which I shall throw the apple of beauty. I must, however, refer with more detail to one special accusation brought by the right hon. Member for Bradford. He was very angry indeed that he had not been arrested. He seemed to think that I had slighted his efforts to stir up disorder in Ireland. But why was the right hon. Gentleman not arrested? He was not arrested and not tried because, as far as I know, he committed no offence against the law calculated to produce the slightest evil, disturbance, or difficulty in any part of Ireland which he visited. He did go to one part of Ireland where a dispute of the most acute kind rages, but he was very careful in that place to deliver such a speech as, I think, would damp even the most inflammable material. He went to another place, tha Massereene estate, and he attempted to rival the performances of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and who for advocating the Plan of Campaign on that estate was prosecuted some time ago. Yes; but the Plan of Campaign is over on the Massereene estate. [*Cries of* "No."] I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman whether that is not the fact. The tenants have paid their rent, the conspiracy is at an end, and even the fiery rhetoric of the right hon. Member for Bradford is incapable of again reviving it. The right hon. Gentleman asks too much in expecting me to arrest him. He complains that the Crimes Act is a brutal Act, brutally administered. He says my rule is of an irritating and of an unjust character. The right hon. Gentleman is at liberty to use what epithets he likes towards my rule and my government of Ireland; but I would not willingly give him the chance of saying that by arresting him I had rendered the administration of the Crimes Act ridiculous.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I beg to say that I never made any complaint against the right hon. Gentleman for not arresting me. On the contrary, I have claimed

that what I said at Drogheda was legal within the law, and justifiable. That is what I have always said in this House and on platforms, and my contention is that I have said what was legal and proper. What I have complained of is that other Members of Parliament have been arrested and sent to prison for saying exactly the same things that I did.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The substance of the right hon. Gentleman's complaint was this—that I had not meted out to him the same measure that had been meted out to others. But I bear in mind a most sensible remark that fell from the hon. Member for the City of Cork in the course of his speech. He said truly that, "You have not merely to consider the character of the act, but the condition of the district in which the act is done." And the right hon. Gentleman has been wisely and rightly careful never to deliver any speech in any place where it was calculated to do the slightest injury to the cause of law and order. Now, Sir, I have had, since I was Chief Secretary for Ireland, to reply to about 12 Votes of Censure as nearly as I can calculate, and I suppose the Votes of Censure—including important Motions for the adjournment of the House—have been about on that average since the year 1880 or 1881. The sameness in the attacks throughout all these years is, perhaps, the most remarkable feature of them. Here I must refer to what fell from the hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs. He was very much afraid that I should take occasion to point out to the House that everything that is now said against us was said against Lord Spencer's Government, and he took the trouble to answer by anticipation an argument that he thought I was going to use. The fact is undoubted, but I have never used it as an argument in order to drive home to right hon. Gentlemen their inconsistency. Nobody defends their consistency. It is not worth trying to defend. But I will tell you how the character of the controversy that raged in Lord Spencer's time may be, and ought to be, used. It may, and it ought to be, used to show the absolute worthlessness, if not the insincerity, of the arguments of those who bring these accusations against us. The hon. Member says that the charges brought against us are the same. The charges brought against Lord Spencer were incomparably stronger. As repeated attacks of disease go on they become milder and milder, and in the same way the attacks made upon me, however similar, are insignificant, compared with those that were made against Lord Spencer. They are couched in far more temperate language—though perhaps the words "temperate language" is scarcely applicable to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork; but they are mildness itself compared with the savage, brutal attacks which the hon. Member has made time after time, in this House and in his newspaper, upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan) and upon Lord Spencer.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork, N.E.): I rise to a point of order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in imputing to me that I made brutal and savage attacks in this House?

*MR. SPEAKER: My attention was attracted by the word "brutal," which is, undoubtedly, a very strong expression. I hope that that expression will not be used in this House.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I withdraw the epithet "brutal." But, perhaps, in order that I might be partly justified in your eyes, Sir, and in the eyes of the House, I will read one of the attacks to which I alluded, which is by no means one of the severest that I could select—

"Lord Spencer is a fourth-rate Englishman"——

An hon. MEMBER: That was not in this House.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said in this House and in his paper the hon. Member wrote—

"Lord Spencer is a fourth-rate Englishman, a dullard in Parliament, a sour failure in society, who came over here to Ireland when the country was sinking to rest after its high fever. He has been engaged ever since in gratifying his own vindictive temper, and in maddening Irish feeling by turning the law into an instrument of murder and outrage, and bidding nameless infamy flourish behind its shield."

I could, of course, if it were worth while, multiply quotations of this sort to any extent. But what I wish to point out is not the language which the hon. Member is in the habit of using, but the

fact that with the exception of the suggestion contained in the last sentence —a suggestion which I do not qualify— the lines of attack against Lord Spencer are precisely the same as those used against myself, the only difference being that the accusations against Lord Spencer are more vehement and more bitter. The use I make of that fact—and I say that it is a legitimate use to make of it—is to point out that if the hon. Members below the Gangway could reconcile it with their conscience to make accusations of that kind against a man whom everybody on that as well as on this side of the House will acknowledge not merely to be a high-minded gentleman, but a very able and impartial administrator, why should we attach the slightest value to such accusations when made against us? The hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), with characteristic exaggeration, has compared the action of the Irish Government to the most tyrannical actions which have ever been attributed to the Russian Government. But when we ask for the examples on which accusations of that kind are framed, we are reduced to such cases as that of the prosecution for 10s. under the Towns Improvement Act, cited by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), or the still more absurd and illusory case which first did duty in the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian at Chester (Mr. Gladstone), and which was immediately blown into fragments in the Press. The fragments having been laboriously collected by the hon. Member for Durham (Sir J. Pease), and have been actually produced in this House as the show example of Irish tyranny. I allude to the case in which two tramps were brought up at Petty Sessions in a distant part of Ireland, and were condemned, not by a Resident Magistrate, but by two ordinary magistrates, one of whom was a local solicitor, and the other a local tradesman, to a sentence which the critics of these magistrates regard as being too severe. [An hon. MEMBER: They were sentenced to three months' imprisonment.] That sentence may have been excessive or not; but it had no more to do with the responsible Government of Dublin Castle than it had to do with the Government of Timbuctoo. I have alluded briefly to some of the positive statements made by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in his speech in which he introduced this Amendment. But I think everybody who heard that speech must have been much more struck by what it did not contain than by what it did contain. At least half the Amendment was never alluded to by its Mover. But it was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. He says that we used our Act to interfere with conspiracies, and not to suppress crime. [An hon. MEMBER: Combinations.] Well, combinations. A conspiracy I understand to be an illegal combination. And the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Plan of Campaign is illegal. The Plan of Campaign, therefore, is a conspiracy. I do not in the least deny, minimise, or palliate the fact that the Government do desire, to the best of their ability, to put down and suppress, as far as they can, every illegal conspiracy in Ireland; and they regard the work as of the more importance because they believe that these illegal conspiracies are the fruitful parents of every species of crime, and that if you can destroy those conspiracies you will, at the same time, destroy the crime by which alone these conspiracies are supported. Now, Sir, it is a mistake to suppose that we were the first to recognise this connection between these agrarian conspiracies and the prevalence of crime. Why, Sir, dealing with agrarian conspiracy was the very essence of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. That policy was exhibited in the Preamble of the Act of 1882, and in the very speech in which the right hon. Gentleman threw upon the Conservative Government of 1885 the responsibility of not renewing the Crimes Act he made it plain that his chief objection to the non-renewal of that Act was the existence of an anti-rent conspiracy. I think I can give the right hon. Gentleman the exact reference. It was in 1885 he called it "the great anti-rent conspiracy." And, Sir, I may perhaps also allude to the extraordinary doctrine which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. He wishes us to believe that the Plan of Campaign is on all fours with the industrial combinations in England. It is not on all fours with

those combinations in any single particular. It is not on all fours with those combinations, because it aims at a different object; it is not on all fours with them because it proceeds by different methods. As regards those methods, is it not enough to remind right hon. Gentlemen that the essence of the Plan of Campaign is to use the landlord's money in order to get up a conspiracy against the landlord himself? Is there anything analogous between such a state of things as that and anything which may exist in England under Lord Cross's Act of 1874? I heard the hon. Member for Cork talk of my hon. Friend the Member for South Hunts as using the money of the tenants of Tipperary for oppressing the tenants of Mr. Ponsonby. Was there ever anything—if I may use the expression without offence—more Irish than such a statement? The money which my hon. Friend gets from his Tipperary tenants is not their money, but his money. The tenants of Tipperary, by keeping back the money, are committing nothing short of a gross fraud upon the landlord: and the only difference between the Plan of Campaign, which is the agrarian conspiracy with which we are concerned, and the no-rent conspiracy with which the right hon. Gentleman was concerned, is that the Plan of Campaign is a far more ingenious, refined, and effective weapon than any they have hitherto discovered for dealing with Irish landlords. There is another distinction between the action of the working men in England and the action under the Plan of Campaign. In England the working men aim at benefitting themselves. In Ireland the authors of the Plan of Campaign aim at injuring others. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that the Plan of Campaign was started spontaneously by an oppressed tenantry. It was nothing of the kind. The object, like that of those who advised the "No-rent" manifesto, was not to benefit the tenants, but to ruin the landlords; and to ruin the landlords they used intimidation, by boycotting and otherwise, which led to crime, and which they knew led to crime. Now that again differentiates, and I hope will for ever differentiate, the illegal conspiracy with which we and our predecessors had to deal in Ireland from any combination which exists among working men in this country. The hon. Member for Cork City advanced a most astounding assertion with regard to modern boycotting. He appeared to me to distinguish between boycotting or exclusive dealing not accompanied by intimidation, and boycotting or exclusive dealing accompanied by intimidation, and he said he endeavoured to keep that distinction in his mind ever since it was first made in 1881 by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian; and he added—

> "I think those who were responsible for the agrarian movement are entitled to claim that they kept the movement free from crime, and that they purged the practice of boycotting from the evils attending the older system."

I say that an excuse for boycotting more inconsistent with every known fact and reality of Irish life never was made across the Table of this House—boycotting without intimidation! Why, what would be the use of it? The essence of boycotting is that it intimidates. The reason why it is employed by the hon. Member for Cork and his friends is that it may intimidate. That is the very object with which they concentrate upon one unfortunate man who has done nothing else than what he has a right to do all the power of the locality to injure him, refusing him the necessaries of life, refusing him what is necessary to maintain his business, making life intolerable, poverty inevitable, and death possible. That is boycotting. That is the difference between exclusive dealing and the boycotting with which we have to deal. Of course, I admit that where the law is vigilantly administered the crime which accompanies boycotting may be kept in check, and is largely kept in check. But the suffering which boycotting inflicts is inherent in the very system of boycotting, and is not dependent upon the fact that boycotting in too many cases is accompanied by other forms of crime. I say that everything which makes life intolerable is itself a form of crime of the deepest and gravest character, and if it be allowed to prevail in any society, that society cannot long stand. Now, Sir, that is true of boycotting not followed by crime. But is it a fact that this wondrous change has come over

boycotting since 1881, when the hon. Member for Cork heard the distinction first propounded by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian? It is not the case. Boycotting is the same, and the results are the same. Take the case of Horan, who was boycotted in 1886 and shot in 1887. Take the case of Hannah Connell, who was boycotted in 1887 and nearly starved to death. Take the case of Tomkins, in Wexford, whose whole property, including a large number of cattle and horses, was entirely destroyed by fire in 1888. Take the case of M'Loughlin, who in 1888 was cruelly beaten on his way to market and the pigs he was taking there mutilated, so that they became unsaleable. Take the case of Michael Coffee, of Gurteen. He was boycotted in the most cruel manner, those who visited him were beaten, his sheep injured, and his stock destroyed. Take the case, in 1887, of Michael Cushin, who was shot in the legs. Take the case of a farmer in 1889, who had four or five cattle put to the most terrible and brutal death in consequence of a boycotting resolution issued against him. These are instances of the results of boycotting. They could be paralleled during the whole history of the boycotting since it was first begun in 1880, at the instance of the hon. Member for the City of Cork; and however much the alertness of the police and the energy of the Government may diminish the chance of those crimes following the system of boycotting, nevertheless boycotting remains a system, not merely contrary to law, but opposed to religion and common morality, and absolutely destructive of the elements of freedom in any society in which it may be permitted to grow up. I take, then, as a vain, frivolous, and empty defence the suggestion of the hon. Member for Cork that the system by which he and his friends endeavoured to destroy the landlords by means which they knew led to crime between 1880 and 1886 has in any way been mitigated except by the operation—the energetic operation—of the Coercion Act; and I claim, therefore, whatever the cause of the improvement which even hon. Gentlemen opposite are forced to admit in the state of Ireland, that that cause is not to be found, at all events, in any conduct which may be attributed to Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway; or, for the matter of that, to Gentlemen who sit above the Gangway. The truth is that of all the eccentric hypotheses which have ever been devised by the human mind none is more eccentric and none less capable of being maintained than that which attributes the improvement in the state of Ireland to the so-called "union of hearts." Facts are conclusive against the hypothesis. I suppose the ill-omened union between the two sections opposite may be said to have been arranged on the 26th January, 1886, when the Conservative Government were turned out of office, and to have been consummated on the 8th of April, when the right hon. Gentleman brought in his Home Rule Bill. The year 1886 should therefore figure among all the years which followed the various stages of the Crimes Act as that in which crime least prevailed in Ireland. But what is the fact? If you look down the list of agrarian crime from 1881 to 1889 or 1890 you will find invariably that where there has been a Coercion Act put vigorously in force crime has diminished; that where the Coercion Act has been repealed or relaxed crime has increased; and that there has been no other incident whatever to account for such diminution and such increase. I therefore take it that according to every principle of scientific inference known to mankind we are justified in assuming that there is some logical connexion between the repression of crime and the Act intended to repress crime. I would remind the House that the Special Commission found that the augmentation of crime after 1884 grew with the growth and strengthened with the strength of the National League. As the Land League grew in strength crime increased in amount; as the National League grew in strength crime increased in amount; and as the power of those two organisations has been impaired by the administration of the law so proportionately has crime diminished in every part of Ireland. There is only one conclusion that I can draw from this. If crime has grown with the growth of these organisations, strengthened with their strength and decayed with their decay, we are surely justified in assuming that there is something more than a chance connection between them. But, however much I may be in con-

flict with hon. Gentlemen opposite on the subjects with which I have so far dealt in my speech, at all events there is perfect agreement between the two sides of the House as to the fact of the actual improvement in Ireland. I rejoice, and I have no doubt hon. Gentlemen opposite will rejoice, to know that no new Plan of Campaign has been started in Ireland during the year 1889, and that those plague spots in Ireland which are responsible for incomparably more than their fair share of crime have not increased during the past year. A cry of "Oh" is raised when I say that the Plan of Campaign is responsible for crime. Well, I have made a calculation, and I find that whereas the area over which the Plan of Campaign is in operation is about the 167th part of the whole country, this area is responsible for one-seventh of the crime. That fact, I apprehend, bears out the statement I have made, that the Plan of Campaign is largely responsible for the crime and illegal conspiracy of Ireland. Crime has diminished by nearly one-half since 1886—since the year of "the union of hearts." The prosecutions under the Crimes Act have diminished by one-half in 1889 as compared with 1888. Painful as it has been to me and to Her Majesty's Government to be responsible for an Act and its administration under which 1,614 persons have been imprisoned since it was passed, I rejoice to think that this punishment has not been in vain, for of this number of 1,614 persons 71 only have been imprisoned twice, only eight thrice, and only one has been imprisoned four times. I rejoice, therefore, to think that if it has been necessary to inflict punishment, that punishment has fulfilled the primary object of all punishment and has had a deterrent effect. At this moment the number of persons imprisoned under the Crimes Act is, I believe, only about 40.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: What about the statute of Edward III.?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The effect of the administration of the law has been still more remarkable in regard to boycotting. When the Act came into operation the number of persons subject to boycotting was 4,900. The number has now been reduced to 150. This great improvement in the condition of Ireland has been accompanied, as I think it ought to be, by a diminution of the area in which we have found it necessary to put in force the more stringent provisions of the Act. The complaint which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has made against that Act turns principally upon the earlier sub-sections of the second clause—those sub-sections which give jurisdiction to the magistrates in cases of criminal conspiracies. Those sub-sections, I am glad to say, are at the present moment in force in only one-fifth of the area of the country. Whether that condition of things can be maintained, as I hope it may, I cannot tell. I shall certainly not hesitate, as far as I am concerned, to re-proclaim, should it prove necessary. But I trust that the enormous improvement of the last two years will be a permanent improvement, and that never again will it be necessary to extend this particular part of the Act to the great mass of the Irish population. I have been accused by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) of going about the country boasting of the improvement in Ireland. Like other people, I have had to go about the country. But it is not my practice to boast. I cannot say the same of the hon. Member for North-East Cork himself. The great bulk of the vigorous speech which he delivered yesterday appeared to me to be intended not for consumption in this House, but to sustain, by confident prophecy, the flagging spirits of the campaigners in Ireland. Though I confine myself to stating facts which can be proved by statistics in regard to the condition of Ireland, I hope the House will allow me to add two things. In the first place, I think I may claim that the Crimes Act has in its effects surpassed our most sanguine expectations. No one could be more conscious than were myself and the other Members of Her Majesty's Government when they undertook the task of governing Ireland, with the whole force of hon. Gentlemen opposite encouraging boycotting and intimidation and disorder, that they undertook no small or light task, and I rejoice that, in spite of all adverse conditions, we have met with so large a measure of success. The other remark I wish to make is this. Whatever the future course of events in Ireland may be, all that has been done

has been a positive gain. The amount of needless human suffering which the administration of the law has saved in Ireland is something of which we may still be proud, even if we were turned out of office to-morrow. I am one of those who believe that these effects will not be transitory. Even if transitory, however, we can still feel that all the exertions of this House and Her Majesty's Government in order to pass and maintain the law have been exertions not thrown away in the interests of humanity. But I have every hope that the improvement which we all rejoice to see in Ireland is a permanent improvement. I believe it is a permanent improvement. I believe that two or three more years of the same steady and just administration of the law will do much to re-establish those elementary principles of society which it is the special object of hon. Gentlemen opposite to upset, and it is in the hope that the dawn which has now arisen in Ireland will brighten into a perfect day that I ask the House to continue its support to a Government which has done, as I believe, so much for the benefit of Ireland.

(6.0.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland Division): The right hon. Gentleman spoke of two or three years more being necessary in order to consummate the policy of the Government. There is a strange coincidence between the length of time which the right hon. Gentleman requires and the period which at most can elapse between this House and a general election. But anyone reading between the lines will see that the right hon. Gentleman expects a much shorter interval. I have heard the right hon. Gentleman speak very often. I admire his speaking; he has a good deal of the dialectic of an Oxford schoolboy; but the only effect of the dull and depressing speech we have just listened to was to send to sleep the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston). The right hon. Gentleman is a beaten man, and knows it and looks like it. The right hon. Gentleman said that this is the 12th vote of censure he has had to face. The right hon. Gentleman is right, and 12 is exactly the number of bye-elections which his policy has won for the Liberal Party. I do not know whether I should allude to the merely personal observations with which the right hon. Gentleman began his speech. I did not think those observations were in the best taste, or hardly up to the level of the situation. He referred to the jealousy between the Members for Bradford and Halifax in respect of their visits to Ireland. If there is anyone who ought to be jealous it is the right hon. Gentleman himself, for the presence of those right hon. Gentlemen in Ireland, and of other Englishmen, is the greatest obstacle to the Chief Secretary's campaign of mystification, and in addition their presence is disagreeable because it contrasts with the right hon. Gentleman's absence. We have all heard of the Chief Secretary's exploits in golf at Felixstowe and North Berwick, but in Ireland he has only had the courage to open a ball with a waltz in the Viceregal Hall. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of his success as having been greater than he expected. In so saying he is indeed thankful for small mercies. Let him descend from his generalities, and give the House a single instance in which his policy has been successful. He said that the Government were determined to put down all criminal conspiracies, and he added that criminal conspiracies led to crime. He defined the Plan of Campaign as a criminal conspiracy, and said the Government were determined to crush every criminal conspiracy—that is, every Plan of Campaign. Has he crushed the Plan of Campaign on a single estate? What does the right hon. Gentleman mean by crime? There is nothing which justifies the indignation of Irishmen more than the constant abuse of the word "crime," applied to a country which is one of the most crimeless in the world. If the right hon. Gentleman means combination let him say so; if he means boycotting let him say so. But if he means murder or attempt to murder, the statement is most inaccurate and unfounded, for the Plan of Campaign has not been stained with one serious crime. If the right hon. Gentleman or any one of his acolytes is able to adduce one grave crime connected with the Plan let him do so. The Plan of Campaign estates have been absolutely free from crime; and it is most unfair and uncandid to represent them as covered with crime. The right hon. Gentleman has made a parting thrust founded on the Report of

the Special Commission. If the right hon. Gentleman is satisfied with that Report, so are the Irish Members, and we will take an early opportunity of giving our reasons for that satisfaction, but the right hon. Gentleman has quoted from the Report as to our having been guilty of a criminal conspiracy and making speeches which resulted in crime, and which we knew must result in crime. That is a serious charge—I do not think it is true—and it is a serious thing that even a political tribunal selected from our political opponents has pronounced that judgment. But that charge affects more than even the Irish Members or the Front Opposition Bench. It affects the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon. Gentleman has been kind enough to say that the union between the Liberal Party and the Irish Members began on January 26, 1886, and was consummated on April 8 of the same year. But my knowledge of history began a little further back. I have watched, to use the right hon. Gentleman's phrase, the Parliamentary career of the Chief Secretary with sympathetic interest. I remember the right hon. Gentleman occupying the place now occupied by the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner). The right hon. Gentleman sat as an ornamental and casual member of the historic Fourth Party—that was in March 1880—and the right hon. Gentleman and his Leader and his two colleagues, one now the Under Secretary for India and the other a diplomatic Representative, hunted in couples with the Irish Members—aye, and embarrassed and obstructed the Liberal Government, even when they were passing a Coercion Bill. I remember, not wholly without gratitude, that on the third reading of that Bill the leader of the small Fourth Party, the leader of the right hon. Gentleman himself, came down to the House and made a speech which may be summed up in his own words as a parting kick to coercion. This combination, or, if the right hon. Gentleman prefers the phrase, the criminal conspiracy between the Tory Party and the Irish Members began in March or April, 1880, and it received its consummation on June 8, 1885, when the Liberal Ministry was expelled, and the Tory Ministry, including the right hon. Gentleman, was installed in its place. I do not wish to lift the veil on the somewhat obscure and not altogether recorded transactions of that period. But the right hon. Gentleman will bear me out that there was an understanding, if not before, immediately after, the Tory Party came into office that as the price of Irish votes the Tory Government were to drop the policy of coercion. The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, but he was not then so important a Member of the Government as he is now, and probably a good many things took place of which he heard not. I have said that the consummation was on June 8, 1885; I am wrong; it did not receive its final seal until the Viceroy of Ireland held a secret meeting with the leader of the Irish Party to see on what conditions the Irish vote could be purchased by the concession of Home Rule by the Tory Government. The term criminal conspiracy is a much-abused one, and if I were to apply it rashly I might be inclined to ask whether it might not be used of the combination of the saintliness of the Attorney General and the forgeries of Pigott. Does the right hon. Gentleman remember that the conclusion of the Judges with regard to our knowledge of crime and our association with crime referred only to speeches made before 1885? All the articles and speeches referred to by the three Judges were written and made in the years 1880-82, when the right hon. Gentleman was a member of the Fourth Party, and when (I do not use the term in a disparaging sense of either side) that Party and the Irish Members were as thick as thieves. The right hon. Gentleman is very eloquent—it is a favourite topic with him—and he dwelt upon it on a certain historic occasion at Manchester when, according to a Tory paper, his features were illumined by the electric light and exposed to 10,000 Tories there, and when, by singular maladroitness, he was present at the fall of the Bastile. I see some hon. Members on this side do not understand the allusion. The proceedings in a popular resort at Manchester wound up with a firework display. There was a representation in fireworks of the Bastile, and, in the end, the building crumbled away and the prisoners escaped looking almost as bad by the

appliance of art and the electric light as the right hon. Gentleman's prisoners when they leave Irish gaols. The Bastile crumbled away amidst the cheers of thousands of Tories. I was about to say that a favourite assertion of the right hon. Gentleman is that the present Government is in a much worse position than other Ministries, in this fact—that, whereas the Opposition in past times have helped the Ministry in maintaining the law and in preserving order, the unscrupulous Opposition of to-day employs all its time in embarrassing the Government and in interfering with the administration of law. I have a very lively recollection of some of the debates with regard to the policy of Lord Spencer. In the debate upon the convictions and executions for the Maamtrasna murders speeches against the course adopted by the Government were made by the legal luminary of the Fourth Party, the present Under Secretary for India (Sir J. Gorst) and by the present Solicitor General, while the right hon. Member for West Birmingham described the conspiracy between the Irish Party and the Tories as the "Maamtrasna alliance." Now, I think I have given some food for reflection to the right hon. Gentleman when he comes to debate the Report of the Judges next week. The right hon. Gentleman has a most extraordinary method of dealing with affairs in Ireland. Take his statistics with regard to prosecutions. He gave the number of persons sent to gaol as 1,614. Yes, but that includes some who went to gaol more than once, so we must add considerably to that list. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to make a point against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in regard to one of the cases he brought forward by saying it was tried under the ordinary law and not under the Coercion Act. If I recollect rightly the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not say it was tried under the Coercion Act. But after all, there is not much in the point of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, because our contention is that the spirit of the administration of both ordinary and the extraordinary law is different in Ireland from what it is in England, and this is exemplified by the conviction of the two ballad singers for singing a song which is chiefly remarkable for the absence of any rhythmic continuity, and which, in fact, is worse than Walt Whitman—and it cannot be said that many things are worse than that. ["Oh, oh!" from Mr. W. O'Brien]. I am sorry if I have offended the literary susceptibilities of my hon. Friend below me. The differences in the modes of administration have become worse under the government of the right hon. Gentleman. I say further, Sir, that the right hon. Gentleman has deliberately chosen, in order to manufacture hugger-mugger statistics, to proceed under the ordinary law in respect of crimes which ought really to be classed as coercion crimes. He is able to use the ordinary law for purely coercive purposes, and so to keep down the returns of coercion offences. Under the musty Act of Edward III. a man can be tried in Ireland for anything. Suppose a man is brought up on a charge of boycotting, which is one of the so-called crimes the Coercion Act was passed to deal with, he is charged with intimidation, which is also a Coercion Act offence. He is further charged with conspiracy, also a Coercion Act offence. The magistrate says:—"Well, there is no doubt you are an ill-conducted kind of fellow, and that you have been disturbing the peace. We will not inflict a heavy sentence on you, because the evidence is not very strong or the offence very great. We will acquit you if you like, but we will attach a little condition, which is not of the smallest importance. It is that you, whose case is that you have not broken the peace, should acknowledge that you have broken it; that you, whose case is that you are an honest man, should acknowledge that you are a bad character; that you, who enjoy the esteem of your neighbours, and have, perhaps, been elected to a public office by their votes, should acknowledge yourself to be a person of ill-fame, and on this small and trifling condition of abrogating your own honour and sacrificing your good reputation you may go free. If you agree to this condition we will bind you over for six months; if not, we must send you to prison for six months." This was done the day before yesterday in the case of Mr. John Slattery, President of the South of Ireland Cattle

Association. As every honest and honourable man in Ireland would do, he refused to give bail under conditions so degrading, and he is in gaol at this moment; and in gaol without appeal. According to a recent decision of the Courts, the binding over of a man on bail is not a formality, but a conviction which bars appeal. I do not wish to recall to the memory of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) his record with regard to appeals. I am afraid I should not have sufficient self-control to keep myself within the limits of Parliamentary decorum if I were to characterise in accordance with my feelings the record of the right hon. Gentleman on that point. But I take his own statement, the accuracy of which I deny, that he never promised anything but an appeal in cases of one month's imprisonment. Well, here are men sent to gaol for one, two, or six months without having any right of appeal. I am told that the policy of trying what are really Coercion Act offences under other Statutes has been adopted since the twelve votes of censures by the constituencies. I do not care when it was adopted. It is dishonourable and degrading, and it misleads the country and the House. It is unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman to take refuge in such expedients as these for the purpose of concealing the working of the Coercion Act. Now observe, the Chief Secretary spoke of the flagging spirits of the Plan of Campaign. Well, I do not know why they should flag. Of course, if on one of the estates the Plan had been conquered, there would be grave cause for despondency. But the only estates upon which the Plan of Campaign has been in operation, and has ceased to exist, are those estates upon which it has achieved full and complete victory. I deny in the strongest and most emphatic language that the Plan has broken down on the Massereene estate. I will tell you the full extent to which it can be said to have broken down there. The landlord has got, I believe, four of the farms let to those wretched loafers who pass for industrious tenants and drunken creatures, whom a leading teetotal advocate employs, and to these solvent tenants £5,000 were given to put into one pocket and take out of the other like the pea under the thimbles. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman again, and pin him to facts and particulars. Let him give one instance where the Plan of Campaign has broken down, or one in which its action has been stained by one act of violence. The right hon. Gentleman has said a good deal about boycotting. It is not a weapon of which I am personally fond, and there is not a man on these Benches who does not long for the day when the very name, and much more the thing, "boycotting," shall be swept away. I say to the hon. Member for North Armagh, that when the people have entire control of their destinies in Ireland——

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: When will that be?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will tell me the date of the General Election, I can then give him the approximate period. I say, when the people have under their control the destinies of Ireland, I do not believe there is a man on these Benches, be he Protestant or Catholic, who would not rise in revolt against an extension to Protestant Tories in Ireland of such a system of boycotting as the Primrose dames pursue in England. Boycotting is a delicate subject for a member of the Primrose League to touch. I am in the habit of going up and down the country a good deal more than I like, and I have visited many parts, both town and country, and I say my blood has boiled at the suffering I have been told of inflicted on labourers who have been persecuted, beggared, and starved so far as Primrose dames and knights could accomplish it, because they voted for Liberal candidates. I say to my hon. Friends above the Gangway there is no more necessary work to do than to abolish this system of tyranny in England, aye, and in Scotland too. The other day in Partick we abstained from putting a vote to a body of working men electors because we did not wish to subject them to the chance of expulsion from the works where they were employed, with the loss of their daily bread, because they had held up their hands for our candidate. There is no more necessary work than to protect these people from the persecution and starvation sometimes of which they stand in peril. Yet another word or two on boycotting. It exists in every profession

in the country—I do not say whether rightly or wrongly, though, for my part, I had rather that it existed nowhere. I believe it is a rule at the Bar that no barrister shall go to a circuit outside his own except on receipt of special fees. There was a gentleman named Kennedy. I did not know him personally, and I believe he is now dead, a gentleman of the highest ability, who sought to break through this unwritten law of the Bar, and he practised on a circuit to which he did not belong. What was the consequence? It is a rule of the Bar, obeyed alike by Tory and Liberal barristers, that no barrister shall take a brief with another barrister who has attempted to exercise his legal right and to practise on a circuit outside that to which he belongs. Mr. Kennedy, in spite of his brilliant abilities, was—I do not know whether he was ruined—but he went to his grave a victim to boycotting in the legal profession. I observe there are some smiles on the faces of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The two hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite are not members of the Bar, though they are eminent members of another profession, which will not, I hope, ever call on them for the valorous exploits they sometimes talk about. I cannot take their authority on the etiquette of the legal profession, but I ask any legal Member in the House, can he deny that Mr. Kennedy was starved out of the practice of his profession for a breach of the unwritten law of the Bar? Take another case of a like character. A doctor came up to the Law Courts and asked for relief because he had been—I do not like to say boycotted, because it may seem trifling with the question—because he had been excluded from his profession by the College of Physicians for unprofessional conduct. The decree of the Court was that the College of Physicians was supreme in all matters relating to the profession, and declined to interfere. In the face of these things, it is rather too much to hear all this virtuous indignation poured upon the Irish people, who, while in the agony of a national struggle, resort to methods that are employed in the piping times of peace in rural districts in England and in the legal profession. Boycotting is not confined to one side. I have extracts here which throw a little light on this subject. The other day in Ireland a Railway Com-

pany increased its fares. In this, I believe, they exercised a perfectly legal right, though I believe, also, there is a legal right to compel them to reduce their fares. Upon this the *Dublin Express*, the organ of all that is lawful and orderly in Ireland, published an article in which it said—

"No merely declared resolution adopted at a meeting will have any effect on the Board. It will be necessary to put the sentiments of this meeting into a form in which the company must be made to see and feel in a reduction instead of an increase of their receipts. This result there is every reason to expect; and, if it be realised, the Board of Directors will find that, instead of paying a small though increased dividend of 1½ per cent, they will draw a blank next half-year."

And now I will give you a specimen of boycotting on the part of the Chief Secretary. Mr. Conlan has a newspaper which circulates popularly throughout the middle of Ireland, and he has a rival organ in the interests of the Coercion Party. Though the "loyal minority" lays claim to number two millions, I do not know that they supply a large number of newspaper readers except, perhaps, that some of its leaders give study to our past speeches and articles. Well, Mr. Conlan, the editor of this Nationalist journal, was prosecuted for a coercion offence, but under the Statute of Edward III., and suffered a term of imprisonment. Subsequently, he applied for those Government advertisements which had been diverted from his paper, which had a large circulation, to his miserable Coercionist rival. Here is the reply he received from the Office of Irish Fisheries, Dublin Castle—

"You are under a misapprehension in supposing that the advocacy of any particular political opinions is any reason for giving or withdrawing Government advertisements. If such have been withdrawn from your journal it is solely because that paper has continued to violate the law."

So that you have this virtuous denunciation of an attempt to starve men into submission by the refusal of the necessaries of life; and, at the same time, by exclusive dealing, the same principle is applied by the Government to public advertisements which are not theirs to give, and which, in the public interest, should be bestowed on papers of the largest circulation. Now, the hon. Member for South Hunts justified the action of himself and his friends in entering

into a combination—criminal conspiracy, as it may be called—with Mr. Ponsonby to refuse arbitration in the dispute with the latter gentleman's tenants on the ground that arbitration had failed in the case of the Vandeleur estate. He gave as a reason, I think, that the tenants there had paid none of their instalments.

MR. SMITH-BARRY (Hunts. S.): What I said in effect was that a good many of the tenants had not paid their instalments.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I did not catch exactly the terms of the hon. Gentleman's explanation. I understand him to imply that a large number of tenants on the Vandeleur estate had refused to pay, or I think he said a very few had paid, instalments due under the award of the hon. Member for Hackney.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: Yes.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Now I say, if that statement were true, it would be a most painful statement to hear. We on these Benches would be grieved and ashamed to find it true; but the statement is absolutely without foundation. In the first place, if I rightly understand, for I speak on the information of others, the first instalments have been paid—I do not know whether I am justified in saying that of every case, but in the vast—the overwhelming—majority of cases. [An hon. MEMBER: Every case.] An hon. Friend near me tells me the statement applies to every case. He is intimately acquainted with the facts, and he says the first instalment has been paid in every single case, and I must say the hon. Gentleman opposite would display a little more of that love of his native country to which he lays claim if he were not so eager to calumniate the character of Irish tenants.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: I do not know whether I may be allowed to say that my information up to a fortnight ago is of a diametrically opposite character.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: This, on a question of fact, is a direct conflict of assertion which time must be left to decide. As to the second instalment now due, I can speak on the authority of the hon. Member for Hackney. A statement was sent to the hon. Member for Hackney by the hon. Member for Canterbury, who has taken a most creditable part in this matter, whose conduct contrasts very favourably with that of his Colleagues on the Tory Benches. He received a complaint that all the tenants had refused to pay the second instalment. Now, the hon. Member for Hackney has had considerable training lately in dissecting very confident assertions, and accordingly he requested the hon. Member for Canterbury to descend to that statement for particulars, from which the *Times* newspaper shrunk so long as it could, and then he found that 118 tenants were stated not to have paid. Well, there are 400 tenants on the estate, and if these 118 had refused they would not be a majority of the tenants refusing. Further, I hear, this number of 118 have already been reduced to 59, and I daresay successive posts will reduce this 59 to as vanishing a quantity as the forged letters and other charges of the *Times*. I hope I have made it clear to the House that my reference is to the second instalment. Now, let me tell the House another thing. The other day, in Partick, the hon. Gentleman who stood for the Tory Party declared that Irish tenants, by their regularity in paying instalments under the Ashbourne Act, had proved themselves thoroughly honest men. Well, I was legitimately proud to have this testimony to the solvency of my own people. This character for honesty comes from a Scotchman, the calumniation of his countryman comes from an Irishman. The history of the Vandeleur tenants is a confirmation of this eulogy; for I am informed that some of those tenants described as dishonest defaulters by the hon. Member for South Hunts, are actually waiting for remittances from America, sent by their poor hard-working relatives, in order to honourably maintain the award that was given. The information supplied me by my friends enables me to make this complete exposure of the charges of the hon. Gentleman. Now, I come to the charges of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. Russell). He says that a number of shop-keepers in Youghal were boycotted because they did not put up their shutters, joining with their townsmen in condemnation of the treatment of my hon. Friend

(Mr. O'Brien), and he insinuates that this boycotting was due to differences of religion. Now, it has been my fortune to follow the hon. Member through many parts of the country, and there is no man I better like to follow except, perhaps, either of the two hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite, because I am assured by active Liberal canvassers that a speech from either of these hon. and gallant Gentlemen is worth at least 200 or 300 votes to the Liberal side. I understand the smiles of those hon. and gallant Gentlemen perfectly well. They tried to make the issue of an election turn upon my individual view and policy, such was the beggarly condition to which the Tory Party was driven. But to return to the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He goes about the country making charges of sectarianism. He complains of our inquisition; but he has become Grand Inquisitor himself, not of us alone, but actually of hon. Gentlemen on the other side—may be, has become Torquemada of the whole British Empire. From this position he informs the people that my hon. Friend the Member for Cork is a non-Catholic in the same sense as the Junior Member for Northampton. Well, that is an inquisition into the religious opinions of a politician that is not justified. Such attacks as these on the conscientious and religious convictions that are buried in a man's bosom will go far to test the charges of bigotry and intolerance this hon. Member and others so freely make. It is suggested that I should contradict the statement that has been made in reference to my hon. Friend the Member for Cork, but I am not concerned to do so. I do not care what the religious opinions of a man may be. These are matters for his own conscience, and I see no advantage to Christianity in making such things matter of attack and defence in the arena of party politics. In regard to this incident at Youghal, it is perfectly true that a number of shop-keepers refused to close their shops when my hon. Friend was so barbarously treated in Clonmel Gaol. Well, I must say I do not think any Irishman, Protestant or Catholic, ought to have felt other than a sense of humiliation in regard to this treatment of my hon. Friend. Well, these shop-keepers in Youghal refused to join in the general manifestation of feeling. Now, we have occasionally in this City of London manifestations of public feeling on Royal anniversaries, or in celebration of political occurrences, and I do not think a dissentient from the popular opinion thinks his windows are quite safe if in a marked manner he refuses to join in illumination with his neighbours. In fact, I remember an historical occasion when the front windows of a house in Harley Street suffered in consequence of the views held by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone.) This is a specimen of what may happen in a time of popular excitement, and if a few windows were broken in Youghal it was not because the occupiers of the houses were Protestants. [Several hon. MEMBERS: No windows were broken.] No windows were broken. I am wrong. I share with hon. Gentlemen opposite the pleasure they find in the fact that no windows were broken on the occasion. But a charge of boycotting is attached to this incident. Now, there were Protestant shopkeepers who did put up their shutters, and among them was a harness maker, Mr. Fowkes. In reference to this gentleman, I have a letter which is about as grammatical as the correspondence of a duchess, in which a Mrs. Dring explains that her son did not like to go to the shop in consequence of the shutters being up, and that she had determined not to take the harness which had been ordered. I grieve to say that this poor man was boycotted by all the Tories of the district. Now, what becomes of the Protestant charge of boycotting? Nothing is more honourable to Ireland than the absence of religious intolerence in political and municipal contests. We follow the lead of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork, and we intend to do so until he has brought about the final emancipation of our country. He is a Protestant; he is the son of Protestants, and the grandson of Protestants. Around me sit many Members who are Protestants. Nobody ever asks what is their religion, but yet you cast upon Youghal the unjust stigma that its Catholic inhabitants are intolerant. What are the facts? The Chairman of the Town Commissioners is a Protestant; five of the members of the Town Board are Protestants, and I deny that there is any foundation

for this allegation of intolerance on the part of the Roman Catholics. I feel that I am making a large claim on the indulgence of the House. Last night the hon. Member for South Hunts took part in the debate, and I am now anxious that the public should know the real facts with regard to the Ponsonby dispute. I confess that if the hon. Gentleman were able to prove the truth of the assertions which he made, he would have a strong case for interference, although I do not think that even those facts would wholly justify that interference. But if our statements are correct, his interference is both unjust and iniquitous. Now, first, is Mr. Ponsonby a model landlord, as the hon. Member represented? In reply to that I wish to give the House a few facts. One of his tenants was a man named Scully. In 1885, this man, who was suffering from the terrible depression then existing in Ireland, and especially in that district, was processed. The process was decided against him, and he sold his only cow in order to pay the rent. When he got to the rent office the agent told him there was a guinea to pay for law costs; and the poor man's wife, who was approaching her confinement, had to take the quilt off her bed and pawn it in order to raise part of the guinea. She took the guinea, with the pawn ticket, to the rent office, and appealed to the agent, because the quilt which she had had to pawn had been made for her by her mother and given to her on her wedding day. The agent of this model landlord, notwithstanding this, took the guinea and flung the pawn ticket back into the woman's face. I will take another case, which shows the real nature of this model landlord. I see in this pamphlet, the authorship of which I believe I am not wrong in attributing to the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone——

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I had nothing to do with it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am sorry to hear it, because it does credit to the kind of literary skill in which the hon. Gentleman is so proficient. It was, however, stated by the hon. Member for South Tyrone—I have not the exact words with me——

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: If the hon. Gentleman wishes to know what I said, I have no objection to telling him. The pith and substance of what I said was that this rent was the amount of rent paid from before the time of the famine, and, therefore, it could not be called rack-rent. I never said no individual's rent had been paid.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: We have also been told that the rent had not been increased within the memory of man. Now I will deal with the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who we are glad to find is able to deal more courteously with us in his address than sometimes appears in his communications; and if he would add a little candour to both forms of expression, perhaps the discussion would be more intelligent and more real. One statement is, that the rents have not been increased within the memory of man. Another statement is that they had been slightly increased, but that the increase practically amounted to nothing, whilst the third statement—that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover—was that the increase had only amounted to £100 a year. But the owner of the estate, who is perhaps as good an authority as anybody, stated in a letter to his brother-in-law, that the net increase was £500 a year. Which of these assertions am I to deal with? I venture to state that each one of them, except the last, is inaccurate. I can give a few instances in which the rent was increased. The Widow Mahoney had her rent raised £12 a year. Her husband had made improvements on the holding at a cost of £168, and towards this the generous landlord contributed £20. But there is another foul page in this history of which the hon. Gentleman never spoke. I remember with great distinctness that in 1881, when the Land Bill of the Government was under discussion, there was something almost approaching a crisis in regard to a clause which we wished to have inserted, admitting the leaseholders to the benefit of the Act. The consultations extended over two or three days. I believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was himself anxious to make the concession if he could, but having consulted his Colleagues, he came down and said—

"We cannot release all freeholders, but we will put in a clause the effect of which will be that if the tenants are able to prove to the

Court that the lease was forced upon them under the threat of eviction, that lease may be broken."

I suppose the right hon. Gentleman has followed the course of events, and he knows that, although the clause was well intended, it has proved practically a dead letter. I am not lawyer enough to explain the means by which it has been chicaned away; at any rate, it was a dead letter to all intents and purposes until the right hon. Gentleman brought in a Bill admitting the majority of the Irish leaseholders to the benefits of the Act. We have the fact that of 1,000 applications which were made to enforce the clause, not one succeeded. In 1871, after the Land Act was passed, Mr. Ponsonby, or his agent, went to several of the tenants. Under the Land Act of 1870, a 31 years' lease gave the holder a right to the benefits of the Act, whilst a lease for 32 years precluded him from them. Mr. Ponsonby and his agent forced upon these tenants a 32 years' lease, thus filching the benefits from them which were intended to be conferred on them by legislation; and this is the considerate, kind landlord whose brilliant record shines amid the darkness of Irish history. I challenge a contradiction of these facts. These leases were sometimes forced upon the tenants under circumstances almost tragic in their character. In one case a man refused time after time to accept the lease, his child died, and when he returned from the funeral, sad and sorrowful, he found upon his table a notice which compelled him to accept a 32 years' lease. Is not the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh ashamed that conduct such as this should happen? How can he stand up in this House and defend men guilty of these acts? I know he will be ashamed to hear this; but I know also that he will stand up and represent this landlord as a paragon of virtue. In another case the rent was increased from £70 to £80. In a third case the landlord, Mr. Ponsonby, had beautified his estate by the creation of some glens, and in order to do that he took nine acres from the holding of a man named Michael Murphy. Did he compensate Murphy? No; he sent his valuer to the holding and actually increased the rent by £4 a year, although the size of the farm had been diminished In still another case four acres were taken off a farm and an increased rent put on. Surely these facts—these startling facts—shatter the legend that Mr. Ponsonby was a peculiarly considerate landlord. I could go through case after case of a like nature. I now come to the question of terms which were offered to the tenants. We know that at the end of 1887, 200 of the tenants signed originating notices to the landlord showing their desire to go into the Land Courts, and surely that was a sufficient indication of a *bonâ fide* desire to take this step. The landlord at that time was anxious that the tenant should have the opportunity of going into Court, and he was kind enough to extend the term during which the originating notices might be sent in. But a few days before the Court sat, the landlord, under some malign influence, actually served notices on some of the tenants which barred them from going into the Court. Such a notice was served on 30 of the principal tenants. I acknowledge the landlord was within his legal right, but was he within his moral right? These tenants, he knew, had elected to stand or fall together, and I, for one, would be ashamed of the Ponsonby tenants if, in a struggle like this, the more fortunate ones were to desert the less fortunate ones. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary illumined the debate just now with a most important contribution, and it was fortunate that he did not see the long faces and eloquent grimaces of the two Colleagues who sat immediately behind him. How the Chief Secretary refrained from pulling him by the coat-tails, as he demolished the whole fabric of the principle of equality of law in England and in Ireland, escapes my comprehension. I wish now to call the attention of the House to the fact that the Tories, when they are seeking the suffrage of popular constituencies, actually boast of the services of their party towards the protection of combination. Reference has already been made to the Liverpool case. I will point to another instance: The Tory candidate for Croydon in 1885, standing against my hon. Friend the present Member for Burnley, claimed credit for the Tory Party because, among other things, it had permitted freedom of combination amongst working men, by an Act legalising the employment of

peaceful picketing in cases of strikes. And this testimony of the democratic attitude of the Tory Party towards peaceful picketing is the more valuable because the signature at the foot of the election address I refer to was that of Mr. Grantham, Q.C., the very Judge who tried the Liverpool case. And now I come to the second offer made on the part of Mr. Brunker, the former agent of Mr. Ponsonby, and in connection with that I have here three letters, extracts of which I will read to the House. The first letter declares that he, Mr. Brunker, has full powers from the landlord, and is his authorised agent. The second declares that he and Canon Keller, on behalf of the tenants, had almost come to an agreement, and only a modification of terms was required. The third letter, dated some months later, declares that he, Mr. Brunker, still thinks if he and Canon Keller had been left alone (this was four months after the negotiations had come to an end), they would have have been able to come to an agreement. I think it is flying in the face of the credulity of this House to say that these letters could have been written by a man between whom and his fellow negotiator there was a difference of £20,000. In regard to the third offer, the statements which have been made as to that seem to form a most powerful specimen of the *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. It is said that by this offer 32 per cent reduction was tendered, and that it was only 3 per cent below that demanded by the tenants. If that is so, how can it be said that the demands of the Plan of Campaign were downright robbery? But, as a matter of fact, what the tenants were to pay amounted to 17 years' purchase, and this land is certainly not worth that. On the estate of Lord Egmont, close by, where the land is better, the sales have been on the basis of from 11 to 16 years' purchase. On the estate of the Uniaks, again better land, the average price was 16 years. Let us have the truth about this matter, and let the public outside judge. Seventeen years' purchase was not all that was demanded. The tenants were also to be called upon to pay the law costs. And this brings me to the most astounding statement made the other night by the hon. Member for South Hunts, to the effect that the costs only amounted to £3 or £4 in each case.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: My expression was a few pounds, I believe.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: These figures are entirely inaccurate. Some of the processes were brought at the Wicklow Assizes, and the solicitor for the landlord has since sent in a certified bill showing that the costs of the proceedings against 90 tenants amounted to £4,000. Yet this is only one of many stages in the proceedings.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: I think the hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to what I said. I suggested that 3 per cent interest upon the capitalised sum of the costs would amount to only a few pounds in each case, and the landlord was willing to accept payment in that form.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Yes, but the tenant would still be liable for the capital sum. The 3 per cent would be without a Sinking Fund, and would leave a heavy load of indebtedness upon the tenant's shoulders. I am told that the law costs of this estate now amount to nearly £15,000, and to add this £15,000 to the lump sum to be paid for the estate would greatly increase the burden. This, I suppose, will be done if the landlord succeeds, which is very hypothetical; and even that does not exhaust the extent of the landlords' demands. The tenants will have to undertake the repair of the buildings, and I am not exaggerating when I say that the total claim made against them will amount to between eighteen and nineteen years' purchase, for land not worth fifteen or sixteen years' purchase. That is the generous offer of which we have heard such eloquent descriptions during the last three or four days from hon. Members opposite. Nothing, I think, has been more remarkable in the struggle than the attitude of the tenants. They have been willing to refer the matter to arbitration; they even offered to refer it to the Tory Recorder of the City of Cork. But the answer of the hon. Gentleman to the demand for arbitration was an utterly unfounded calumny as to the solvency of the tenants as a body. There is a dispute about the repairing of houses. An hon. Member has said that the dilapidations of tenants' houses are due to the action of the tenants themselves. I suppose what

he was thinking of was the preparations made for resistance when evictions were about to commence, and the damage that was done by the Sheriff's officers when making forcible entry. But what did the tenants do in regard to this matter? They said we are willing to separate the two classes of dilapidations. [An hon. MEMBER: Oh, oh!] The hon. Member seems surprised at this, and to me it is a singular thing that he could have gone into this terrible crusade without having mastered the fundamental details connected with it. Fancy the hon. Member taking upon himself the responsibility of devastating a town in Ireland without being acquainted with the facts. The tenants, as I have said, agreed to divide the dilapidations into two classes, namely, those made by themselves and those made by the Sheriffs in executing the evictions, as distinct from the dilapidations following the evictions when the house from which the tenants had been ejected were left in the merciful hands of the emergency men. There are two questions which arise on this; first, who caused one set of dilapidations, and who caused the other? The tenants offered to submit this question to two arbitrators, one to be appointed by the landlord and the other by themselves. They offered on their part to pay the full value of the dilapidations which were their own work; while, on the other hand, the landlords were to pay for the dilapidations effected by the Sheriff's men, and the House will probably consider that the tenants had a right to demand that dilapidations created in cruel wantonness should thus be paid for. Thus, all through the County of Cork, we have the tenants offering to arbitrate every single point of dispute, and we have also landlords who are willing to arbitrate if they are only left alone. But unfortunately we have, beyond this the malevolent influence of the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry) intervening for the purpose of preventing arbitration. I think I have said enough to show that the tenants on the Ponsonby estate have been justified in their action, and that the Tipperary tenants well deservethe high eulogy of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. O'Brien), and I come now to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Has the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in suppressing the branches of the National League? No, they are all alive. Has he succeeded in suppressing the newspaper reports? No, they are still published. Has he sueceeded in diminishing the strength of the League? No, it is now stronger than ever. Has he succeeded in exhausting the funds of the League? Certainly not, it is richer than ever it was. And now I will put before him an alternative policy. In the 5th sub-section of the 6th section of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act it is said —

> "In the proceedings in such application the Crofter Commissioners shall take an account of the amount of arrears of rent due or to become due before the application is finally determined, or may take evidence of all the circumstances which have led to such arrears, and shall decide whether, in view of such circumstances, the whole or what part of such arrears ought to be paid, and whether in one payment or by instalments, and at what dates the same shall be paid; and the amount of debt so fixed, shall be deemed to be the total amount of such arrears due by the crofter, and the times at which the same becomes payable."

A similar sub-section to this inserted in the Land Act of 1887 would have put an end to the Plan of Campaign, would have settled all these disputes, and have done away entirely with the necessity for coercion. It would, beyond this, have saved Ireland 4,000 prosecutions, and would also have saved the lives of 16 men and boys who have died by violence within the three years of the right hon. Gentleman's rule. But the right hon. Gentleman chooses the bad way when a little good sense, a little less of hysterical tendency to impotent violence, would have suggested to him the entrance upon a right and just solution of the difficulty. Well, what is the result? We cannot recall the dead, we cannot efface from Irish memory and Irish hearts the sorrows and sufferings of the last three years. We can only wait until the time arrives when the country shall be called upon to give its verdict, and I, for one, shall be greatly surprised if that verdict is not that there never was a Minister who had a policy which was so foolishly carried out by methods so brutal or by instruments of such a character.

*(7.37.) MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): The hon. Member who has just spoken has dealt with three estates, namely, the Massereene estate, the Vandeleur

estate, and the Ponsonby estate. With the Massereene estate I am well acquainted, and I should say that every fact the hon. Member has mentioned with regard to the Plan of Campaign on that estate is absolutely inaccurate. The Plan of Campaign was beaten last year on that estate. I was present when the Sheriff proceeded to evict 21 tenants, and 12 of those tenants, as soon as the Sheriff entered, produced their rents saying, that if they had known what the Plan of Campaign really was they would never have joined that organisation. On that occasion I met a man who had been evicted on the previous day, and he begged that he might be received back again on the estate. He owed four years' rent, a sum exceeding £20, and was only able to pay 30s. down. He was accepted on the spot upon his assurance that as soon as possible he would pay another 30s. I asked him why he had joined the Plan of Campaign, and he refused to tell me. I then asked him to explain what he had done with the rent. He said it was in the war chest, and he never expected to receive a farthing back. It had gone where many a pound had gone before. I venture to say that on the Massereene estate, the Vandeleur estate, and the Ponsonby estate the men who joined that organisation were generally men who were well-to-do, and that the men who were first evicted were men possessing ample resources. In 1887 occurred the celebrated eviction of Patrick Devine. Some hon. Members opposite were present on that occasion and applauded the resistance offered to the law by that modern example of the Irish hero. Only six months ago I passed the very house from which that man was evicted, and I found that the individual who was made so great a hero of by hon. Members below the Gangway for resisting unfair rent was back again in the occupation of the farm from which he had been evicted, having paid every single farthing of the arrears which two years ago he alleged he was unable to pay. As to the Ponsonby estate, the hon. Member for the Scotland division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has based the attack made by him upon the hon. Member for South Hunts on the statement that Mr. Brunker, the agent, had full powers. The fact is that Mr. Brunker never had full powers, and the mere fact that he himself may have said so does not make it so. Mr. Ponsonby could not have given him full powers because Mr. Ponsonby did not possess full powers to deal with the estate himself. It is obvious to anybody who reads the letter which the hon. Member has brought under the notice of the House that the further modification alluded to by Mr. Brunker was not to be made by him but by Canon Keller. Mr. Brunker never had any authority to recede from the position that the £16,000 were to be included in the sum payable by the tenants. The hon. Member has stated that on the Massereene estate there are only four tenants now in occupation of land from which other tenants had been evicted; and he also asserted that they are not *bonâ fide* tenants. The hon. Gentleman has been entirely misled on that point, and I feel assured that he knows nothing about the character of the tenants on the Massereene estate except what he has been told. I have been on the estate myself and have seen every one of the 13 tenants—*bonâ fide* tenants—who had left holdings in other counties to come there, and whose farms were well stocked. Those tenants came some from my own county, some from Fermanagh, some from Monaghan. The men have bought their farms, and there is not the slightest foundation for the charge by hon. Members opposite. There could not be found in any part of Ireland men who are more capable of working their farms in a proper manner. Now, we have had two long speeches made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford. I do not know, really, whether their utterances require attention. One or two Members of their Party have let the country know the precise position which they occupy. According to an article, probably written with authority, by the hon. Member for North-West Durham, these right hon. Gentlemen, and every other right hon. Gentleman who sits on the Bench opposite, with the exception of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, belong to an order of things which has passed away. They can never be anything in the future; they cannot occupy any prominent position in the destinies of this country.

The only conscientious Member among them, according to the leader of the Radical Party, is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. But the writer has gone further in explaining the position occupied by the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Bradford and Halifax. They are "official limpets." I do not know that it is necessary, therefore, to occupy the time of the House in referring to the speeches of these right hon. Gentlemen, who belong to an order of things which has passed away, and who are "official limpids." But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax went over to Ireland to find a Protestant Home Rule Party. He might as well have gone to look for an Irish elk. There is, indeed, the perfect skeleton of an elk in the Royal Museum, but I do not believe he would find even the perfect skeleton of a Protestant Home Rule Party. I was present at the demonstration, held in the county to which I belong, for a purpose diametrically opposite to that which the right hon. Gentleman came over to advocate. I am not sure whether the right hon. Gentleman was there, or any other Members of his Party. Instead of going to a representative meeting of Protestant tenants they attended a hole-and-corner meeting held in a bye-street of the town of Dungannon, where I was unable to discover more than one Protestant, if there was one there at all. However, the right hon. Gentleman comes back to this country and professes to be greatly delighted, because at a meeting in Dublin he invited the audience to join with him in saying "God bless the Queen of the United Kingdom." I wondered at the time whether there was sincerity on the part of each of the 10,000 persons who responded to that invitation, or whether, with tongue in check, they thought, "Well, we will join in this sentiment just to amuse the right hon. Gentleman." [Mr. W. REDMOND: That is a nice character to give your countrymen.] I ask the hon. Gentleman opposite to allow me to proceed without any further interruption. What are the sentiments of the hon. Gentleman's party on this question? I quote from *United Ireland* for 8th September, 1884, as expressing more truthfully the sentiments of that party. It was as follows:

"There are several indications of a necessity to make it once more clear to all men that any attempt to resuscitate the old Buddha worship of English princelings will be sternly resisted by the Irish people. Our attitude towards 'this gentleman,' and ladies and gentlemen of his way of living, is perfectly plain. So long as the English Parliament chooses to continue the Sovereign in her situation, we, though holding our own opinion that hereditary Sovereigns are as laughable shams as hereditary peers, will continue to obey the law with respect to Royalty as we obey the law with respect to vaccination; but personal adoration of the very commonplace persons who fill thrones is no more enjoined by law than kissing the shoe of the policeman or process-server when officially engaged. It is a voluntary abasement, and not a matter of law or loyalty. The Duke of Edinburgh is not even a Sovereign, but one of an innumerable German family, whose chief claim upon the homage of the people, who pay them a million and a half a year in salaries, is that they are not the idiots and debauchees that their grandfathers were."

It was exactly in that sense that the audience at Dublin repeated the very mild expression of loyalty in which the right hon. Gentleman asked them to join him. In moving his Amendment the hon. Member for the City of Cork made a charge against the Chief Secretary which he did not attempt to substantiate in any way. It was that the policy of my right hon. Friend has tended to produce crime, and that the result of the Crimes Act has been to force the people of Ireland into disobedience to law and order. The hon. Member for the City of Cork ought to have recollected that long before the present Chief Secretary came into office the policy of disobedience to and rebellion against law and order had been preached by his lieutenants in America. In the month of August, 1886, at a time when Ireland was free from coercion, and when, according to hon. Members opposite, the hearts of the Irish people were being turned with affection to England, Scotland, and Wales, the hon. Member for Wexford and the hon. Member for North-East Cork laid down lines of policy upon which hon. Members opposite were going to carry out their views in Ireland, namely, that there was to be no truce with the English Government; that they were to make the government of Ireland by England impossible; and that no effort

was to be spared by the hon. Member for Cork and his friends in order to force the Government of England to forge fetters of coercion. It was the Member for the City of Cork and his friends who were responsible for making the condition of Ireland such that it was impossible to consider life and property safe unless the Criminal Law was strengthened. Hon. Members opposite cannot deny that statament. Their representatives returned from Chigago, and emissaries were immediately sent through Ireland to formulate the Plan of Campaign. They never ceased agitating and agitating until they forced the yoke of the National League upon the people. With regard to the Ponsonby estate, I am firmly convinced that the more plainly the public understand the facts of the case and the action of the hon. Member for North-East Cork and Tipperary, the more satisfactory will be the support of the Government both inside and outside this House. Now, the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool attempted to get rid of the fact that the Protestant shopkeepers of Youghal had been boycotted. The minister of the Wesleyan Methodists stated that most of his congregation were boycotted, and I prefer to take the statement of one who must know the circumstances to the statement of the hon. Member. There can be no doubt about this, that the only people in Youghal who declined to submit to the dictation of the National League were the Protestants, and that the only persons boycotted in Youghal were Protestants. Then the hon. Baronet (Sir J. W. Pease) is in the habit of coming to the House annually to make a speech which appears to give him the greatest possible pleasure to deliver. He quotes whole rows of figures as to evictions, and leaves himself and the House in a state of confusion as to the deductions he wishes to draw from the statistics he cites. Everybody knows that, roughly, there have been 12,000 ejectment notices under the Act of 1887, though not more than 2,000 have resulted in actual eviction, while 9,000 are now in occupation of their farms either as caretakers or tenants without being disturbed by their landlords. Hon. Members opposite may laugh, but it is a fact. It would be better if they would set themselves to the task of showing that these official figures are not to be relied on, and do not support the contention of Her Majesty's Government. If they will look at the notices and the actual evictions for the last two years they will see that only one in nine of the ejectment notices has resulted in actual eviction, and hon. Members know as well as I do that in a vast number of the cases in which these ejectment notices have been served on the tenants they have been so served because the tenants would not pay rent until the landlords had adopted this quasi-hostile proceeding. The tenants when they received the notices were enabled to comply with the demands of the landlords—a thing they would have done without the notices of it had not been for the pressure of the Plan of Campaign. Before this debate closes I hope some hon. Member opposite will attempt to do what has not been attempted hitherto, namely, prove the allegations contained in the Amendment. Up to the present that has not been done, and we on this side have the pleasure of feeling that hon. Gentleman opposite have to reconcile their attitude with two great facts, that is to say the fact that Ireland is more prosperous than it was three years ago, and that crime in that country has greatly diminished. If it is any satisfaction to hon. Gentlemen opposite to say and to pretend to believe that they have had something to do with the diminution of crime, I am quite willing for them to lay that flattering unction to their souls, but as I believe that it has been the policy of Her Majesty's Government and their firm administration of the law which have laid the foundation for this prosperity, and have reduced crime, I shall oppose in the Lobby the Amendment before the House.

*(8.34.) MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Dublin, College Green): The hon. Member who last addressed the House made some remarks with regard to an observation from me that followed his references to the statistics of eviction. That observation was drawn from me by the fact that the hon. Member was treating, in a very delusive and uncandid manner, the figures he was putting before the House. The hon. Member gave certain figures as to eviction notices, but he said that in many

cases evictions did not follow upon the issue of those notices, as the tenants continued to be either tenants or caretakers. Well, Sir, I think that statement was a very illusory one indeed, and one calculated, if not intended, to mislead the intelligence of the House. We know what a tenant is, but what is a caretaker? He is a man who has no legal right whatever upon the holding, and he is liable to be turned out at a day's or a week's notice. The hon. Member made some quotations from publications in *United Ireland*, in 1884. Many things have happened in Ireland and England since 1884, and I think it is notorious throughout the world that certain political incidents that have occurred since 1884 have made a very serious and happy change indeed in the condition of Irish feeling. It is a game that should at this time of day be regarded as played out to attempt to quote against the Irish cause the writings of *United Ireland*, or any other Irish newspaper published in 1884 or in times still more distant. No one attempts to deny that things were said and done or attempted to be done in other days in Ireland which no man desires to repeat to-day. For the great and beneficent change that has occurred the whole Irish people are grateful to the wise statesman who brought it about. It is a stale trick now to quote the writings of *United Ireland* and other papers in the year 1884 or in preceding years. The publishers of those papers and the makers of speeches which were to the same effect have confessed that since that time a very great change indeed has come over their minds and feelings in regard to Irish political matters and to the relations between the peoples of England and Ireland. The hon. Member was pleased to assume—and I thought it an extraordinary evidence of his native modesty—that when 10,000 Irishmen in the City of Dublin applauded the sentiments uttered by a public man from a public platform, they were hypocrites and dishonest deceivers. He referred to himself as an Irishman, and spoke of "his people," and he regards it as consistent with his ideas of Irish patriotism to tell this House that 10,000 Irishmen, assembled in a magnificent meeting in the capital of the country, applauded a sentiment in which they did did not believe, and that they were simply trying to humbug the right hon. Gentleman and the people of England. I stigmatise that statement as unwarrantable and as discreditable to the hon. Member who made it. He asked whether the feelings of the proprietor of *United Ireland* had changed. I took the liberty of interjecting "Yes," and I had the authority of my hon. Friend for saying so. Then the hon. Member asked whether the Irish people had abandoned their national sentiments. I said: "No," Sir, they stand by national sentiments, national principles, and national feelings, and they believe these things can be reconciled, and will be reconciled, with loyalty to the Crown and the Government of the country. It has been said that the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) at the outset of this debate dealt with trivial matters, and that to some extent it was amusing, and did amuse the House. Well, Sir, if there was any liveliness in the opening speech of the debate, I think more serious matter has been abundantly supplied since, and will be abundantly supplied again later on. No doubt some of the circumstances related by the right hon. Member for Cork were calculated to produce laughter. In connection with the administration of the Coercion Act in Ireland there have occurred, and are occurring, day by day, a number of most ridiculous, grotesque, and comical incidents. It is impossible to read of such things without a smile. But there is a very serious side to these matters. It is no laughing matter for an industrious and honest man, earning his livelihood by the sweat of his brow and the labour of his hands, to be sent to gaol for two, three, or six months on a ridiculous charge of conspiracy or intimidation. It is no laughing matter for his wife and children to be deprived of their bread-winner, although the charges themselves may be ridiculous and nonsensical enough. It has been said that the hon. Member for Cork did not deal with the question of evictions. He did not attempt or intend to go over the whole of the Irish case. But what he left untouched has been abundantly dealt with by his colleagues. It is a serious matter enough that over 2,000 men, women, and children have been impri-

soned in Ireland under the right hon. Gentleman's administration by one device or another. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) criticises statements of this sort in the smallest and narrowest spirit. The slightest error of circumstance or date is treated by him and his supporters as if it were something that absolutely disproved our case. If we said a girl was sent to prison who was fair-haired and about 12 years of age, the right hon. Gentleman would rise and deny that anything of the sort ever occurred, if the fact was that the girl had black hair and that she was not 12, but 12½ or 13 years old. To fix the right hon. Gentleman, is like trying to hold an eel by the tail, but though eels are very slippery customers they are sometimes landed, and so has the right hon. Gentleman been. Let me give the House an instance of how our people are treated in Ireland. A young girl, named Cullinane, is confined in Limerick gaol undergoing a Coercion Act sentence because she refused to give bail on a charge of intimidation. I suppose she intimidated a party of military men, or that high and mighty, that potent and efficient body, the Royal Irish Constabulary. It astonishes me when I read so much about intimidation to learn what a cowardly set of people the Irish must be. Old women and young girls and little boys are said to intimidate, I know not what number of people, and are sent to gaol for these tremendous offences. But this is not all. For refusing to exercise with the other prisoners this girl has been subjected to the brutal ordeal of spending eight days in a cell of confinement, and the strain she has had thus to undergo has told severely upon her. This young girl refuses to exercise with the off-scourings of the streets. God bless her for doing so. But she gets eight days in confinement for her refusal. That is a specimen of the way in which he seeks to promote respect for what he calls law and order in Ireland. Then we have the case of the funeral. At one funeral the police went through the procession, entered the graveyard, and stood by the grave to take note of the few touching and sympathetic observations that were made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. People from a distance flocked into the town to pay honour to the memory of the deceased. They went with solemn and serious minds into the Catholic Church to witness the last rites of religion performed over the body, and when they came out they found a posse of the Royal Irish Constabulary armed, and with a proclamation in their hands declaring the assembly illegal. It has been denied that at another funeral, which formed the subject of a question to-night, the police accompanied the procession or entered the graveyard. It is said they only looked after the men who composed the procession. The presence of death, the solemn ceremonies of the Church, the sad rites paid over the remains of a deceased person are not too sacred for the presence of those interlopers. The wonder is how patiently the Irish people are able to bear with such indignities. How much further will this sort of thing be carried? The three great events of human life are birth, marriage, and death. The Irish constabulary already claim to supervise the arrangements at death. I suppose they will shortly insist upon being present at the marriage of Irish Nationalists, and that the next privilege they will claim will be to be present at the births. Some discussion has taken place in the House with reference to Press offences, and the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. G. Wyndham) has said that Irish editors have been prosecuted for comment upon their reports in more than one instance. Some time ago the Chief Secretary for Ireland at a public meeting said—

> "No man has been attacked in Ireland through my administration for the expression of any opinion whatever in any newspaper whatever from one end of Ireland to the other."

I grant that these words were used before the recent prosecutions for alleged comment upon the reports published in Irish Nationalist newspapers, but if no comments had been published up to the time at which the Chief Secretary used those words there was no merit or credit due to him for not prosecuting any editors for comment. I heard some, if not all, of the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I am familiar with the speeches of that hon. Member, and know something of the work in which he is pleased to engage. I consider there is not a more mischievous influence at work in Irish affairs than the influence

of the hon. Member. It is not merely that he has prolonged and embittered the strife between landlords and tenants in Ireland, it is not merely that he is largely responsible for the getting up of syndicates or combinations to resist the just demands of Irish tenants, but he has done all that lies in his power to infuse into the struggle, already sufficiently sad and serious, the additional element of religious bitterness and religious bigotry. In the speech he delivered last night he did not fail in that evil department of his exertions. The hon. Gentleman endeavoured to make out that the boycotting of the Youghal shopkeepers amounted to religious persecution. Nothing more unwarranted or more shameful has been said since the commencement of this debate. Religious feeling had nothing to do with the action of the Nationalists in Youghal. It may be that the shopkeepers boycotted were Protestants, but it was not because of their Protestantism that they were boycotted. If Catholics had taken the same course they would have had just the same treatment—dealt out to them possibly in a more severe form. In one of his speeches the hon. Gentleman said—

"The pivot on which Protestantism turns is the right of private judgment. The Protestants of Youghal exercised their discretion whether they would close their shops or not."

Have the Youghal Catholics no right of private judgment? The Protestant shopkeepers had a perfectly legal right to act as they did, but if they had shown a little more feeling, if they had displayed a little more sympathy with the feelings of their fellow townsmen, they would not have been treated as they were. But they chose to act as they did, and why should not the people of Youghal exercise their private judgment and deal with whom they please? But why found a charge of bigotry against the Youghal Catholics on those facts? Remember these very suggestions are in themselves evidence that no bigotry existed, because they show that the Catholics have in the past been in the habit of dealing with Protestants; that they have helped them to earn a livelihood and to make fortunes. Undoubtedly religious bigotry had nothing whatever to do with these proceedings. But if I wanted a striking illustration of the practice of boycotting people for conscience I might look to the other side of the House. On the Massereene estate, after the clearing off of the Catholic tenants whose forefathers had been on the land for generations, advertisements were inserted in the public papers that for the vacant farms only Protestants need apply. Is not that boycotting; is not that persecution for conscience sake? Surely it was a daring and shameless experiment on the patience of the tenantry of this district? What would happen in the North of Ireland if a Catholic proprietor, having cleared off a number of Protestant tenants, published advertisements that only Catholics need apply? I have a very shrewd notion of what would happen to the Catholic tenants who might go into such farms. The advertisement ran in these words:—

"Important to Protestants and their sons.—There are several vacant farms to let in the counties of Louth and Meath"

(these are very largely Catholic counties),

"close to the important town of Drogheda. None but Protestants need apply."

["Hear, hear!"] This is the genuine article. Well, it befits hon. Members opposite that taunt us with bigotry and persecution. I have, however, a worse case even than that. An ex-Member of this House and a gentleman of title made a speech some time since, in which he said:—

"It is not that I object to a Roman Catholic as a neighbour or a friend, but it is to the Roman Catholics as a body, because when a body of men deliver themselves over into the hands of one man, the priest, and show themselves to be so mean-spirited or weak, in my opinion they ought not to have power in this or any other country. For this reason, and this reason alone, do I preach this crusade against Roman Catholics, and it is for you to do a great deal to strengthen our hands. I say to you farmers, many of whom I see around me, employ more Protestants, and do not employ Roman Catholics. As Roman Catholics must live, they may go elsewhere to live, and joy be with them. If you do not feed them, they will have to be fed in some other country. They will have to leave the County of Fermanagh, and that is all we wish."

[Mr. W. JOHNSTON: Name.] Oh, yes; I will give you the name, date, and place. This speech was delivered at Florence-court on January 14, 1886, by Viscount Cole, ex-M.P. for Fermanagh. I quote it from the *Irish Times*. In thus

preaching a clearing of the Roman Catholics out of the county Fermanagh, Viscount Cole was, however, only acting in accordance with the doings of his political ancestors. Catholics have been hunted out of Fermanagh and out of other places in the North of Ireland for no offence whatever except that of being Catholics. Proof of that may be obtained in the Library of this House. I remember that in one case a poor old man thus treated actually died in the snow on the road-side. Yet Viscount Cole and his friends are always talking of law and order, and are strong in their condemnation of anything that has the semblance of boycotting or of bigotry. This spirit of religious intolerance has its grotesque as well as its serious aspects. A short time ago an advertisement appeared in a North of Ireland paper, at the instance of a rev. gentleman, for a boy to do general work, and also for a resident labourer, and, after stating the wages, added, "Grazing for a goat or two. Both Protestants." Even the goats apparently must be of the Protestant faith as well as the tenant. Reference has been made more than once to-night to the attack made by our Grand Inquisitor, the Member for South Tyrone, on the Protestantism of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. I desire to carry the matter a little further. The hon. Member for South Tyrone speaking at Cookstown on January 19 last, said Mr. Parnell spoke as an Irish Protestant, but he (Mr. Russell) would like to know of what church he is a member, and for what religious organisation he had done a hand's turn during the last 10 years. He also added that Mr. Bradlaugh could set up just as good a claim to speak for Protestantism. Now, these remarks have been rightly stigmatised as an unworthy and shameful invasion of the private affairs of another man. But the Great Inquisitor has already received a most effective answer from an authoritative source, for Mr. Manning, the secretary of the select vestry of the parish of Rathdrum, in the county Wicklow, wrote to the *Irish Times*, stating—

"That ever since the Distablishment of the Irish Church Mr. Parnell has been one of the largest contributors to the sustenation fund of the parish of Rathdrum, in which his residence, Avondale, is situated. He is also a liberal subscriber to the funds of our parochial school, of which the rector of the parish is the patron, and has always evinced his readiness to aid any object brought under his notice for the benefit of the parish."

Can the hon Member for South Tyrone show as good a record? I do not care whether he does or not; I have nothing to say as to his religious opinions, but I ask this House is not this a shameful and scandalous work in which the hon. Member has indulged? He has repeated these disgraceful insinuations more than once, but I have yet to learn that he has had the decency to make any apology for his allegations, neither has he withdrawn them. Now, I pass to a speech recently delivered by the hon. Member for South Belfast as an instance of the inconsistency of the hon. Gentleman and his friends. The hon. Member recently paid a high tribute to the discretion and conduct of the Irish Constabulary, and expressed his horror of any one who could be so wicked as to condemn them. He denied that it could be proved that any member of that body had taken deliberate aim at any one with intent to kill. Yet it was not so long ago that the hon. Member's own political friends and associates in Belfast were calling the Irish Constabulary "Morley's murderers," and one of his colleagues in the representation of Belfast dubbed them as "liveried assassins." Is he aware that the Orange and Tory newspapers denounced the Royal Irish Constabulary as having deliberately potted and shot down men, women, and children in the streets of Belfast. If he has forgotten that many others have not. When an hon. Member for Belfast was charged in this House with having called the Irish Constabulary liveried assassins, and was invited to apologise for, and to withdraw the expression, he refused to do either thing. In Belfast, then, these men were described as liveried assassins and as cowards, and as everything base and bad, but as soon as they took to breaking the heads of Plan of Campaigners, and rubbish of that sort, they became a loyal, brave, glorious and distinguished force, meriting the approbation and gratitude of the British nation. Now, having made these remarks, I wish to charge the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary not only with acting wantonly

and cruelly during these troublous times, but also with being guilty of deliberate provocation and with endeavouring to get up and make crime for the purpose of prosecution. And here again I say I shall be able to substantiate my statement, and to give proofs whenever they may be demanded. Take, for instance, the account of what occurred at the Miltown Malbay trials. Important trials were taking place in that town, and the people were likely to be in a state of excitement. Large crowds were expected, and there were apprehensions of scenes of turbulence and disorder. The priest of the town took the wise, and, as I think, prudent course of advising shopkeepers to close their establishments during the day so that it might be a day of quiet; that business being stopped the streets might be deserted. I think under the circumstances this was advice to be commended. But what did the authorities do? They brought in a large force of police and got a number of the men to go about to all the public-houses asking for whiskey. With this object they visited 26 public-houses, and I leave it to the House to imagine what would have been the condition of these men had their wishes been gratified. Twenty-six glasses of whiskey per man is rather too large a supply even for the stalwart members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. It is a fact that the publicans were prosecuted for refusal to supply the drink. I have the details in hand, but the House is, doubtless, familiar with them, and I will not press them. I will only say that the way in which the Royal Irish Constabulary are employed in Ireland, the way in which they are encouraged to take plenty of whiskey, and exercise their strength freely on the heads of unoffending people guilty of no turbulence, disorder, or illegality, these things have created among the men an amount of demoralisation, I am sorry to see. Take one instance of the demoralisation of this physically fine body of men. At eviction scenes in the North of Ireland, after being engaged in the levelling of homesteads, such as many of them must have been brought up in, the police, marching about the country from one house to another, beguiled the way by singing songs. It struck me as an evidence of the change that has been wrought in the character of the men; that after witnessing these scenes in which they were called upon to take such an ignoble part, they had the heart directly afterwards to join in merry choruses. Provocations to crime do not stop here. I have heard of emergency men being sent to attend mass in chapels for the purpose of provoking the rest of the congregation to rise and leave the place of worship, and we know that men have been sent to prison for leaving a chapel on the entrance of a person obnoxious to the people of the district. Time was when it was as much as a man's life was worth to be seen attending mass, but now, under our present administration, it is a crime to leave a chapel before the celebration of mass is over. What is the view of the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) on this state of things? I should think he would rather approve of the worshippers leaving the building, and the sooner the better. I am sorry that another illustrious representative of the loyal minority is not now in his place, he who complained of the triviality and comicality of the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) endeavours to amuse the House, and rarely fails to excite a good deal of boisterous merriment. He seems to have an ambition to be regarded as the "*Lion Comique*" of the Tory benches. But, though his speeches excite merriment, and sometimes indignation in other parts of the House, they never seem to carry much weight in the House of Commons, or in the country. Therefore I pass from this gentleman to say a word or two in reference to the manner in which the people in this country have behaved during the somewhat trying time, a very trying time for us and to some extent for the people of England also, of the past four or five years. During that time the Irish Members and the Irish cause were industriously calumniated and most shamefully defamed, and if the people of England had given ear to one tenth of the allegations made against us they would have had very little sympathy with the Irish people or the Irish

cause, and would have given very little welcome in their towns to representatives from Ireland. But to their honour be it spoken, and I desire to testify so much from the floor of the House of Commons, the conduct of the masses of the English people redounds to their eternal honour and to their everlasting credit. They have shown a free and open mind; they have shown more than that, an inclination to sympathise with the people they believe to be oppressed and the cause they believe to be traduced, defamed, and calumniated. As one Irish Member I have had experience of the sympathy, fairness, love of justice, and fair play on the part of the English people, and I tender my hearty thanks for it, and I believe I may say the same for the great mass of my fellow-countrymen, not only in their own old land but for the large majority of their race all over the world.

(9.40.) MR. W. MORRISON (York, West Riding, Skipton): Time is pressing, and I only just rise to meet some of the remarks made by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool in reference to the Ponsonby estate, a subject which has been so much dealt with in this debate. That hon. Member stated frankly that he was speaking from information supplied to him, he having no personal knowledge, and that is my position too. He asked for a statement as to whether there had been any increase in rents or not. Perhaps the House will allow me to give a very few figures from which the hon. Member will see how the matter stands. In 1872, Mr. Ponsonby had his estate re-valued by a competent valuer, who advised him to raise the rents to the extents of £517. That was the figure taken by the hon. Member as the amount of the raising of the rent. The whole of the amount put upon 59 farms was only £172; that is the actual amount of the increase. Then, on the other hand, Mr. Ponsonby undertook to pay half the county cess, which he was under no legal obligation to do. In that year this amounted to £134 and in subsequent years to a great deal more; absolutely wiping out the whole of the advances made in rent. So that in point of fact there has been no actual increase of the rent of the estate. Now the hon. Member endeavoured to make a point of Mr. Ponsonby having forced 32 years leases instead of 31 years leases on his tenantry. I have refreshed my memory by looking up the Acts of 1870 and 1881, and I find there is no distinction between 31 years leases and 32 years leases in either of these Acts. All through his speech the hon. Member omitted to point out that Mr. Ponsonby had spent out of his own resources, or by borrowing from the Public Works Loans Commissioners, many thousands of pounds upon the estate. Therefore all the hon. Member's arguments about the unfairness of the rents, and what it would have been fair to ask the tenants to give, have been vitiated by the leaving out of this very material circumstance. The hon. Member quoted a number of cases, of which I shall take one, that of the widow Maloney. He said that Mr. Ponsonby forced a lease upon this lady. So far is that from being the case that Mr. Ponsonby always objected to granting leases, and he has informed me himself that he only granted a lease in deference to strong pressure, and in favour of tenants who applied to him for it. Now, Mrs. Maloney's rent was £58 14s. 2d. There is a letter from Mr. O'Farrell, who was then agent for Mr. Ponsonby, dated September 17, 1876, in which he says—

"I have had more than one interview with Mrs. Tom Maloney. She is willing to pay £65 for a lease, but refuses the payment of an advance in the rent without a lease."

So it appears that she was willing to pay an increased rental for the advantage of having a lease. At the same time as Mr. Ponsonby was paying the county cess there was practically no increase at all. The hon. Member asked why Mr. Ponsonby did not accept the arbitration of the Tory Recorder of Cork? I think it would have been fairer to the House of Commons if they had been told that all through this unfortunate dispute between Mr. Ponsonby and his tenants, Mr. Ponsonby always urged the tenants to have the matter settled by the Tory Recorder of Cork, because that gentleman happens to be a County Court Judge, and as such is the official proposed by Parliament to fix fair rents. It is very evident that it is not expedient that a person appointed to judge cases such as this should act as arbitrator, because as

arbitrator he would have no power to compel the attendance of witnesses or to take evidence on oath. The hon. Member made a point also about the large amount of costs incurred; he mentioned, I think, the costs in 90 cases. But whose fault was that? I imagine he was alluding to the cases tried at the Wexford Assizes. In these cases, first of all it was maintained in defence that Mr. Ponsonby was not the owner of the estate, when it was a notorious fact that he was; secondly, it was urged that these tenants did not owe any rent at all, while it was notorious that they were three or four years in arrear. This was the defence set up by every one of the defendants, and that could have been only with the object of increasing the solicitors' bill at the expense of Mr. Ponsonby. I will not deal with any other point raised by the hon. Member except to mention an abstract of certain correspondence with Canon Keller to which he made a reference, reading from a certain pamphlet. It is a singular fact that the hon. Member did not turn over to the following page, where he would have found a complete answer to his statement. On page 15 he will find a letter, the original of which I am informed can be produced, in which Mr. Brunker stated that Canon Keller had raised the question of Government charges, and that he did not give way on the point. This is confirmed by a letter written to Canon Keller by Mr. Brunker, on 6th July, 1889, in which, referring to the interview on the 18th January, the date mentioned by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, he says that Canon Keller raised the question of charges, but he replied that he looked upon these as intended to remain an incident of holdings until he was otherwise instructed. This confirms the statement made more than once by the hon. Member for South Hunts that the difference between Mr. Brunker and Canon Keller was not £5,000, but considerably over £20,000. I do not wish to detain the House beyond making this statement.

(9.50.) MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., North): I do not think it will be necessary for me to trouble the House at much length upon questions relating to the Ponsonby estate, but I am not surprised when a gentleman who has invested some thousands of pounds in the attempt to exterminate the Ponsonby tenants, feels called upon to defend his action in some way or other. After the speech of my hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) it is unnecessary for me to make more than a remark or two. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has repeated the statements which have before been made in this House, and I will not weary the House by repeating the lengthened reply. He said the tenants owed three or four years rent. Nothing of the kind. They no doubt would have owed that amount if they had been tenants all the time, but they had been out of their holdings for at least two or three years. They were under process of eviction. The hon. Member has talked about the expenditure upon the estate; but after his study of the question it would be surprising if he did not know that this expenditure was incurred upon Mr. Ponsonby's own house and grounds. Further than that, on the £5,000 expended, after being obtained from the Board of Works, the tenants had to pay interest. The hon Member by his speech endeavoured to impose upon the House, as he imposed upon the gullibility of the electors of the Skipton Division, who returned him despite his broken pledges. He attempted to contradict my hon. Friend with his few figures, but it is a mere pretence; he has not done so in fact. Two points stated by my hon Friend the Member for North-East Cork have never been answered. First that the agent of Mr. Ponsonby has declared in a private letter, never intended to be made public, that these rents were grossly unjust. Mr. H. H. Townsend, in a letter to Mr. Giles, the secretary to the Land Corporation, said from what he had seen of the estate it was his belief that the Land Courts would reduce the rents very heavily. He expressed his belief that the reductions would be 30 per cent. The existing rents, he said, might have been very well 15 or 20 years ago, but were far above present value. A good deal of the land, he said, rented at 20 shillings, would, before the Land Court, be reduced to 12 or 13 shillings. This, the agent said, was the opinion of Mr. Barter, the bailiff. Mr. Townsend went on to

advise that Mr. Smith-Barry and the Syndicate should make it public as soon as possible that they were only fighting the way in which the tenants were trying to get the rents cut down and not to dispute the justice of the claim for reduction. In the face of this testimony what are all the small points about the expenditure of Mr. Ponsonby and this or that reduction made in this or that year? Here we have the plain statement of the agent that the rents are grossly unjust, and he is supported by the opinion of Mr. Barter, who knows more about the value of the land than any other man in the country, and I certainly should take his opinion in preference to that of the hon. Member for South Hunts on this matter. The next fact is this, that the tenants are willing and have been from the beginning to submit the whole matter to arbitration. What answer is there to that? What is this arbitration? The landlord appoints one man, the tenants another, and these two agree upon a third. There can be no fairer tribunal, and I say the man who refuses under any pretext to submit his claim to such a tribunal stamps his claim with dishonesty. The hon. Member for South Hunts stated last night that the reason why Mr. Ponsonby declined arbitration was because the offer of the tenants was coupled with conditions which no landlord could accept without humiliation. I assert that that statement is untrue in fact, because it has been declared by Canon Keller, who was the authorised exponent of the tenants' views, that the offer of arbitration was made without any conditions at all, and the refusal of Mr. Ponsonby to accept that offer stamps the case of the hon. Member for South Hunts with the infamy that belongs to it. Last night that hon. Member made an attack upon the Catholic clergy of Ireland, and alluded to the Christian morality they were preaching. The Catholic clergy do not need a testimonial from me, and their character and reputation remove them far above reproach from the hon. Member. From whom did the attack come? It came from the champion of the landlords of Ireland. Who is the gentleman who dares to cast aspersions on the high character of the Irish Catholic clergy? Is it a man who is himself above reproach? The hon. Member has been frequently described, I am sorry to say, as a good landlord. But I deny his claim to that title, and I assert that the management of his estate has been marked by almost as much infamy as that of any other estate in Ireland. I will read to the House some narratives which I think will cast a new light on the character of Mr. Smith-Barry as an Irish landlord. He had at one time a tenant named John England, and we are told in the pamphlet I hold in my hand that—

"The late John England bought the interest of a house and about three acres of land adjoining the workhouse, about the year 1853 or 1854, for £67 from James Kinnane. He rented it at £12 or £13 a year. Mr. England expended £300 in building new houses and repairing the old one; he also put a great quantity of the best manure on the land yearly, thus doubling in a short time the value of the land. He was put out by Mr. Cust without any reason whatever, except that he presumed to ask the English agent of Mr. Smith-Barry (Mr. Cust) for a 21 years' lease. The 'voracious' agent allowed him no compensation except £30, which was little more than he (Mr. England) gave to the tenant Kinnane for his goodwill of the place, so that when the agent got it up he was enabled to charge £5 per acre for the land. There are splendid stone built houses, for which he (Mr. Smith-Barry) now receives £48 per year because of the outlay of Mr. England's money and improvements thereby. John England was put out against his will."

This agent is said at one time to have worn a coat of mail and to have been under police protection. Again—

"Miss Tobin's father bought the interest in a building ground in Nelson Street, Tipperary, and built a house thereon. He got a lease of lives, which lease he never perfected regarding the naming of lives. Mr. Cust, taking advantage of the flaw, or rather of Mr. Tobin's implicit confidence in his landlord, gave Miss Tobin notice to quit. She got a lease of 10 years, so as to bring it to fall due about the time of Mr. Smith-Barry's coming of age. On the expiration of said lease, she again received notice to quit and had to do so, Mr. Cust saying that he had positive instructions to have no middleman on the estate. She offered any amount he wished to charge, she being an orphan, and the house being the only property she had. He heartlessly refused, and put out Miss Tobin, she having no father or relative to protect her. This is a most cruel case. He established Smith, of Nelson Street, and Mr. Moloney, of Church Street, middlemen."

Here is another case:—

"Widow Elegot had a small farm of land. She had two daughters, and entered into

negotiations to get one of them married, and was giving £150 fortune, so as to give up her farm to her son-in-law, she to live with him for the remainder of her life. The £150 was to portion off the other daughter. Mr. Cust would not allow her to get her daughter married, as it was against the rules. She had to give up her farm and emigrate in her old age, having no other alternative, with her two daughters."

This is the model landlord! But I will give another case, the case of John Fahy—

"A relative of John Fahy's offered to lodge six years' rent—£100—in Bank to Mr. Cust's credit, and give him authority to draw each year's rent at any time he wished if he would allow Fahy to remain on the farm; also if any arrears were due he would pay them—there were none due. He was evicted and again turned out of the house he held on the Green, Tipperary, and died of a broken heart."

This again is the work of the model landlord, who, after evicting this man, levelled his house to the ground just as is now being done on the estate of Mr. Ponsonby. Here is another case—

"Darby Ryan, of Ballinilard, was served with notice to quit (same as Mrs. Elegot) for getting his daughter married. It was not put in force because the Ballycohey affair happened the same time. There were some policemen and a landlord shot on the occasion of the Ballycohey affair, which was some 10 years before the Land League was formed. This no doubt had the effect of preventing Darby Ryan, and probably many other tenants, from being thrown out on the roadside for similarly grave offences. John Peter held 21 acres of the lands of Cluen. During 40 years he paid the middleman a fine for his interest to get under the head landlord. He held it during the bad years, and paid £50 and £3 per acre when it was worth very little. When he did come under the head landlord, Mr. Smith-Barry, instead of a reduction of the rent he got an eviction, and was told by Cust that no matter what price he paid he would not be allowed to keep the land. Himself and 10 children were evicted; also his uncle and seven children. They had all to emigrate."

I should not be at all surprised if it were shown that all the members of that family had become members of the Clan-na-Gael Association, and also subscribers to the funds of the Land League in memory of the deeds done in the name of Mr. Smith-Barry, the model landlord—a gentleman who thinks he is entitled to interfere in other people's disputes with their tenantry, and to attempt the extermination of the people of a whole country side. During all this exposure I observe that the hon. Member has not made a single attempt to controvert either of the statements I have read. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Down (Colonel Waring) is anxious to interrupt. I would recommend the hon. Member to reserve himself for his own defence. It is true he has not got much landed property nor many tenants, but we are inquiring into the management of his estate, and he may require all his eloquence in his own behalf when the time comes to investigate his case, which may not be a very long way off. I was saying that this hon. Member (Mr. Smith-Barry) who is entitled "a Model Landlord," is one who thinks he has a right to exterminate his tenantry. It did not at all surprise me to find Mr. Smith-Barry in alliance with Mr. Ponsonby, or to see Mr. Smith-Barry and the Cork landlords uniting together, on the principle that birds of a feather flock together. Those gentlemen, however, made a tremendous and fatal mistake. They thought they could rely on Mr. Bullock, who, in a letter to the *Times*, stated that all that was wanted for the conquest of Ireland was £40,000. They also relied on the assurance of the Chief Secretary that coercion would prove the death knell of the National League in Ireland. They may likewise have given credence to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), who said the mission of Mr. John Dillon to Australia would not produce the amount of his hotel bills. But I would inform hon. Members that that mission has already produced £35,000 in addition to the £40,000 we have collected under the guns of the Chief Secretary during the last six months. The House may also be interested in knowing that the Cork Defence Union is bankrupt at the present moment. They at one time boasted that they were paying 40 per cent. dividend, and a journalist in Yorkshire, who sympathises with us, wrote to me and asked if this were true. I could only reply that I had not seen the books or accounts, which had not been produced, and I asked him to wait. I now find that Mr. Patrick Beattie, Secretary of the Cork Defence Union, has written a letter reminding Mr. Smith-Barry and his colleagues that they are not a self-

supporting institution, and that subscriptions are wanted all round. Since then they have not fared very well. I thought it possible they might have derived something from the visit of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I had no doubt they hoped they would get some of his surplus, but the right hon. Gentleman has kept a tight hold on the surplus, at least as far as the Irish landlords are concerned. I do not know whether he intends to continue that hold or not. The House will pardon the digression, if I record one incident of the visit of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Ireland, when he was the guest of Mr. Villiers Stuart, in the neighbourhood of Lismore. It is an illustration of the right of public meeting as it exists in Ireland at the present moment. On the very night of the right hon. Gentleman's arrival, someone acting on his behalf in Dublin, sent a policeman to break up a public meeting held in the town of Lismore, not for the purpose of advancing the National League, but for the purpose of thanking the electors of Elgin and Nairn, and Bucks and Peterboro' for the vote they had given for Ireland. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in his speech last night, contrasted the Nationalist principles of Ireland to-day with the Nationalist principles proposed by John Mitchell. The past is always praised by these gentlemen. But Mitchell must be first dead and buried before you praise him. You can now speak of John Mitchell's chivalry, but, when he was alive, you put him in a felon's cell; you sent him to 10 years' penal servitude; you never pardoned him; he died a felon. He was returned for the County of Tipperary by 3,500 against 500; you rejected his claim to sit in this House, and you seated a Member of the Loyal Minority, who had 500 votes, on the ground that John Mitchell was a felon. Then, Sir, the hon. Member for South Tyrone quoted a passage from a patriotic writer, but I am afraid the hon. Member has not read all the author's works, but for his benefit I will quote a few lines he wrote, though I think they will hardly be to the taste of the hon. Member. The words embody a good deal of the philosophy of the Irish question—

"O God of Heaven, I cried, send Thy Spirit down on those lords, so cruel and proud, and soften their hearts and relax their frown, or else, O God, I cried, vouchsafe Thy strength to the peasants to drive them for ever from out the land."

The hon. Member for South Tyrone made a good deal of the fact that out of 10,000 notices of eviction there had only been 2,000 actual evictions. But when a man gets an eviction notice he ceases to be a tenant; he has not a penny of property in the holding; he cannot serve a notice for the fixing of a fair rent; and if he sows a crop he can be prosecuted by the right hon. Gentleman, as many have been during the last three or four years. The reason why these 10,000 notices have not been carried into effect is because the Plan of Campaign has struck terror into the hearts of the exterminating landlords and their allies on the Treasury Bench. It is quite enough at present to have evictions on the Ponsonby and Clanricarde estates and other Plan of Campaign estates; but we should soon have an exterminating campaign all over Ireland if these tenants on the Clanricarde and Ponsonby estates could be evicted; and the 10,000 eviction notices, but for the Plan of Campaign, would ere long be transformed into a physical fact. I wonder that the right hon. Member for South Tyrone did not see that he was falsifying every single statement in the Queen's Speech regarding the contentment and the tranquillity of Ireland. He described the condition of Tipperary as that of a town "through which had passed an avenging enemy." He said we had "assassinated freedom of speech." He said that boycotting at the present moment was worse than the boycotting of old, and worse than the crime and murder of old. He stated what must have been gall and wormwood to the Chief Secretary, that the National League, instead of being a thing of the past, was an organisation of vast resources. The fact is we have only, as it seems to me, to rest our case on the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, without having to say another word. Now, Sir, I have heard, not only from the other side, but, with astonishment, from Members of the Front Opposition Bench, that there is a vast improvement in the state of Ireland. Sir, I challenge the

statement that there is any improvement whatever. There has been a little commercial prosperity, and Ireland has shared in it. We are not isolated; we are in the highway of civilisation; we are attached to Great Britain. [*Cheers from Ministerial Benches.*] You seem to object to a phrase which means an alliance between the two countries. I always observe that you cheer the sentiment, but seem to hate the idea of union. You not only do not want it, but you do not like it. Those who call you Separatists speak the truth. But, Sir, I deny altogether that there is any improvement in the state of Ireland. I wonder some Members of the Front Opposition Bench, with all their ability, have not discovered before now that the figures produced with regard to the crime of boycotting are simply fraudulent and humbugging from top to bottom. I base my contention upon the words of a no less infallible personage than the present Chief Secretary. On the 9th May, 1889, when he wanted to make an argument for Coercion, the right hon. Gentleman commented on the misleading character of these Returns and showed how impossible it was to come at the truth in regard to agrarian crime. The right hon. Gentleman gave as instances the Curtin case, the two girls attacked in their father's house, and the girls shot in the Kanturk district, which were not returned as agrarian crimes. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman said that for several years the meshes through which crimes had to pass before they were admitted into the agrarian list had been constantly narrowing. I say that the process which was gone through for six years preceding 1887 in reference to the returns of crime, is going on at the present moment. There were four murder cases at the last assizes in Connaught, and three at the Tullamore Assizes, and not a single one of them figures in the agrarian returns. The figures that are given in support of the contention that crime has decreased are simply fraudulent from top to bottom, and are made to order for the purpose of deceiving the House of Commons and the constituencies. But the figures regarding boycotting are more fraudulent still. It was said in 1887 that 4,000 persons were boycotted, but not a name was given. The reason given for withholding the names was the most ridiculous one in the world, namely, that if the names were given everbody would know who they were. As if a person could be boycotted without everybody knowing. The truth is that boycotting was not so rampant then as it was represented to be. It is said that there are only 150 boycotted persons in all Ireland at this moment. Why, there are 150 in the County of Cork alone, and there are 250 in Tipperary. It is stated in the Returns that in 1888 there were three boycotted persons in Ireland, and that last year there were only two. How have the three been reduced to two? There was a person named Maguire, who was postmaster of Awards. He committed an offence against the law for which he was fined £50 or sentenced to two months' imprisonment. He went away to Australia so as to escape both the fine and imprisonment. In 1887, after the Coercion Act had passed, he thought he saw his deliverer in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He returned from Australia, and the first thing he did was to grab a farm. I am glad to say he was boycotted. I helped to boycott him myself, and I would do the same again to-morrow. Well, Sir, he has been boycotted out of the country, and therefore you have two persons boycotted out of three in the county of Dublin at the present moment. This case explains a great deal of the diminution of boycotting, if there be any diminution, which I greatly doubt. This man was protected by seven policemen. There was a warrant issued for his arrest. The police would not execute it. They exercised what is called a dispensing power, and it was not until I had asked two or three questions in the House that the police at last executed the law and put the man into gaol. In face of facts like this, I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir H. James) who will probably follow me, what he has to say as to people being bound to respect the law. When one Party is favoured by the Crown and the executive authority in defiance of the Law and Constitution, it is enough to throw

contempt on all your proceedings. A good deal of the boycotting that has taken place has been condemned. Whenever it is accompanied with violence I condemn it. Whenever it is confined to exclusive dealing, however, I say it is thoroughly justifiable. The case of the man Phillips, in Tipperary, who is boycotted because he will not join his brother tenants on the estate of the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry) has been referred to. Well, he has a perfect right to refuse to join them, but his neighbours have a perfect right to their opinion also. They have a right to say, "That man is an enemy to the common weal and we will boycott him." As long as they merely leave that man severely alone they are within the lines of law and within the lines of morality. With regard to the proclamations, they have been withdrawn and reimposed to such an extent that nobody in Ireland knows at this moment which county is proclaimed and which is not. It appears that the 2nd clause of the Crimes Act has been withdrawn as far as the proclamation of the County of Kildare is concerned. But the very same day witnessed a proclamation imposing the 1st clause on Kildare. The meaning is this. The 2nd clause has failed in Kildare. The authorities were met at the very beginning with the difficulty of finding informers, and the next thing they do is to import the Star Chamber into Kildare in order to manufacture informers if they possibly can. I shall be surprised if they succeed any more under the 1st clause than they have done under the second, as there is not a man in Ireland who will give evidence now before the Star Chamber. There has been complete silence this Session with regard to the question of derelict farms. A gentleman recently visited the Coolgreany estate, and he relates that in the case of a number of evicted farms which had been re-occupied, between £4,000 and £5,000 had been advanced to the solvent tenants at 3 per cent. interest. The tenants of the farms in Captain Hamilton's list you pretend to be real tenants, but they are bogus ones and will remain so to the end of the chapter. There is only one other matter to which I would call attention, and that seems to me conclusive on this question. A short time ago the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland gave some evidence on the question which cannot be questioned. Speaking in Durham he made a most significant statement—though I have not heard it commented on by any Member of the Government or any Member of their Party. After his three years' experience in Ireland he stated that "they could never govern Ireland except by a Coercion Act." That is tantamount to saying that you may have tranquillity in Ireland by shooting the people down, you may have tranquillity by brutal coercion, but you will never have real and permanent tranquillity in Ireland under any system but that of Home Rule. The right hon. Gentleman has by his police murdered 14 persons during the last three years; he has evicted 12,000 persons during the last two years, and he has injured in collisions with the police hundreds of persons. He has put 5,000 people in prison; and all this policy has, I maintain, earned for his administration not fame but infamy.

*(10.40.) SIR H. JAMES (Bury): Whatever difference of opinion may exist upon the terms of this particular Amendment, I think the House will feel that there are some matters connected with the commencement of this debate which afford to us a promise we have long desired to see fulfilled. I gathered much hope from the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, delivered on Wednesday last. If in that speech my right hon. Friend did not display all the highest qualities of debate—if he did not draw on his vast store of genius high or lore profound, he certainly charmed the House with a wit that loved to play, not wound. I judge also from the tone of his speech that my right hon. Friend is likely to encourage his supporters to devote themselves to the practical work of legislation during the coming Session. Sir, I hope it is not presumption in me to say that I think every Member of this House heard with unmixed pleasure the speech to which I have referred. It is

to be hoped that the right hon. Gentleman's power will prove so great that it will induce those whom my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Fife calls the relics of the Party to allow legislation to proceed. But there is another subject for congratulation, and that is to be found in the terms of the Amendment against which some of us are now about to vote. It marks an era in the history of political contests in connection with Ireland, when in an Amendment we find the authorised leader of the Irish Party announcing that tranquillity has long continued in Ireland. There is one speech which has been made in the course of the debate which I listened to with hope, but which, I admit, caused me disappointment when it was concluded. That was the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan). I am not about to enter into any dispute with him as to his change of opinion. It is not my mode and manner to do so, but my right hon. Friend has something to answer for, though he has made no reply to the call made upon him. He has occupied a conspicuous position in public affairs of late years, and perhaps he does not know fully the extent to which he has fashioned men's thoughts, and the extent to which he has prompted their action, There were some words uttered by him—they were not uttered lightly, or when he, who had been responsible for the Government of Ireland, was in a period of fluctuation, but when matters had settled down pretty much into the position they now occupy. It was in the early spring of 1887 when, with all the knowledge he had obtained in Ireland, he condemned the Government for having allowed the power of the mob to be supreme over that of the Government, and announced that the game of law and order was up. There were many who then asked, "What does this mean?" To many it seemed that if it were true that the game of law and order was up, the game of this country was up too. What an admission it would have been for a Government to have made or to have acquiesced in! What an example it would have been to the representatives of the Queen, who, in distant lands, far from central support, are endeavouring to maintain law and order! To have told the people, here in the centre of the Queen's authority, backed and supported as we are by all the resources of the Empire, that the Government were willing to admit the truth of this assertion of my right hon. Friend, and to allow the power of law and order to pass into the hands of the mob. It would have been an act of infamous shame and disgrace to have made that admission. It would have been nothing short of a disaster to this country, worse than if we had been defeated by an enemy abroad, or if rebels in the open field at home had been victorious. It would have been a willing acquiescence in shame; that is why it would have been worse. I ask the House to mark that there is dissent from one quarter. There are Members who would wish her Majesty's Government to admit that the game of law and order is up, and make no endeavours to maintain it. Some of us, however, believed that some course should be taken to repel the statement of my right hon. Friend, when, in 1887, we gave our support to the Government, in order to afford them the opportunity of showing that they did not acquiesce in the statement that the game of law and order was up, and that they had not abandoned every attempt to fulfil their duty. We see now our vindication in words of no uncertain sound, and not in statements that can be contradicted. We accept the words of the hon. Member for Cork, and call him now as a certain witness to the fact that the tranquillity of which there was no trace to be found by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division in the spring of 1887 is at last restored. We find also the happy admission that the game of law and order is not up. What I miss from the speech of my right hon. Friend is the statement which he had to make in respect to that admission. Does he not himself triumph in the fact that the state of things he deplored and for the existence of which he condemned the Government on the 7th of March, 1887, has passed away? My right hon. Friend is about to vote for the Amendment asserting that tranquillity has been long continued in Ireland. Let him now admit that something

has happened which has taken away that shame from the country—something which we can trace to legislation, and not to other causes, as alleged by hon. Members below the Gangway. Those hon. Members attribute the tranquillity to other causes, but, unfortunately, inexorable facts are against them. They say the cause of the now existing tranquillity is what is called the "union of hearts." But that union was effected in January, 1886. Then, when that union was in the warmth of its first embrace, crime ought, according to this theory, have commenced to decrease. But it did not decrease; it increased. Then 1887 came, and agrarian crime still went on increasing until the month of July, when the Crimes Act came into operation. Let hon. Members find an explanation why it was that for 18 months crime increased under the "union of hearts," and as soon as the Crimes Act was passed it decreased and steadily decreased. [*Laughter.*] Such is the fact, and let those who interrupt me endeavour to find an explanation for it. It may be said that it was an accidental circumstance that crime has, since 1887, steadily decreased, but it is a strange coincidence that exactly the same thing occurred in 1882. The policy of my right hon. Friend had then exactly the same effect. We had an increase of agrarian crime from the date of the establishment of the Land League in 1879 until June, 1882, when, directly the Peace Preservation Act of the right hon. Gentleman was passed, crime dropped to one-fourth of the previous Return. Such is our justification for the Crimes Act of 1887 and for the support which we have given to the Government. Intimidation has, to a great extent, passed away, and is now, according to the statement of the hon. Member for Cork, simply on a level with what is called exclusive dealing. That may be paraphrased by the term "Boycotting." Will my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian forgive me if I do that which it is still my pleasure to do, find authority in his words? My right hon. Friend has said that in his opinion this intimidation which we call boycotting is nothing more than exclusive dealing. Well, I, with great respect to his opinion, dissent, and dissent as strongly as I can, from that proposition. My first reason for doing so is that it was from his lips I learned that boycotting, which has been increasing in intensity, had nothing to do with exclusive dealing but was an entirely different operation. May I recall to my right hon. Friend's recollection a debate which took place in this House on the 24th of May, 1882? If he is, as he says he is, familiar with it I am sure what was in his mind is worthy of communication to the House. The hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon) interrupted the right hon. Gentleman in his speech, and said:—

"I have quoted the words of the right hon. Gentleman himself to the people of Ireland that 'Boycotting' was not illegal; it was on that ground I went."

My right hon. Friend replied,

"I am not aware how I ever could, and, as a matter of fact, I never did, make such a declaration—never."

Mr. Dillon then said—

"Yes; and in this House."

The right hon. Gentleman proceeded—

"I have stated that there might be exclusive dealing between men. But that is a totally different thing; and unless I am much mistaken, that declaration was made before 'Boycotting' was heard of. (*Cries of* 'No!') At any rate, before that which is known as 'Boycotting' was established in the way that has made it illegal. I may have said, and I say now, that I have a perfect right to deal with one man rather than another, and even to tell people that I am doing so; but that has nothing to do with combined intimidation, exercised for the purpose of inflicting ruin and driving men to do what they do not want to do and preventing them from doing what they have a right to do. That is illegal, and that is the illegality recommended by the hon. Gentleman; and it is plain that those who recommend and sanction such illegality are responsible for other illegalities, even though they do not directly sanction them."

SIR W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear.

*SIR H. JAMES: I gather from that cheer that my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby acquiesces in that statement. Let me go a step further. That was the

statement in 1882. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork then said that there had been a great abuse of boycotting; he now says that all that abuse has passed away. I sometimes think that even the hon. Member for Cork does not always know what is taking place in Ireland, but if the Member for Mid Lothian or the Member for Cork thinks that boycotting since 1882 has altered for the better he is labouring under a misconception. I say, and if time afforded I would prove every word I use, since that time boycotting has intensified. Boycotting, in later times, became the chief weapon of the League, for the reason referred to by a conspicuous Member of the Irish Party, who said—

"I look forward to a time when we shall want no speeches; when we shall be able to effect our purpose not by speeches but by our organisation."

That time came: 1882 passed away: the Crimes Act of my right hon. Friend effected good work in Ireland. The National League came into existence. There was a lull during 1883 and 1884, during the time of the operation of the Crimes Act. 1885 came, and then 1,700 branches of the National League came into existence, all in correspondence with one another. There are members from Ireland who, I think, in their hearts will not contradict me when I say that the boycotting of 1879-82 was a brutal weapon, but the weapon of 1885-6-7-8 was a very different one. You might as well compare some flint arrow head existing in pre-historic times with a weapon fashioned by all that modern science can do. As to comparing the boycotting of 1882 with the boycotting of late years I do not exaggerate language—[*Cheers and counter cheers*]—I exaggerate no language when I say that one would almost believe that the boycotting of later years must have been the boycotting of fiends instead of men. Talk of exclusive dealing! Let me ask for one moment the attention of my right hon. Friend. Would exclusive dealing be represented by these facts:—A man has offended the National League. His wife is lying ill near to her death. A branch of the National League passes a resolution during her lifetime that she is not to be buried, and that resolution passed by one branch of the League is sent on to another branch. The resolution was timed so that it should come into operation on the death of the lady. The lady dies, and the resolution is carried into effect. No man would furnish the wood for the coffin, and no man would bury her; and from afar off the help of Christian men had to be brought. That was the case of Mrs. Fleming. I could proceed with case after case. Is it exclusive dealing that when a man has been murdered and his child goes to a school, that school shall be boycotted because the child of the murdered man is simply taken into it? Is that exclusive dealing, or does it approach to exclusive dealing? One word more in this connection. The hon. Member for Cork said what is punished in Ireland is allowed to be done in England, and he mentioned the occurrence of the late strike. He said, "You have now intimidation at the docks and you do not punish it." I deny the truth of the comparison. The Trades Union Act of 1875 declares, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby and I know very well, that any one who intimidates another is liable to punishment, and therefore it declares that combination to intimidation is punishable. If the docker goes to another and uses moral suasion he is not liable, and you also have the right to use moral suasion in Ireland. But if the dockers followed another to a shop and said to the person there, "Do not supply that man with the necessaries of life," who will say that that would not be an offence in England? I declare I sometimes wonder at the statements of those who ought to know better when they say that this boycotting is exclusive dealing, and when they state that it is lawful to do certain things in England which are punished in Ireland. I pass from these matters now to notice again the suggestion made that all this tranquillity proceeds from the good feeling which my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has endeavoured to create between the people of the two countries. Sir, we have two witnesses to that view. One is my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). One word of protest before I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the position which he occupies. He stated that it was an act

of illegality on the part of the Parliament of England to pass the Act of 1887. That is a strong statement to make, coming from one who is one of the counsellors of the Queen. It is a statement that when both Houses of Parliament in their wisdom passed a measure, and the Queen approved of it, it was an illegal act. If my right hon. Friend's courage of statement causes him to say so much in this House, how likely it is that he may make some further statements of exaggeration outside. I should have thought that my right hon. Friend's experience would have reminded him of the inadvisibility of saying that Acts of Parliament ought not to be obeyed on account of circumstances under which they were passed. But my right hon. Friend did not even on this occasion refer to the circumstances under which the Act of 1887 was passed. His statement was that, because he disapproved of the measure, it was an illegal act for Parliament to pass it. Under these circumstances my right hon. Friend says, "I am certain that peace proceeds from the good-feeling that now exists in Ireland," and we had a statement of his travels to prove that. I must confess that my right hon. Friend gave a very peculiar account of the position in which he was placed. It was, as far as I can judge, a position of disappointment; he said, "I was regarded as a peculiarly harmless person." What was most peculiar in his account was that the moment he began to speak every policeman ran away, and the moment he had done "the mighty meeting at Mallow" joined in singing "God save the Queen." This is no exaggeration. That is the position, and we are to be told now seriously that there is the most perfect loyalty existing in Ireland; every Harp without a Crown is repaired; and now there is perfect devotion, under my right hon. Friend's influence, to the Crown and this country. That is the statement made, and which we get from gentlemen of small experience, who, with carpet bags in their hands, go to Ireland. They go under particular protection; they work in one groove; they see one phase of Irish life, and they come back with joy in their minds. That recalls an incident in my early life, which occurred when I was fishing on the Upper Shannon. I formed the acquaintance of an old fisherman, a very respected man. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, he had been out in the rebellion of 1798, and so he was very much respected. He was very communicative in his anecdotes, and at last I heard him tell a young friend of mine something which I knew must be an enormous exaggeration. I said to him, "Oh, Considine, how can you tell such a tale?" "Ah, sure," he said, "Sure he is only a spalpeen from London; faith it is the like of him I am humbugging every day." I do not recognise my right hon. Friend under that title, still less my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre). He at least is not, or ought not to be, a disappointed man. If my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax complains of being called harmless, I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford can complain when he is treated as a dangerous man. I must confess that my right hon. Friend's speeches never have upon me the effect of inciting me to commit acts of violence. Upon the whole, I think his speeches have rather a different and contrary effect. But the hon. Member for Cork says that some spots in Ireland are in a very dangerous condition, and I suppose in such districts even statistics delivered with vehemence under certain circumstances may have a certain degree of exciting influence, and certainly upon one occasion my right hon. Friend's language was so incisive that as it fell to the ground armed men sprang up around him with rifles and bayonets, and he delivered his speech surrounded by an array of physical force. Thirty armed policemen, 30 loaded rifles, 30 bayonets, pointed at my right hon. Friend as a central figure. What a proud moment for him. When I heard my right hon. Friend denouncing one Member of this House because he had taken part in a dispute between landlord and tenant, and saying that he had no business to do so, I wondered where was the justification from that point of view for my right hon. Friend's paying visits to different estates and interfering in disputes between landlord and tenant in which he had not the slightest interest. The Irish people ask to be left alone, to be left severely

alone, and I would suggest to my hon. Friend that there will be found a better solution of the difficulties that exist in Ireland and a greater likelihood of settling the differences between landlord and tenant than if he always on every occasion takes up the case of the tenants and always endeavours to persuade them to resist what is taking place around them on behalf of the landlord. I cannot part from this subject without saying that, whilst we think there are those in this House who ought to have great cause for congratulation that the tranquillity which exists in Ireland has been maintained by the Act of 1887 and by the acts of Government, we are not content to look only upon that tranquillity. There are those in this House who regard with pleasure the promise that is contained in the gracious Speech from the Throne. We look with gratification to the announcement that the time has come when legislation that is not only for the purpose of supporting law and the authority of the Queen is now about to commence. We accept the words of the hon. Member for Cork that tranquillity prevails in Ireland, notwithstanding the views of the hon. Member for Dublin, and, accepting that as a fact, we feel the time——

MR. CLANCY: I never said so.

*SIR H. JAMES: The hon. Member stated that there was more crime than the Government allowed, but if this be so, still it is the crime that comes within the area of tranquillity continued for a long time.

MR. CLANCY: What I said was that the criminal statistics upon which a decrease of crime was supposed to be based were fraudulent from top to bottom.

*SIR H. JAMES: That means that there is more crime than is known to the Government to exist; and, if that be so, still it is to such an extent only that justifies the hon. Member in saying that the tranquillity is long continued, and justifies him in voting that that is the fact. Therefore, I say that under those conditions law and order has not been thrown to the winds; and there are men in this House—I hope the vast majority—who will welcome legislation that will give to the people of Ireland no greater powers of government. There are men in this House who have always hoped that a time would come when the people of Ireland could with safety have conferred on them equal powers of self-government with the people of England and Scotland. Now, when the statement comes that tranquillity has been obtained, the Government may rest assured that they will receive a full and complete support for their promised measure, which I hope, within proper and safe limits, will conduce to maintain the law and order that exists in Ireland.

*(11.23.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle): Mr. Speaker, my right hon. Friend, in this respect following the Chief Secretary, drew a picture of those whom the Chief Secretary called strolling and intinerant politicians, and he ridiculed the visitors to Ireland who went there with carpet bag, and moved in one groove only. But the itinerant politicians are not all on one side. I chanced to be in Ireland when my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was there. The movements of so important a Minister were naturally followed with eager curiosity by the people; but, so far as I could gather, the groove in which he moved, and the sphere in which he carried his carpet bag, was confined entirely and exclusively to landlords, resident magistrates, and police. After what fell from the Chief Secretary it may not be in bad taste to mention the fact that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer stayed for a considerable time with the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry); and though he passed through Youghal, where he had an opportunity of hearing the views, for example, of Canon Keller, to the best of my belief he took no opportunity whatever of ascertaining those views. So much for the itinerant politicians. My

right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir H. James) seemed to me to show some inconsistency in two positions which he took up. He first of all leans on the reference in the Amendment to the long-continued tranquillity in Ireland. He rejoices in the figures which seemed to show a decline in boycotting; but, on the other hand, he showed us, with great emphasis and earnestness, that boycotting is more fiendish just now than ever it was before.

*SIR H. JAMES: Before the Act of 1887 was the date of the particular instances I gave.

*MR. J. MORLEY: At all events, the impression, I think, conveyed to the House was that though the figures of boycotting may have diminished, its enormity and inconvenience to life and property is greater now than it was before. If my right hon. Friend did not say so, the hon. Member for South Tyrone, in a strong passage, declared that though murder had ceased, a far more cruel tyranny even than murder now prevailed. If that is so, what is the use and meaning of these congratulations? For my own part, I should be glad if I could congratulate myself upon a decline in the passionate agitation which has been going on in Ireland; but what strikes me in the attitude of the Chief Secretary and of my right hon. Friend is their insistence that the alleged improvement in the state of Ireland is not, and cannot be, due to anything but coercion and fear. My right hon. Friend referred to that legislation to which we are all looking, but with different emotions. If you are going to introduce remedial legislation, is it a source of satisfaction to you—ought it not to be a source of the deepest misgiving to you—that there is to be no hope, no trust, and that their reconciliation with us is pretence and hypocrisy? If I were the Governor of Ireland, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is, I could conceive nothing on which I would less congratulate myself than upon the fact that nothing but coercion and fear induces the people of Ireland to remain tolerably peaceable and tranquil. My right hon. Friend referred to the difference of the law between Ireland and England in the matter of combination; and undoubtedly, I suppose, the whole House will agree with me that one of the most interesting episodes of this debate was the felicitous interruption of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. Whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland remains unperturbed under the attacks of my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork or not, I thought I saw signs of profound perturbation when he was "wounded in the house of his friend." The Chief Secretary, when speaking to-night, told us that it was his duty to go about the country a great deal, and to make many speeches; and, among others, he made one in Edinburgh on December 5. In view of the remarkable deliverance of the Home Secretary this evening I will venture to reproduce a part of that speech to the House. This is what the right hon. Gentleman said at Edinburgh:—

"It apparently has been thought to be the most successful electoral cry"

—he was referring to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) at Manchester—

"to try and persuade the working classes of this Country that the population of Ireland are, by the Crimes Act, debarred from those combinations which would be necessary and praiseworthy in this island. So anxious were we that the rights of Ireland to combine legally should not be interfered with, that we introduced into our Bill a provision by which anything that was legal under the Trade Unions Act should remain legal in respect of the Crimes Act. I have shown you that the Trade Unions rights were absolutely reserved, and that no lawyer in Ireland has ventured to say that anybody has been prosecuted in Ireland for things under the Trade Unions Act which could have been done in England. Well, is it not disgraceful, and doubly disgraceful, that a man in Mr. Gladstone's position should go into the country and attempt to rouse the working classes of England and Scotland by telling them that rights which they enjoy on this side of St. George's Channel are denied to their brethren on the other side?"

But what did the Home Secretary say to-night in his reply to my right hon. Friend

the Member for the Stirling Burghs? He said that the Government could not do this or that in connection with the dockers' strike. And why? Because statutory enactments guard trade combinations, which do not protect and guard agrarian combinations. Why, that is the very thing that we have been saying, and it is for saying that very thing that the Chief Secretary taxes my right hon. Friend with disgraceful, and doubly disgraceful, conduct. I know why the right hon. Gentleman shakes his head. He means to say by his gesture and by his dissent that Trade Union offences, if committed in the relation of employer and employed, would be punished in Ireland just as in England. Yes; but when the right hon. Gentleman is talking to large audiences in Edinburgh and elsewhere, is that the impression that he either conveys or means to convey? The impression that he conveys and means to convey is that combination among agrarian tenants is as free in Ireland as Trade Union combination is in England. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, as for those Gentlemen who cry No, there is an election coming off soon, and I challenge one of them to go down to North St. Pancras and say what they mean to say now by that denial, and to tell the voters that there is one law for agrarian tenants in Ireland and another law for Trade Unionists in England. What we did—as I have pointed out before—when the Crimes Act was before this House, was to put down an Amendment on the Paper—I really forget in whose name it stood—expressly designed to do what the right hon. Gentleman conveyed to his Edinburgh audience had been done—an Amendment to concede to agrarian tenants the protection of the Trade Unions Acts of England. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bury, and the Chief Secretary too, said a great deal about boycotting. They have both painted strongly-coloured pictures of what boycotting means, and the Chief Secretary was particularly vehement and sombre—I do not say too vehement and too sombre—in his denunciation. But while he was speaking I could not help remembering a speech that was made by the noble Lord, a relative of his and at the head of the Government—I refer to the famous Newport speech of the year 1885. Lord Salisbury, in 1885, spoke of boycotting. Boycotting was a thing you could not deal with by Act of Parliament. It was like excommunication in the Middle Ages. According to Lord Salisbury, in 1885, so far from being the terrible and atrocious thing which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury and the Chief Secretary have depicted it to be, it was a sort of religious rite. It was analogous to a sacred ceremonial. Ah, but then in 1885, when Lord Salisbury was minimising boycotting, and when he was declaring how open a mind he had on federal schemes—an election was approaching. And yet it is you who taunt us with demoralising English public life! The Chief Secretary gave us certain cases of boycotting. Some of those cases I seem to recognise as oldish friends; but there were others which I confess were not familiar to me. I hope I may ask that he will be good enough as soon as convenient to lay Papers on the Table containing details of the cases to which he referred, so that we may analyse and examine the circumstances. I was very sorry to hear the Chief Secretary in the course of his speech—and I daresay that hon. Gentlemen opposite will exult when I say it, though it is not a wise exultation—go out of his way to reproduce vicious passages in *United Ireland*. I ask him whether anything is gained by going back upon it? I say there is nothing in *United Ireland* in its most exasperated moments comparable in enormity with the charge brought by your own ally and confederate against colleagues of your own. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Are they not colleagues of your own? Then turn them out of the House. Nothing, I repeat, so vile as what was done by your ally and confederate in the Press when it charged your colleagues with meeting at the railway station, and there, a month before the Phœnix Park murders, deliberately making themselves participants in the plot that ended in that murder. You have nothing to gain by going back on the past. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, after prefacing his remarks by saying that he never boasted, went on to say that he believed—I think it was more than a hope—he believed that the improvement he had effected in Ireland would be permanent. I confess I do not

see signs of this permanent improvement. I will refer to a case to which I am surprised reference has not been made before. I mean the jury-packing at Maryboro'. The House is familiar with the circumstances and the details of that transaction. So little confidence have the Government, or had they a few months ago, in having public opinion in Ireland on their side, that they could not trust the trial of the Gweedore prisoners, not only not to men of the County Donegal, but they could not trust them to a jury of County Wicklow—they could not trust them even to a fairly chosen panel of special jurors—but they packed that jury. The right hon. Gentleman does not deny it?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Absolutely.

*MR. J. MORLEY: What, the right hon. Gentleman denies it! Speaking in Edinburgh he maintained then, as now, that the jury had not been packed, but he appealed to certain testimony. He said:—

"I appeal to the testimony of one gentleman who was there—an English Queen's Counsel, I believe a Separatist, a man of large experience, for he has witnessed some thousands of criminal trials in England. He gives most unqualified testimony both as to the manner in which the Judge performed his duty"—that is quite true—"and as to the way in which the jury falsely alleged to have been packed executed their onerous duty."

But will you believe that, of course, by inadvertence, the right hon. Gentleman represented that gentleman as saying exactly the opposite of what he did say. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was made on December 5, and I have a letter which was sent round to the Press on November 21. This gentleman, Mr. Crompton, a Queen's Counsel of eminence, who was in 1886 a Member of this House, was present at the trial. He says:—

"The trial was fairly conducted by Mr. Justice Gibson. I said nothing in favour of the way in which the prosecution was conducted on the part of the Crown; on the contrary, I denounced the way in which the jury was packed. The result of what I saw" (he says) "was that trial by a jury so selected cannot be called trial by jury at all; it is rather a trial by 12 men selected by the Crown and presided over by a Judge of the Superior Court."

I do not wish to detain the House, but I should like further to illustrate my point as to the extraordinary disregard which the Chief Secretary and the Irish Government ostentatiously show for Irish public opinion by referring to the appointment of the Law Officer who was responsible for what the English Queen's Counsel called deliberately packing a jury, to the chief seat of judgment. That appointment we shall no doubt have the opportunity of discussing at some later period; but I may say that the step is in distinct violation of what was practically a pledge given to the House. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.] I will give the House the date. It was given to the House on January 28, 1887, by the present President of the Board of Trade, the then Chief Secretary. He said distinctly that considerations both of economy and efficiency required that there should be a merger of the Court of Exchequer with the High Court. I have not the time to go into that now; but I say that the Government could not possibly if they had tried have taken a step to show more ostentatiously how they defy the public opinion of the people they have to govern. Another step the Government has recently taken illustrates the same thing—I do not now pronounce any opinion upon it, as an administrative step—I mean the suppression of the Cork Board of Guardians. My right hon. Friend says that we welcome in the Queen's Speech the promise of the extension of local government in Ireland. What a farce this is! What a farce it is to enter upon your great land policy which, whatever form it may take, must consist of a great number of delicate bargains into which it is most important to have the Irish people and their leaders on your side—what a farce it is to preface a policy of this kind by a policy of coercion which is a policy of exasperation! Unless you have the co-operation of the Irish Members, unless you show that you are willing, in some degree at all events, to conciliate Irish sympathy, to conciliate even Irish prejudice, depend upon it you are merely offering them what they

will regard as a poisoned cup. Depend upon it when your policy is carried out to its furthest ends, it will prove only to have landed the English Government in Ireland in a worse condition than it is in at this moment; and as for reconciliation, as for a real re-construction of Irish Government, as for a regeneration of Irish character, I cannot conceive steps, I cannot conceive a policy, more fatal, more disastrous than that against which we are going to vote to-night.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 240; Noes 307.—(Div. List, No. 3.)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

It being after midnight the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

MOTIONS.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (BOROUGH OF BELFAST) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to provide courts for the revision of the lists of Parliamentary Voters in the Parliamentary Borough of Belfast, and to amend the Laws which regulate the Registration of Voters in the said Borough, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney and Captain M'Calmont.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 153].

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to amend the Agricultural Holdings Acts (England) and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Arthur Williams, and Mr. Francis Stevenson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 154.]

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS DISTRIBUTION.

*A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Wigton): I beg, Sir, to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in superintending the form and regulating the Distribution of Parliamentary Papers:—Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Causton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Gill, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Maclean, and Sir Herbert Maxwell:—Three to be the quorum."

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I object.

*SIR H. MAXWELL: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not press his objection, as there is much work waiting until the appointment of this Committee. We shall be most happy to receive from the right hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members suggestions as to the most convenient method of dealing with the Parliamentary Papers.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I have no objection to the Committee being appointed to do the work which the hon. Baronet refers to, and I have perfect confidence in the Gentlemen proposed to be appointed on it; but what I object to is that the Committee should have power to settle what Parliamentary Papers shall be distributed during the ensuing Session without the matter being again referred to the House. If the hon. Baronet will introduce words obliging the Committee to report to the House, I will not press my objection. Last year we inadvertently consented to the appointment of the Committee, believing the question would be referred back to the House. But it never was so referred. If the hon. Baronet cannot assent to the suggestion I now make, I shall press my objection.

SIR H. MAXWELL: To-morrow.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Does the hon. Baronet intend to re-move his Resolution in its present form, or to introduce the words I have suggested?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): We will consider the point.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 19th February, 1890.

The House met at Two of the clock.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES (GOLD AND SILVER MARKING).

Return ordered—

"Of information from Foreign Countries relative to the assaying and Hall-marking of Gold and Silver wares."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th February.]—[See page 128.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): While I congratulate the Government on the information they give us that provisions will be submitted for diminishing the difficulty and cost which at present attend the passage of private legislation required for Scotland, I still think that it is desirable that I should move the Amendment of which I have given notice, and which is as follows:—

"But we humbly submit to Your Majesty that the present mode of legislating for the domestic affairs of Scotland is unsatisfactory; that measures affecting the welfare of the Scottish people are not considered, in consequence of the pressure of business of the other portions of the United Kingdom; that when Bills relating to Scotland alone are being dealt with, the decision of the House is often contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Scottish Representatives; and that it is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to devolve upon a legislature in Scotland the consideration of the domestic affairs of that Country."

I do so because I think that measures affecting the welfare of the Scotch people cannot be considered here, in consequence of the pressure of other business, and because I desire to bring before the House one or two questions, which have been for ten or a dozen years before the House, and for the discussion of which no time has been found. The first is with regard to a Bill of a non-contentious character, which both Conservative and Liberal Governments have brought before the House, and which Special Commissions both of this and the other House of Parliament have been considering for years. I refer to the Burgh Police and Health Bill. We are now told by the Government that this Session a Bill will not even be introduced. It is a most important measure, affecting all the burghs in Scotland giving us Police Law and Public Health Law. In consequence of the Public Health Law of Scotland being what it is, I believe that thousands of deaths occur in that country which are preventible. We are at least a quarter of a century behind England in the matter of sanitary legislation, and yet the Lord Advocate is unable to tell us when he will bring in a measure to satisfy our wants. Then again, there are important measures affecting the liquor traffic which require consideration. We have been trying for the last six years to obtain legislation on this subject. The last vote taken upon the question was in 1884, and there have been two Parliaments since then. We have tried in vain to obtain a day for the consideration of the question, and although in the last Parliament and in this there was a majority of the Scotch Members in favour of legislation, we cannot get an opportunity of bringing the matter before the House. There has been a Report from the Royal Commission on grocers' licences, and yet the Government tell us that they cannot afford time for the consideration of that Report with the view of legislating upon it. Then again, there is the question of land tenure reform. Bills have been brought before this House time after time, and they have been supported by a large number of Scotch Members; nevertheless they have been unable to obtain a hearing. The Crofters' Act has been in operation for three or four years, but there have been very few cases dealt with under it. The one thing wanted is to give the people more land, and although the Act, so far, has been unsuccessful for that purpose, we have been unable to secure a fitting opportunity for laying the real facts before the House. The same thing has occurred in regard to allotments for agricultural labourers. Three years ago an attempt was made to obtain

for Scotland the privileges which England now enjoys, and it was then promised by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that a Scotch Allotment Bill should be brought in. We have not yet seen that Scotch Allotment Bill, and I can see no indications of it. The people are craving for land and a cow at grass, in order that they may provide milk for their children; and the children are growing up stunted and unhealthy because the Government refuse to afford facilities for legislation. There is also another matter which affects the fishing industry. Three years ago we were promised the re-construction of the Fishery Board and the modification of its functions, with increased general powers. No Bill has been introduced, and the Fishery Laws of Scotland remain as bad as bad can be. In the next place, there is the Bill which was brought in by the hon. Member for Aberdeen in reference to the right of way over mountains and native heaths. No progress has been made with regard to it. Important measures affecting Scotland cannot be considered by this House on account of the ballot. The Scotch Members being few in number cannot get an opportunity of promoting measures affecting the wants of the country. Some years ago a Bill relating to the payment of wages was passed by this House, but it was thrown out in the House of Lords, and since then no opportunity has been afforded of bringing it forward again. The fact of the matter is that this House has so much to do that, generally speaking, what it does it does badly. In the present Session there are only about 10 days on which it will be possible for private Members to bring their measures before the House. Notice has been given of the introduction of something like 200 Bills, and consequently only about 5 per cent. can have a fair chance of being considered and the proposals they contain being heard by the House. It is time, therefore, if this House refuses to grant facilities, that the Scotch Members had some other means of making their wants known. The wishes of the Scotch Representatives are not carried out here. Just now there happens to be a Conservative majority, and the Conservative Members sit on both sides of the House. But even when a Liberal Government has been in power—and Scotland has been Liberal for the last half-century—we have been unable to get what we wanted and have been compelled to take a great deal less. Now that a Conservative Government is in power, we cannot expect them to carry out the principles we advocate, because they are opposed to them. But the House will perhaps allow me to point out one or two little matters in which the wishes of the Scotch Members were overridden in matters affecting Scotland only, that were involved in the Scotch Local Government Bill. One most important Amendment proposed had for its object the giving to the County and Burgh Councils the right to acquire, compulsorily, land for public purposes. It was not proposed to steal it. It was not a question of confiscation, but simply a right to purchase, and I think that upon such a point the House might have considered the wishes of Scotland; 46 Scotch Members were in favour of the proposition, 12 against. But the 12 Scotch Members were augmented by English and Irish Members until they became 128, and as there were only 99 in favour of the proposal it was rejected. The same thing occurred when it was proposed that the County Councils should have the same power as Town Councils in reference to licensing. The numbers were 48 against 12, so far as Scotch Members were concerned, but the proposition was thrown out by 164 against 137. It may be considered a small thing to give the County Councils the power of maintaining rights of way; and of preventing Scotch landlords from stopping up the rights of way; but although 52 Members voted for it, and only 10 against, the Amendment was thrown out by 176 against 149. I might recapitulate a dozen or 15 important questions in which the same course was taken, although the defeated Scotch Members were four or five to one. In every case they were overridden by Members who had no connection with Scotland. There are two other matters upon which, incidentally, I should like to say a word. One has reference to to the financial arrangements between England and Scotland, and the other is a mere question of sentiment. As a matter of fact, in Scotland we pay more per head for taxation than England or Ireland. It may be that we are making more money; but although we pay more

per head, a Scotch official receives much less than the same kind of officer in England. It seems to me only fair and just that if you tax us you ought to put our officers upon a footing of equality with, at any rate, Irish officials. Nevertheless, while an Irish executive officer receives £1,500 a year, the same class of official gets only £1,000 in Scotland. Then, again, our public buildings in Scotland are not designed by Scotchmen; they are inefficient and ugly, and, instead of beautifying and ornamenting our towns, are an eyesore. One of my strong reasons for urging the adoption of Home Rule in regard to Scotland is that it would save the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds. In the matter of education, we have again been placed upon a footing of inequality. What in England is lost in grants is recouped in the way of licences, but in Scotland what we lose in the shape of licences we do not get back at all. Another fact, which may possibly be considered sentimental, is that Scotland is entirely ignored in our Despatches and Treaties. You speak of England, and England only, and we were told the other day by the Secretary for War that an English regiment was ordered for service in Egypt, when in fact it was a Scotch regiment. And now a word as to the remedy. I think the disease that you are suffering under is congestion here, and the only remedy is devolution. The wisest mode of remedying the evil would be to devolve the domestic affairs of Scotland upon a Legislature in Scotland. I am not particular that it should be composed of Scotch Members, although my hon. Friend the Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. D. Crawford) proposes that it should be. I am perfectly willing to try it, but I am not prepared to say what the constituencies may require, except in regard to the few in which elections have taken place lately. But I know that the movement has been growing in Scotland, and after the next General Election the Scotch Members will be able to speak more distinctly. All I want now is to take the opinion of the House whether it is not desirable to devolve upon Scotland the power of determining and controlling Scotch matters. I am perfectly willing that the Imperial Parliament should retain the power of preventing injustice being done to anyone, and that the Ministers of the Crown should, if they deem it necessary, advise Her Majesty to veto any particular measure. I do not think we want any Supreme Court in this country except the Court of Parliament, and I have no desire to see a solution of the difficulty established on the lines of federation as in America or Switzerland. All I desire is that we should delegate to a certain body or Parliament certain powers, and still retain the power of veto. I quite agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Wallace) that my proposal should be carried into effect at such time, and under such conditions, as may be desired by the Scotch people, and I am willing to amend my Amendment in the way desired by my hon. Friend. All I want is that these matters should be determined by the Scotch people through their Representatives. Another question is, whether Home Rule for Scotland, or for Ireland, should come first. The Irish question has already been before the Irish constituencies, who have expressed themselves conclusively upon the matter, and it is, at this moment, a more burning question. The same conditions exist in Scotland as exist in Ireland, but probably we may take a different method of solving them than they have done. Ireland has a right to be dissatisfied, because Irish opinion has not been considered as it ought to have been in this House, and because legislation has been forced upon the Irish people which they do not want. I trust that, in regard to Scotland, a Conservative Government will be wiser in that respect than they have been in the case of Ireland. In Scotland we are discontented because so few opportunities are afforded to us of expressing the opinions of those we represent, and because, when we do so, our votes are of no avail. The same principle ought to be applied to Wales, which has a just claim to have her case brought before the House. I may add that the question of Scotch Home Rule has not been raised on account of our admiration for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), or in consequence of any feeling in reference to him, because in this matter the right hon. Gentleman has always been coldly neutral. It has simply grown up from dissatisfaction which exists in Scotland in

regard to the treatment of Scotch affairs, and I should like to hear from the Lord Advocate whether he even is satisfied with things as they are. He may be, but I think it is simply a question of the extent to which we desire to go. I have heard one or two remarks made in reference to this question. It is said that if we were to devolve the consideration of Scotch questions upon Scotland herself there might be a narrow spirit abroad, and that it is better to come here and have them dealt with in a broader and more generous way. If I found that that was really so, I might, perhaps, consent to waive our rights. But I do not think that the English and Irish Members can throw much light upon the Scotch problems by discussing them, and in Scotch debates we never hear any views expressed by an English Member unless he happens to be a Scotchman representing an English constituency. In fact, when a Scotch question is discussed here the House is empty, and it is only when the Division bell is rung that the House fills, and hon. Members are quite satisfied to be told that they are to go into the Lobby with the "ayes," or the "noes." What I want to see is a sensible and intelligible legislation and not a mockery. Another argument is that if the Scotch Representatives were to go away, as they have always been Liberal, the Liberal would be weakened. Now, I think it is a dangerous thing to have a minority continually thrusting their opinions upon the majority. Last year, upon the Sunday Closing Bill, the majority of English Members were against it, but other Members formed an alliance with the minority and altered the complexion of the vote. Generally speaking, my contention is that this Legislature is over-taxed, and that the only solution of the difficulty is to devolve a portion of its labours upon those who best understand it, and are best capable of performing the work. I cannot say that we are alive to our great responsibilities in regard to India. The discussion on the Indian Budget is the only occasion when consideration is given to the condition of 250,000,000 of human beings, and that is often thrown off until the very last days of an expiring Session. I do not think that such legislation is either wise or satisfactory. I believe that in the course of another half century, the Anglo-Saxon race will dominate the world. It already possesses the best portions of the world, where men can live and thrive, and certainly their power of reproduction is not surpassed by that of any other race. But I feel that unless something is done to draw the bond closer, by and bye, in the race of nationalities, we may find ourselves in the background, unless something is done to give to every portion of the kingdom the management of its own domestic affairs. Hon. Members who are anxious to see a closer union of all parts of the nation brought about must be aware that the first step is to devolve upon a nationality the control of those affairs which concern its own well being, leaving it to carry them on in a manner commensurate with their due importance. I beg to move the Amendment which I have placed upon the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of Paragraph 11, after the word "Scotland," to insert the words,—"But we humbly submit to Your Majesty that the present mode of legislating for the domestic affairs of Scotland is unsatisfactory; that measures affecting the welfare of the Scottish people are not considered, in consequence of the pressure of business of the other portions of the United Kingdom; that when Bills relating to Scotland alone are being dealt with, the decision of the House is often contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Scottish representatives; and that it is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to devolve upon a Legislature in Scotland the consideration of the domestic affairs of that Country."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."—(*Dr. Clark.*)

*(2.35.) MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): It is with extreme reluctance that I trespass upon the time of the House in order to second the Amendment. The motives which induce me to do so are three. In the first place, it is a matter upon which, personally, I have a strong feeling. In the second place, it is not long since I was face to face with my constituents, and I have reason to believe that they feel strongly upon it also; and in the third place, I think it is unlikely, owing to the state of public business, that the question will be before the House again on an early day. Therefore, I trust that I may be pardoned if I cast myself on the indulgence of the House while I make a few remarks

with the object of giving the reasons which induce me to second the Amendment. There are two sets of arguments which, in my humble judgment, may be brought forward in support of it. There are, firstly, arguments which may be said to depend upon considerations of justice; and there are, secondly, others which may be said to depend upon considerations of political expediency of one sort or another. I trust that I shall be able to show, before I sit down, that some of the arguments, at all events, of the latter category, are not altogether unconnected with the political comfort and welfare of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. It is a peculiar fact, and one which I have noticed for years past, that until very recently none of the leaders of the Tory or the Liberal Unionist Party who went down to Scotland did anything except to boycott the question of Scottish Home Rule. Last year, however, for some reason or other, appears to have changed all that, and I do not think it will be found now that any recognised leader of either of those two parties will go down, or has recently gone down, to a Scottish meeting, and has not found it necessary to say something on the subject. For example, last year the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale went to Aberdeen, and found it necessary to deal with the question of Home Rule for Scotland in his speech. What did he say about it? He said what has been said for decades with regard to the cry for Home Rule for Ireland. He said:—

"This question of Home Rule is only one raised by interested agitators who expect some personal advantage from the change."

But I hope to show the House that the question is not one for agitators; but that it is one in which every man, woman, and child in Scotland has a considerable self-interest. In the first place, I should like to point out a few facts in connection with the financial aspect of the case For instance, the Scotch people are taxed for Imperial purposes at a higher rate per head than the English population. Surely that, if it is true—and I believe it cannot be controverted—is not a matter merely for agitators; surely hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will admit that every person in Scotland has an absolute right to agitate in order to secure that a due and not an undue proportion of Imperial taxation is laid upon his shoulders. Taking every item of the Imperial revenue into account I find that England is taxed to the extent, roughly speaking, of £2 1s. per head, while in Scotland we are taxed to the extent of £2 6s. per head. The result is that the Scottish people pay about £1,000,000 yearly, in excess of what they ought to do, in direct contribution to the Imperial revenue; and it must be remembered that Scotland is a very poor country indeed compared with England. I know I shall be met with the argument—a very weak one—that this taxation includes revenue from whisky. But I do not see how that alters the facts. I do not care whether the revenue comes from whisky or from tobacco, or anything else. If the Scotch people pay it—as they have to do—they are actually taxed, and the payment must not be omitted from the comparison. Then let us look at the other side of the account. Does Scotland get back her just share in the disbursement of the public revenue? I think in that matter she is even worse treated than she is in the matter of over contribution to the Imperial revenue. A careful examination will show that in the items of Civil Service, Law and Justice, Civil List Annuities, and Pensions, and so forth, Scotland is extremely unjustly treated. In the first place, England gets a great amount in Civil List Annuities and Pensions, while Scotland gets nothing at all. In the second place, if we put the whole receipts of Scotland from the Imperial revenue in comparison with her population, we find a deficit of £1,250,000 as compared with the proportion she should justly receive. Again, there is another serious injury to the Scottish nation in consequence of having no local Legislature, and that is that London, instead of Edinburgh or Glasgow, absorbs at this moment the great mass of the wealthier classes of Scotland into its own pale. This is a very grave matter Every one knows that the land of Scotland is very largely held by the aristocracy, and it is computed that fully one-third of the whole rental is now being spent out of Scotland. Summing up these items it would appear that the total annual loss of Scotland, in respect of these matters, amounts to no less than four millions sterling a year, or about £1 per head of the population. But

although the financial injury is in this respect considerable, I hold that the political injury is very much greater. Scotland is a country which may be described as "steeped to the lips" in Liberalism, in the same way as the South of England, including London, is steeped to the lips in Toryism. Let us look at the state of the Scottish Membership. At least six-sevenths of the Scottish Members are Liberals of a sort, and it must be borne in mind that two-thirds are Liberals of the true Mid Lothian type. Yet, in spite of this, what happens when the Scottish Members combine together for the purpose of passing some really Liberal measure? They are at once incontinently voted down by English Tories, who, no doubt, are thoroughly convinced that they know infinitely better about the needs of Scotland, and that their souls are burning with a greater anxiety for the welfare of Scotland than are the souls of the Scotch Members themselves. But for their votes the Crofters' Act would have been extended to the united counties of Elgin and Nairn last Session. Again the Scotch Local Government Act is a bare skeleton at present, but it would long ago have been clothed with living flesh and blood if the Amendments pressed in Committee had not been refused by the Government. In the same way there is no question that the Scottish State Church would have been Disestablished, and that a Local Liquor Veto would have been passed long ago but for the votes of English Tories. Such, Sir, in barest outline, are the claims for Home Rule in Scotland, and they are founded on the principle of general justice. And now, if still further favoured with the indulgence of the House, I propose to say something as to some grounds of the demand, which are based upon political expediency. I have said that the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale went to Aberdeen last October, and on that occasion found it necessary to speak about Scottish Home Rule. The noble Lord was ably followed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, who spoke at Inverness on October 11. The right hon. and learned Gentleman candidly confessed that the election of Elgin and Nairn had filled the Party to which he belongs with "bewilderment and surprise," although the walk over at Dundee and the loss of a seat at Peterborough apparently seemed to him to have been quite consistent with the victorious march of Tory principles. The right hon. and learned Gentleman then did me the honour to call me, or the election, "a dark spot on the political horizon." I can assure him, however, that a great many electors in these and in other counties think that that election might be better described as a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, which is at this moment spreading over the Scottish sky, and which may possibly before or at the next General Election be followed by a voice directed to all the Ahabs of the Tory Party in Scotland, saying, "Get thee down, that the Radical rain stop thee not." I trust hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite will not suppose that I have desired to level any special epithet of discredit against them by calling them Ahabs.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. I must remind the hon. Gentleman that he is not now speaking on matters relative to domestic legislation for Scotland.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I may say, Sir, I was merely mentioning—and no doubt I was wrong in so doing—this part of the right hon. and learned Member's speech as introductory. The right hon. and learned Member proceeded to speak on Home Rule for Scotland and Disestablishment, which he coupled together, and then he asked—

> "How is it being disposed of by the Gladstonian Party, from their leaders downwards? The Scotch Church and the Scotch State are merely being made two of the counters in the game of ambition which is being played for Party purposes;"

and he went on to remark—

> "I do not know what is the latest turn or wriggle in Mr. Gladstone's career of evasion, equivocation, and prevarication."

I am sorry to say that this statement on the matter of Scottish Home Rule was received by the audience with laughter and cheers; but I do not so much dwell upon the fact, because the audience chiefly consisted of landlords, lawyers, commissioners, factors, bailiffs, gillies, gamekeepers, and rat-catchers—in fact, the whole landed interest, and nothing else. Continuing his speech, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said—

> "I suppose many of you are inclined to laugh heartily when this subject of Scottish Home Rule is mentioned."

Now, Sir, in my humble judgment the question of Home Rule for Scotland, although not yet urgently in the foreground, is fast ripening, so much so that, before very long, it will be no laughing matter to the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I respectfully submit that it already is so strongly anticipated by the people at large, that it should be treated seriously by English politicians. I venture to suggest that the great secret of statesmanship is to take up and discuss important national questions, and find solutions for them before they are forced upon the Government under conditions of excitement or opposition. How different would the state of Ireland have been to-day had this method been applied to her. If I were not almost the youngest Member, I would say to this House, Do not wait until Scotland takes up the *role* of the importunate widow, and let us act on higher motives than those which influenced the unjust judge in the parable; cure is proverbially difficult, while prevention is well known to be comparatively easy. There is only one other argument from expediency which I would venture to lay before the House, and which, I think, ought not to be without its effect on the other side. Supposing that during the time which yet remains to Her Majesty's present Government, they were to pass a Scottish Home Rule Bill on Federal lines, and, for the matter of that, Welsh and Irish Home Rule Bills also, how much better would their position be at the next General Election. What is the position of the Government now? They are kept in power solely by the grace of the Liberal Unionists; and I suppose I am right in saying that the Liberal Unionist Party will not, at all events, be greatly increased in number at the next General Election. Moreover, the Government have somewhat further complicated their position this Session, inasmuch as in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, local self-government has been promised to Ireland. Now, the Government must know perfectly well that if they gave local self-government to Ireland the result would be to destroy their Coercion Act; and that if their Coercion Act were thus destroyed, something else would be destroyed also, namely, their clients—or shall I say, their masters—the Irish landlords. On the other hand, time is creeping on. Parliament is in its Fourth Session, and the Government are already coming within measurable distance of—shall I say?—the dire effects of the Septennial Act. Already Dissolution rises up before the Government, "bold, gaunt, and bare," as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said on a memorable occasion. Why should they not use the remaining time in order to rid themselves of these troublesome hosts of Scottish and Irish Liberals, and thus secure for themselves a comfortable majority in a purely English Parliament? Why not emulate the wisdom of the man in the parable, and make to themselves friends of the Mammon of Liberal unrighteousness? It may be true the granting of Home Rule to Ireland or Scotland would have the effect of enthroning a Liberal Government in power in Scotland for ever; but that would not be without its compensation. In England you would gain more than you would lose by the bargain. Taking the present representation of England as a guide, you would have a majority of at least 100, while, if you continue to have the support of the Liberal Unionists, who would probably continue to vote with you from sheer habit, then in an English Parliament you would have the unparalleled majority of 205, which would enable you to take a lease of the Treasury Bench, for 7, 14, or 21 years.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must again remind the hon. Member he is not speaking to the question before the House. The hon. Member must not indulge in general reference to the political situation.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: My object was to recommend the Amendment to the favour of the House by——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I have finished all I have to say with regard to the financial and political bearings of the question, and I shall therefore, subject to your ruling, simply add that while apologising to the House for having had insufficient time for such preparation as would have ensured that my remarks should fall within the rules of debate, I have great pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

(3.10.) MR. MARK J. STEWART (Kirkcudbright): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has taken a very unusual course in his speech in advocating the expediency of the Amendment before the House, and I cannot help thinking that the manner in which he expresses his opinion both in this House and outside, constitutes a very dark spot on the political horizon. When a candidate enters upon a political contest and pledges himself to and promises everything in order to get into Parliament, he must expect to be confronted with the consequences of his conduct. Now, I claim to know the sentiments and feelings of the majority of the Scotch people as well as hon. Members opposite, and I deny that there is the least desire in Scotland for Home Rule. No doubt there is a section of the people, some of whom are influenced in the matter by the hope of obtaining political power, who desire Home Rule; but the great majority of the people, I believe, are not dissatisfied with the existing state of things, although I am ready to admit that they wish more time was given by Parliament to Scotch business. At the same time, I must recognise the fact that the Government have shown a desire to deal with Scotch affairs. For instance, there is the Local Government Bill for Scotland, passed last Session, a useful measure which, though the amount it handed over to the Local Authorities was perhaps scanty, is, in my opinion, calculated to educate and train a large number of people in the management of county business. Undoubtedly there are many subjects affecting Scotland ripe for legislation, the licensing question, for instance, and there is a strong feeling that the Secretary for Scotland ought to have a seat in the Cabinet; but to infer that the whole country is up in arms against the present state of things is absurd. There is a point in the Queen's Speech to which I wish particularly to draw attention. I refer to the question to which the late Mr. Craig Sellar devoted a large amount of time and effort—namely, the reform of private Bill legislation, and I am glad that the Government have announced their intention of dealing with the subject this Session. As long ago as 1886 Lord Hartington's Committee reported—

"That it is essential that arrangement should be made to relieve the House from the duties now discharged by Private Bill Committees."

And Mr. A. J. Balfour, who was then Secretary for Scotland, said—

"I share the opinion that the present system of Private Bill Legislation by Committees in the House of Commons and the House of Lords is utterly absurd, expensive, and antiquated."

And he added—

"I hope to be able to carry through this House, with the assistance of my learned friend the Lord Advocate (Lord Kingsburgh), some measure which shall relieve Scotland of a most unnecessary burden."

The right hon. Gentleman did not, however, carry his Bill through, but I hope that the Government measure dealing with this matter will become law this Session, and that this link in the chain of legislation of a domestic character for Scotland will thus be supplied. Now, Sir, the next point which the hon. Member for Caithness has taken up is that measures affecting the welfare of Scotland are not considered. But I cannot think that he is altogether serious in making that suggestion, because we know that this Government has already dealt with many important questions. There was first the Crofters' Act; then they dealt with Local Government. With regard to the question of free education, the Government have been quite willing to give that instalment of justice to Scotland, and I think that it is hard to say that they have neglected the interests of the country. On almost every one of these questions the Divisions of the House were in accordance with the views of the majority of the people of Scotland. I repeat that though the Government do their best, they have not time on every occasion and in every Session to devote to Scotland, or to make a question of such a subject, for example, as that of the Established Church of Scotland. There is the somewhat thorny question of the Educational Endowment Scheme for Scotland, and we know very well that a Committee was appointed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian's Government in 1883 upon that scheme, but I do not think that Committee altogether represented local interests. Now, Sir, there are one or two considerations which I should like to advance against a separate Legislature for Scotland. In

the first place it would not stimulate but throttle local effort in Scotland. The hon. Member who has an Amendment on the Paper proposes that certain of the Scotch Members should sit in Edinburgh for the transaction of Scotch business. How would that suit Members living in London, and who have professional engagements there? Where are these representatives to come from? You have just elected to the County Councils men who could discharge the duties, but the standing of these men is such as to preclude their coming to Edinburgh and attending some months there in the autumn for the purpose of transacting local government matters connected with Scotland. A Legislature of the kind proposed would lead to very great hardships and, what is more, would be a source of very great expenditure. If you set up a separate Executive, or separate Legislature, you would require a separate set of servants and a separate Treasury. And the Scotch people are not too fond of spending their money unnecessarily, and they would simply say that they would have nothing to do with it. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian used in this House the very expressive phrase that it "passed the wit of man" to draw a line between Imperial and local affairs. That is true, and it is untrue. It is perfectly true that it would pass the wit of man if you have a separate Executive and a separate Legislature. But it is untrue if Parliament has general control of the grave principles which animate its policy, and maintains an appeal to itself where it becomes necessary to apply those principles. Now, a point which occurs to me is the danger and difficulty, in a small country left to manage its own affairs, of mismanagement. Scotland is a small country, with a population of only about four millions, and perhaps it may be considered that the danger is not very great. But there is this to be said, that sometimes in a small country, where the people manage their own affairs, they are apt to forget the affairs of other people. An illustration of this can be found in the discussion which has taken place in different parts of Scotland about the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act. It has been the invariable, if not the universal, opinion that the administration of the Act must be more centralised, and that perhaps it should be centralised in London. Why? Because it has been found that one county has passed regulations and so administered the Act as to be out of harmony with the regulations and action of the Authority in a county which is perhaps contiguous. And, similarly, if Home Rule were granted to Scotland, the separate Legislature might adopt measures which, though useful to the country, might bear the evidences of want of care for the affairs and interests of neighbouring or sister countries. That is a strong reason, to my mind, why we should let alone the great question of Federation for the great United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. By all means have federation to the utmost extent for your colonies, but you must not split up your own country. You must keep the old country intact as a centre from which to conduct all that is good in administration throughout the world. I think the Amendment of the hon. Member for Caithness would be foolish and would be unstatesmanlike, and I trust the House will give it a direct negative.

(3.27.) MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): Mr. Speaker, last Session the hon. Member for Caithness brought forward a Motion similar to that which he has proposed to-day. On that occasion I was one of the two Scottish Liberals who voted against the Motion. Nothing has been said to-day which makes me feel inclined to take a different course from that which I took last year. I must say that the speech of the hon. Member for Caithness throws some difficulty in my way in stating the objections which I have to these proposals, for a more terrible come-down than the speech of my hon. Friend I have never heard, My hon. Friend has abandoned everything he set up. There is nothing he has proposed or suggested which cannot be realised by a Grand Committee of Scottish Members sitting in this House. My hon. Friend was President of a Scotch Home Rule Association, which has sent members all over Scotland to say that Scotch Home Rule ought to take precedence of or go *pari passu* with Irish Home Rule. My hon. Friend gives a considerable snub to his own Association when he speaks of the way in which the feeling for Scotch Home Rule is growing, "notwithstanding the injudicious action of some of his friends."

I suppose he refers to the wandering Home Rulers, who have been devoting so much of their attention to certain contituencies. I can sympathise with the whole of my hon. Friend's speech which relates to the neglect of Scottish business in the House. That deplorable neglect must be amended. I thoroughly agree with him that none of our affairs receive that attention which they should receive. It is deplorable to see empty benches on both sides of the House whenever Scottish questions are being discussed. We know the light in which English Members regard Scottish questions. Only last night, in the Lobby, an English Member said,—"Ah, to-morrow is Ash Wednesday, a very suitable day for a Scottish discussion." Hon. Members seem to be afraid of Scottish business. When there is a Scottish debate going on, you may hear English Members whispering among themselves "Hypothec," "Mortification," and such like words which, they say, it is impossible to understand. The Lord Advocate has given an explanation of the emptiness of the benches during the Scottish debates. In a speech which I think both ungenerous and impolitic for a Minister responsible for Scottish business to have made, the Lord Advocate thought it right to say that English Members are driven from the House by the length of the speeches of Scotch Members and the horrible way in which they bore the House. [The LORD ADVOCATE: No.] I will read the speech of the right hon. Gentleman:—

"The complaint is that the English Members go into the smoking-room. Now, the first question I ask is, Why are they not in the House of Commons? And the answer—I am afraid the truthful answer must be—that they have been driven out of the House of Commons. Well, then comes a much more delicate question—Who drove them out of the House? Now, as we are all friends, and a long way from England, and, as far as I can see, no Englishmen are present, I will now tell you the truth. They have been driven out of the House of Commons, and have dropped into the smoking-room, because there is a limit beyond which flesh and blood cannot endure long speeches. And if you meant really to prosecute the subject to a painful identification of the orators, you will know the names of the men who make the complaint. Look at the debate which immediately precedes the Division on which the smoking-room brigade have prevailed, and you will find that for hours it has been carried on by the very men who make these clamorous complaints."

Mr. Marjoribanks

I ask any impartial man in this House to say in what spirit the Scotch Debates were carried on last Session. In my opinion they were carried on in the most moderate and efficient manner. It was an ungenerous action on the part of the Lord Advocate to bring such a charge against the Scotch Members. Having made such a charge, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that he will not find Scotch business go through the House the more easily. I do not know whether English Members can or cannot understand Scotch business, but the fact remains that they are not in the House when Scotch questions are discussed, and that they only come in when a Division is called to vote down the opinions of Scotch Members. Over and over again that was done in the Scotch Local Government Bill. My hon. Friend goes too far in his Amendment, and the proposal of a separate Legislature is both unkindly and premature. I would remind him of the Scotch proverb—"ane at a time's guid fishin!" We have already got on this matter of Home Rule one big fish exceedingly firmly hooked. It has given us a good run, but is sulking in a deep hole. I am afraid it will be some time before we get into a position to drive it on; though I have no doubt we shall start it and have another good run to get it out of the water. But to burden ourselves with another big fish in the shape of Home Rule for Scotland would, I think, be exceedingly foolish. It is a pretty large order to undertake the re-modelling of the Constitution of Ireland, and it is very undesirable that we should throw the whole Constitution of our country into the melting-pot. And that is what we should do if we took up the whole question of Home Rule for Scotland. It seems to me that directly we start the question of a separate Legislature for Scotland, we instantly start the whole subject of re-modelling the Constitution on the Federal system. That is a project for which there is much to be said, but I do not think we are ripe to enter upon it just now. My hon. Friend has said that the system we apply to Ireland should also be applied to Scotland. To that proposition I entirely demur. The differences between the two countries are great. First, there is the physical difference, which is a very great

difference. England and Scotland are bound together in a manner which is practically indissoluble. The boundary that divides them is a very narrow one. The boundary line of the Tweed between England and Scotland is a mere nominal line, and the connection between the two countries is daily and even hourly becoming closer and more intimate. People cross the border from side to side every day and every hour. I frequently have occasion to cross from one country to the other several times in the course of a day. For my own part I feel the closeness of this connection very strongly, as I live within a short distance of the border, and sometimes I am in both countries three or four times in the course of a single day. The connection, therefore, between England and Scotland is much closer than that which exists between England and Ireland. Then again there is a great difference as between the political associations of the two countries so far as England is concerned. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian produced his Home Rule Bill in 1886, his proposition was that the Irish Members should no longer have seats in this House, and what struck me as the most extraordinary feature in connection with that proposal was that the Irish Members agreed to it, and were perfectly ready to cease to sit in this House, and to be content with taking only that part in Imperial affairs of the kingdom which would result from the payment of an annual tribute. I am sure so far as the Scottish Members are concerned, we are proud of the part we are called upon to take in the affairs of England and of the manner in which many of our Representatives have taken part in the government of the country in past times as well as the present. I may also say that whether we agree with the right hon. Gentleman or not, we are at any rate proud of the fact that at this moment one of the Chief Ministers who sit upon the Treasury Bench—I allude to the Chief Secretary for Ireland—is a Scotchman. Another great difference between Scotland and Ireland in its relations to England, is the historical difference. The treatment of Scotland and Ireland by this country has been utterly different. We have never been subjected to a series of Viceroys sent over to us from a foreign country, and belonging to a different nation. Scotland has not been governed by Boards consisting for the most part of foreign officials. We have never had forced upon us a foreign Church and foreign laws. For all these reasons I can only say it is impossible for me to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend, and that I shall feel myself bound to go into the Lobby against his proposal.

*(3.43.) MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): As I feel considerable difficulty in voting for the Amendment of my hon. Friend, I will endeavour to explain the grounds on which I am prevented from giving him my support or from meeting his proposal with a direct negative. I think it right to say in the first place, as my right hon. Friend below me has said, that I entirely agree with those parts of the Amendment which consist of mere statements of fact, and it is only when I come to the operative part of the Amendment that I find it necessary to differ from it. He says in that Amendment that—

"The present mode of legislating for the domestic affairs of Scotland is unsatisfactory."

He also says—

"That measures affecting the welfare of the Scottish people are not considered in consequence of the pressure of business of the other portions of the United Kingdom."

He also asserts—

"That when Bills relating to Scotland alone are being dealt with the decision of the House is often contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Scottish Representatives."

Now, these are very grave statements, and in my opinion they are strictly true. Not only are they grave statements, but they point to the necessity of some change of arrangement, and also indicate that that change should be in the direction of some devolution of the business with which this House is at present overburdened. It may be asked if this be the case why do I object to the conclusion to which my hon Friend has come, when he says—

"That it is desirable while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament to devolve upon a Legislature in Scotland the consideration of the domestic affairs of that country."

I will state to the House the reason why I do not wish to subscribe to that doctrine, and it is this,—this Amendment would commit the Liberal Party, and would also commit the House of Commons, to dealing with the question usually

described as Home Rule for Scotland in a particular manner, and this, too, while the question of self-government for Ireland yet remains unsettled. Now, Sir, I not only feel that it would be the height of imprudence for the Liberal Party to commit themselves to dealing with this question in a particular manner while the otherlarge question remains unsettled, or, as my right hon. Friend has put it, to load our line with another big fish when we have not yet landed the fish we have got upon the hook; but I am also persuaded that it is the wish and the decision of the people of Scotland that the Liberal Party should stand uncommitted upon this question. We are now engaged in a strenuous battle for the settlement of the Irish difficulty. Victory appears much nearer than it ever did before, and I believe it is the wish and the determination of the Scottish people that other questions should be kept in the background until the great Irish question has been settled. It will be impossible, if we accept the Amendment of my hon. Friend, that the situation should remain unaltered. If the Amendment were agreed to the Scottish question would at once be brought into line with the Irish question, and we should go to the country at the next General Election, pledged to support the proposal for a separate Legislature for Scotland as well as for Ireland. On every election platform we should have to stand or fall not by one Bill but by two. In the one case the question has already been thoroughly sifted and discussed, while in the other the question stands in an exactly opposite position. The arguments on the one side and the other of the Scottish question have not been examined—they have not been so much as stated in the discussions which have taken place—and therefore I say it would be the height of imprudence for us to commit ourselves to the approval of the proposal contained in this Amendment until we have first settled the other question. Now, it may be asked, what are the particular objections which I take to the use of the word "Legislature." It may turn out that the difficulties which I see—and here I express no opinion as to whether they are difficulties that can be overcome—will when the proper time arrives vanish. They may prove to be unsubstantial, it may turn out that they may be associated with such conditions that any evils by which we may now think they are accompanied will disappear. But, in the meantime, they have never been stated. In the first place, if the principle of the Amendment is accepted you must create an entirely new body. Now, we have just created in Scotland a new elective body, namely, the County Councils, and we have thereby got at least, in skeleton form, a complete system of local government from which in the near future we have reason to expect that something may be done. I do not say all that is required to relieve this House of the pressure of business. Is it not probable that the creation at this moment of a new elective body would appear to many minds to be an evil in itself? My next point is that if you have a local Legislature for Scotland I presume that would imply the creation of a local Legislature for England, because the English can hardly be expected to submit to have their affairs conducted by Scottish and Irish Members when they have each a separate Legislature of their own. And you will have to persuade English Members to enter into that entirely new arrangement, which they have not thought of up to this time. In the third place, the House will perhaps allow me to mention another point of serious difficulty. I mean the effect which the depletion of its important functions would naturally have upon the Imperial Parliament in general, and especially on the House of Commons. This, I think, is a point well worthy of consideration, and the House will probably be disposed to admit that if the process were carried far enough, if a large portion of the important business of the country were withdrawn from its consideration and put into the hands of other bodies, one of them a body of such enormous importance as an English local Parliament would be, might it not be that the centre of political gravity would be removed from the Imperial Parliament and the efficiency and dignity of this House would thereby be greatly impaired; so that, call it by what fine name you like, it would not be the Parliament of the country in the same sense as heretofore. These, I urge, are serious considerations, although I pronounce no final opinion upon them. I must, however, say that if we, in the way suggested

by this Amendment, tack a Scotch Home Rule Bill on to an Irish Home Rule Bill we may have great reason to regret it, and the Liberal electors of the country will have good reason to resent it. In the one case we go before the constituencies with a proposal they have had four years to consider and understand, while in the other we go to them with an undigested and unexamined proposition, and say, "You must swallow both." I fully recognise the genuine zeal and conscientious motives that have actuated my hon. Friend in moving this Amendment, whether the time he has chosen for it is opportune it is not for me to say; but, at any rate, it forces me to speak confidentially before our political opponents, and to say that if we have to face a General Election with such a programme we can hardly foresee the difficulties we may have to encounter. We may lose not a few votes in England —perhaps hundreds of thousands—inasmuch as the English people have never entertained or considered this proposal. Is it certain that we should not lose votes in Scotland? Is it certain that we have not begun to lose votes there owing to undigested and unconsidered proposals for Home Rule having been put forward? In my own Amendment I have gone the length of indicating, as one alternative, a means by which the neglect of Scotch business and the pressure of that business on this House may be remedied. I propose that—

"It is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to devolve upon the Members of Parliament for Scotland the consideration of the domestic affairs of the country, or to adopt some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to the control of the representatives of the Scottish people."

Now, Sir, the latter and more general alternative would amply satisfy my own views on this subject; and, indeed, it would meet my views better than the first. The reason why I have ventured to put on the Paper the first alternative relative to Scottish Members sitting in Scotland is that I wish to bring prominently forward the suggestion that, whether that particular plan be a good one or not, it is not impossible to get Scottish affairs transacted by the representatives of Scotland in a manner which would be entirely free from what I may call the constitutional objections to which the proposal to create a brand new Legislature is open. In that case there would be no new body, and consequently no necessity for a separate election, and no contingent necessity for the creation of an English Parliament. There would also be no withdrawal of the business of the country from the Imperial Parliament, consequently no constitutional objections would arise. I am far from thinking that that is the only way in which the thing could be done, and the real gist of my Amendment lies in the latter alternative, which says that some means ought to be adopted by which Scottish affairs should be under the control of the Representatives of the Scottish people. Now, Sir, I think that the Mover of this Amendment and some of those who think with him are under a mistaken impression as to what is the real mind of the Scottish people on this question. I myself am convinced that the people of Scotland are sincerely in earnest in determining to keep back this question until the Irish question has been settled, and I find some proof of this in a recent meeting of the Scottish Liberal Association, held in Glasgow. Everyone who knows that body will acknowledge that it holds advanced Liberal opinions, and that it is a representative body drawn from the whole of Scotland. At that meeting a resolution was proposed which I think is substantially identical with the Amendment of my hon. Friend. That resolution was—

"That this Council hereby resolves that it is desirable that arrangements be made for giving to the people of Scotland, by their representatives in a national Legislature, the management and control of Scottish affairs."

A clergyman, the Rev. David Mitchell who is a well-known and very advanced and earnest Liberal, moved as an Amendment that the meeting pass from this Resolution, and he said, among other things, that he thought the time had come when they must say one or two plain words to the people who were agitating in this matter, and then they would find out where they were. Sir, I entirely endorse the opinion of that rev. gentleman. I think the time has come when we should say a few plain words to the people who are moving in this agitation. The words I am saying, and which were said by the rev. gentle-

man to whom I have referred, are that this premature formulating of the demand for Scottish Home Rule in a particular manner, namely, by the Legislature, is a thing calculated to do the utmost damage to the cause of Irish Home Rule, and is, moreover, contrary to the opinion of the people of Scotland themselves. That opinion was endorsed by the people at the meeting to which I have alluded, and the Amendment of Mr. Mitchell was carried by an overwhelming majority. That I believe to be a true expression of the opinion of Scotland on this subject. I have said nothing, and I do not intend to say anything, tempting at the subject is, as to the reality of the grievances under which we suffer. I have, on more than one occasion, asked the indulgence of the House to address it on this subject. I have recently read a very interesting pamphlet by the Marquess of Bute, to which I would refer anyone interested in that subject, and he states in a very true, and at the same time very sympathetic, way the case of Scotland, and the grievances under which we labour. It is not from want of sympathy with those grievances that I do not find myself able to support the Amendment in the form in which my hon. Friend has proposed it. I think the country will look at our proceedings to see in what way this matter is dealt with by the House and the leaders of the Liberal Party. I trust that my hon. Friend will not think it necessary to persist in this demand for the specific form of a Legislature for Scotland, and I hope the House will not agree to it. I am sure that the good sense of our constituents and of the people of Scotland will sustain us in the decision that this is an inopportune and untimely demand, and that though Scotland has real grievances, the time for devising a specific remedy for them has not yet arrived.

MR. J. C. BOLTON (Stirling) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment—

To leave out from the word "upon," to the end of the proposed Amendment, in order to add the words "the Members of Parliament for Scotland, sitting in Scotland, the consideration of the domestic affairs of that country, or to adopt some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to the control of the representatives of the Scottish people."—(*Mr. Donald Crawford.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

*(4.7.) MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I think that the course of this debate will already have shown that if the controversy on the subject of the Motion has advanced since last year the situation essentially remains unchanged. In the interval that has elapsed since last Session Scottish Representatives have had an opportunity of meeting their constituents, and Associations have been able, if they wished to do so, to give their judgment. The result of all this has been to justify the attitude which the great majority of Scottish Representatives assumed last Session. The attitude of the Scottish Members was, that, although there was profound discontent in Scotland as to the management of Scottish affairs, and they felt, at the same time, that this sentiment should be impressed on the House. There was a firm determination in Scotland that her claims should not embarrass the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian towards Ireland. This was expressed, perhaps, all the more readily because Scotland has not yet formulated a definite policy such as that upon which we are called upon to give our votes today. Now, Sir, what does this Amendment mean? It means, as has already been pointed out, that Scotch Home Rule is to be placed on a par with Irish Home Rule, and that is a position which is not maintained in Scotland. It would demand a fresh departure in a form not yet definitely adopted. And certainly, not yet sufficiently appreciated by public opinion in England. I speak as a believer in something in the nature of a State Legislature in Scotland, and the belief rests no less on Imperial than on local consideration. In such legislation we have to guard against loss of vitality to the Central Authority of the Empire, and we have to secure also that the status of Scotland is not impaired by it. We need not lose one iota of the power and the dignity which we possess in the Imperial Councils. We need not, but we might do so if the pace is forced with regard to this question. Therefore, many of

us who desire local independence in Scotland are prepared to consult, and anxious to consult, the attitude of England on the question, because, without the maintenance of Parliament as the real centre of the State, the importance of an English local assembly, representing some 28,000,000 of people, would so enormously outbalance all the others that would be established in the United Kingdom as to become the real power. Whilst Parliament would resolve itself into something of the nature of the German Reichsrath. That is the real difficulty to be faced in organising a federal system for the United Kingdom, and without doubt it is to that that we must tend when Home Rule is given to Ireland, and when representation in an Imperial Parliament is provided for. These are by no means insuperable difficulties if we can secure the support of the large body of English public opinion; and when England realises, especially when English Tory opinion realises, that reforms such as the Disestablishment of the English Church can be carried by Scotch, and Irish, and Welsh votes, in face, perhaps, of a great English majority, and when we can put forward, on the other hand, a general scheme of devolution, fulfilling the required conditions, then, I believe, we shall find England along with us. There are other warnings which we shall do well to bear in mind. We can depend on the support of the representatives of Ireland at the proper time, but I very much doubt if they would thank us for pressing this Amendment now. The British public was not so quick to see the urgent necessity of the case of Ireland as to make us anxious to take the whole federal question upon our backs. Again, the right hon. Gentlemen who are sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, who will have to deal with the re-casting of the Irish Bill, may naturally consider that they have enough of this branch of legislation upon their hands for the time. At all events, upon a question of such supreme Constitutional importance as that with which we are now concerned, the opinion of our leaders is entitled to great weight. Further, we have a prospect of entertaining some proposals with regard to Scottish Private Bill legislation during the coming Session, and, if that be reasonably carried out, there will be the less difficulty in waiting for a little while for the further changes which we require to a time when we can advance them with caution and soundness. Hon. Gentlemen opposite should not misconstrue the motives which induced so many of us last year to refrain from supporting this Resolution, because we believe in the fullest development of local control and administration. Hon. Gentlemen opposite do not. If they think they can out-vote us here and at the same time refuse us a free hand elsewhere they will reap the consequences of their delusion. They should remember that if many of us are content to abstain from voting, or to vote against—as I shall do—the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Caithness, it is on the ground of time and of the manner in which the proposal is made rather than from any objection we have to the principle of the Amendment, or to the belief that things are well as they are.

(4.15.) THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I hope the hon. Members who promote the cause of Scottish Home Rule are satisfied with the tenour of the discussion which has taken place, because, as far as I can judge from the speeches delivered, and especially from the highly significant speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) and of the hon. and learned Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. D. Crawford), certain conclusions have been drawn from the state of public opinion in Scotland which have considerably modified the rising ardour discoverable in certain parts of the country early last year. To turn for one moment to the Amendment of the hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire, I notice with considerable surprise that though he offers two alternatives to the House, he favours very distinctly the second of the two alternatives embraced in his Amendment. Accordingly, taking the hon. and learned Gentleman at his own choice, I find he proposes that this House shall adopt, as an Amendment to the Address, a Resolution, the purport of which is clearly that it is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to adopt some means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to a

Parliament of the Representatives of the Scottish people. I put it to the House whether, upon the most ordinary principles of prudence, not to say statesmanship, that is at all an admissible proposition? It begins by dealing with one of the most vital questions relating to the Constitution of the three kingdoms, and then it proposes to affirm that some means, which nobody has yet thought of, ought to be devised for the purpose of giving effect to the Amendment. The hon. Gentleman has made this extremely plain, because, as he said with great frankness, he has taken his political opponents into his confidence, and he has really for about 20 minutes been thinking aloud over this very arduous and difficult question. He is not satisfied—he is very much dissatisfied—with the proposal of the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark). He also greatly doubts the expediency of the first of his own two alternatives, and he then proposes that the House, rejecting both the more or less specific remedies which have been stated, shall resolve, in an attitude of mere mediation, if not despair, that something or other ought to be done which nobody here is clever enough to hit upon. It appears to me that an Amendment of that kind is not admissible to the deliberate consideration of Parliament under any circumstances; and probably no circumstances are less favourable to its admissibility than to move it as an Amendment to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. But, looking at the question from a more general point of view, I cannot but congratulate my hon. and learned Friend upon having so far advanced in his study of the general question of meddling with the establishment of separate Parliaments. He has most justly observed, and it seemed to me to have come to his cognisance for the first time, that whosoever sets up a separate Parliament in any of the three kingdoms, is thereby detracting from the position of this Parliament, and that no one has a right to offer to the constituencies a plan for setting up a Parliament in any one of the three kingdoms who has not thought out and is ready to present to the constituencies the relative power of the Imperial Parliament and a local Parliament. That appears to me to provide food for thought about other countries than Scotland, and I cannot help looking with hope and expectation to the extremely candid disposition with which the hon. and learned Member is proceeding to re-consider the whole of this subject. But what is the subject upon which we are invited to embark? It proceeds mainly upon certain statements or assumptions as to the present condition of Scottish Parliamentary business. The assumption—because it has not been proved—is that Scottish Parliamentary business is in a very bad state. I think that, after the experience of last Session, he is a bold man who would assert that the work of Scotland cannot be efficiently accomplished by this House. Something has been said about the remarks made by myself upon the proceedings of last Session. I made remarks—and I observe that their repetition to-day was received with applause—which suggested that, perhaps, some of the difficulties in regard to Scotland were to a large extent traceable to the love of discussion which is, perhaps, more or less characteristic of the national character. But I pointed out that we must, if we were to obtain fair consideration for Scottish legislation, endeavour to enlist not only the votes but the sympathy of our English brethren. I ventured to point out, that I was afraid Scottish business was less popular than was desirable, and that if we could induce English Members to favour us with their presence throughout the discussion of Scottish matters our object was likely to be attained. I turn to the facts of the cases which have been brought in aid of the arguments adduced for a change. What are the cases which are put forward as evidence of the unsatisfactory condition of Scottish Parliamentary business? One case has been mentioned—that of the Burgh Police Bill. It is said that we ought to upset the constitution of the country because we have not got the Burgh Police Bill passed. The Burgh Police Bill is a very meritorious measure. I am bound to say that, as my name is on the back of it. At the same time, the Burgh Police Bill, I think, may with advantage stand over, rather than that we should make these gigantic plunges in the direction of the unknown, which even the courage of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Lanarkshire

(Mr. D. Crawford) stands back from. The Burgh Police Bill is a most unfortunate illustration in support of the Amendment, because it stands in this position, that it was considered by a Committee of the House of Commons which was almost exclusively composed of Scottish Members. I think there were 20 or 22 Scottish Members upon it. The attitude of the Government, as announced by me the other day, was this: If the Scottish Members are ready to pass it through the House, as adjusted by the Select Committee, we will rely on that assurance, and carry it through. But, on the other hand, we are not prepared to take a Bill of 571 clauses, and set it down in the fair-way of the navigation of the Session, and invite hon. Gentlemen to resort to it when occasion requires for the retardation of business. But other measures have been suggested as furnishing a text for hon. Gentlemen. I can hardly suppose that the hon. Member for Caithness is serious in regarding the catalogue of minor measures he refers to as otherwise than merely evidencing a want of appreciation on the part of the majority of this House to some projects which are very dear to individual Members on the other side. That is the real state of the argument, so far as it relates to specific Scottish measures. Last Session we passed large measures for Scotland — measures involving a great amount of consideration and time, and I say that the work was very well and creditably done. And there is not the slightest reason why, if a business-like spirit were applied to the other measures we shall bring forward this Session, and especially to the one referred to by my hon. Friend (Mr. Mark Stewart), we should not make equally satisfactory progress. There is another head or category of complaint. We are told, "You do not bring forward and carry measures, and when you do, the decision of the House of Commons is adverse to Scottish opinion." May I invite hon. Gentlemen to consider this? This is a subject on which it is possible to make large assertions, and, therefore, I speak entirely subject to the private knowledge and opinion of any other Member. I think, however, that the public opinion of Scotland—the broad and, on the whole, generous opinion of Scotland—does not attach so much importance to all these points, upon which the majority of the Scottish Members voted against us, as hon. Gentlemen do themselves. I am bound to say that the net result of the legislation of last Session is excessively popular in the constituencies, and that the very natural, and probably inevitable, efforts which they have made to attach importance to the points on which they controverted the Bill are really not appreciated, and have not the position in the perspective of the constituencies which they have in their own. I turn to another subject which is regarded as the motive power towards this change. Not only is it said that legislation is unsatisfactory for Scotland—which I deny—but it is said that Scottish opinion—meaning thereby the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite—is overborne upon various questions, and that this is an intolerable evil. I ask the House this—How do you propose to alter this when you are given a combination of the three kingdoms, and when one of the countries sends a majority of Opposition Members to carry out their policy? You cannot do it. If you appoint a Committee which is to arrive at a conclusion adverse to the general policy of the Government, that means that they arrive at a conclusion adverse to the general policy of the House which keeps the Government in power. Surely it is an impossible political result to contend that the three countries, remaining united, shall stand in this position: that the policy of the Government shall be baffled and stopped, and yet that the Government shall remain in office, and seek to carry out a policy of which it disapproves That is an entirely impossible political predicament. Hon. Gentlemen who have spoken on the other side have another set of grievances, and I desire to invite attention to this, because it to a large extent construes some very vague words used in both Amendments. The hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) is strongly of opinion that Scottish officials do not get fair play—that their salaries are too small. Far be it from me to discourage the idea; but I want to know from the hon. Member for Caithness, or anyone who sympathises with his views, how is your Scottish Legislature to rectify that unless it has got a purse of its own to administer? How are you

going to have more liberal treatment from a Scottish Parliament unless you give it *carte blanche* over English resources—paying the officials out of English resources without the English Parliament having a voice to control that expenditure? The other alternative is that we, the unfortunate Scottish officials, are to depend upon the resources of our native country alone. But the hon. Gentleman goes further. He says, not only are the Scottish officials starved, but the public buildings are scandalously bad in point of architecture; and he thinks the Scottish Parliament would redress this grievance. These æsthetic qualities I am fain to claim, and cannot disclaim, for the Scottish race; but if the hon. Gentleman is going to indulge his architectural fancies by the embellishment of public buildings, then I suppose he will require money, which must be raised by increased taxation on the people of Scotland, or else it must come out of the coffers of the English people, who are to have no voice in the matter. There is another point which bears on the same question. I want to ask the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), and the hon. Member for North-East Lanark (Mr. D. Crawford), do they consider that a separate Executive should be set up in Scotland? If so, I want to know what is to be the constitution of their Parliament, and what is to be the authority of their Parliament? If this Parliament is to sit in Edinburgh or Glasgow, or some other Scottish town, and is merely to consider the Burgh Police Bill, and is also to consider some of the other measures favoured by the hon. Gentlemen, then I understand it; but if they are to improve the public buildings, and raise the salaries of the officials, that implies an Executive. What is your Executive going to be? It is, I presume, to be equipped with all the functions of Government, including that of spending money. How, again, would you propose that this Parliament should be a democratically elected body—a body which shall not only pass laws, but influence policy—unless you set up a separate Executive? And that I call setting up a completely distinct Government. Now, the hon. Member for Caithness has referred to sentimental views which he does not entirely sympathise with, but which he thinks are operative in this question. He referred to an abuse which I entirely agree is an abuse—the abuse of language in using the word "England" when "Great Britain" is more properly applied. But I am quite sure that solecisms of that kind are to be corrected rather by supplying proper literary models for the English people, and showing them, by the illustrious examples of our public men, that we claim a very large share in the dignity of our country, than by setting up a Scottish Parliament. I welcome the contribution to the debate which was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), because of certain firm words which he used in the course of his speech, and which I commend to the attention of the Liberal Associations which meet at Glasgow or anywhere else. The right hon. Gentleman has expressed, with very great clearness and admirable frankness, the strategic reasons which render it impossible to combine in the Parliamentary operations of his friends the landing of an Irish fish and the landing of a Scottish one. There is a beautiful frankness in the language of that speaker, and it was quite participated in by the hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. D. Crawford). The question apparently is—What is to be done with the Liberal Party? Is the Liberal Party better with Home Rule for Ireland and Home Rule for Scotland, or is it better first with the one and then with the other? Or may it not be better to abstain from frightening away sensible people in Scotland at the next General Election, and even, if need be, should anything go wrong, swell your ranks with those who would not answer to the cry of Scottish Home Rule? The right hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) has used firm and drastic language. He says we ought not to "pretend" that we are ready to take it up. I hope that word of warning will sink into the minds of the hon. Member for Caithness and his allies, and that they will accordingly observe that if they receive support from above the Gangway it is pronounced by one of the whips above the Gangway, and a right hon. Gentleman who largely attends to Scottish business, to be a mere "pretence," and that the more manly and correct course is to say so, and to disclaim all

sympathy with the hon. Gentlemen. I welcome that contribution to the political wisdom of Scotland at the present juncture, because I think it is very much needed. I think there has been a disposition in Scotland to reproduce the celebrated advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton (Sir George Trevelyan)—"Let everything go in." There has been a great disposition to consider nothing too bad in the political market to be put into that universal receptable of heresies, the programme of the Liberal Party, and it is rapidly becoming swollen beyond all recognition, by what is now pronounced, by its chief pastor and censor, to be mere excrescences, and distressingly absurd ones, I have said that these are timely words. May I go further, and say that I hope they will be conspicuously and constantly enforced upon the attention of the people of Scotland; because, speaking as a Scotchman, and not for the moment as a politician, I do venture to say that anything more dismal and bleak than the prospect of life in Scotland under a Scottish Parliament I cannot conceive. We have already signs of the rising discredit which attaches to the idea. Its very author and proposer, the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), says he would not have a seat in it. He would not give up his seat in the House of Commons for a seat in the Parliament of Scotland.

DR. CLARK: I never uttered such words. The question was whether the Scottish Members would accept any scheme of Home Rule which would prevent them from having a right to be here; and I cheered the sentiment that we would repudiate and refuse a scheme of Home Rule that would prevent us coming into the Imperial Parliament, and taking part in Imperial affairs.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: On that explanation I have to say two things. In the first place, I rejoice in the fact that there is no prospect of the withdrawal of the hon. Gentleman from this House; and, in the second place, I am quite content handsomely to apologise to the advocates of Home Rule, and say that, at all events, we know now that the Scottish Parliament will be a body in which the hon. Member for Caithness will have a place, and doubtless a distinguished, if not overwhelming, position. I was going to say that, upon the most serious view of this question, I cannot conceive a duty more incumbent upon Scottish public men than to do their best to put a stop to this notion. I cannot imagine that there is any trading body in Scotland which could look without horror, if ridicule were withdrawn from the question, upon the institution of a Scottish Parliament. I cannot imagine that those who are interested in the great institutions of the country, apart from its commerce—in the Universities, in the law, in everything else that lends dignity to the public life of a country—would entertain other than a universal feeling that this would be a step backwards, if possible, towards the darkness from which the country was withdrawn by the Union; and that it would be one of the most recent triumphs of a section of the Liberal Party, and one of the most overt steps towards obscurantism ever inflicted upon this country. I rejoice to think that a sound review of the party and strategic situation has led Gentlemen opposite, who are well able to control the circumstances of the case, to recede from showing any favour to it. I rejoice to think, therefore—and, perhaps, we shall have some more steps in this direction—that it will be seen at the next General Election, and the elections which may intervene before that event, that both parties stand firm in asserting that, whether the exigencies of the Irish Home Rule Question may point in one direction or may point in another, Scottish Home Rule is not to come; and that, in the meantime, any one who says it is coming is guilty of the "pretence" denounced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire.

(4.40.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I desire to follow the right hon. Gentleman, because it is my intention to give a vote which will be in consonance with his, but upon grounds that are totally different from his, and that, in fact include the strongest objections, partly to his arguments and partly to the language he used. I do not understand why the right hon. Gentleman found it necessary to pass such satirical remarks

upon Scotch Members for their garrulity. I am not a sufficiently old Scotch Member to feel myself touched by his observation, although it might be perhaps very fairly and properly applied to me; but this is a question of absolute and abstract, not relative, garrulity. I do not believe that, in the opinion of this House, Scotch Members have at any time been distinguished for spending a larger number of words upon a given amount of business than other Members of the House of Commons. I am bound to say, taking the matter as one of fact, that in my opinion, after long experience, I have found the Members from Scotland more sparing in the length of their speeches than Members fron other parts. There is another statement which the right hon. Gentleman made to which I wish to refer. Towards the end of his speech he said that by the Act of Union the Scotch people were brought from darkness into light. I never heard a more extravagant statement proceed from the lips of any Gentleman representing the Government in this House. The right hon. Gentleman prefers the conduct of the Scottish Members in the 18th century to that of the Scottish Parliament in the 17th century. But what are the facts? The action of the Scottish Parliament in the 16th and 17th centuries did much for liberty, and therefore for the advancement of Scotland; but what was ever done by the Scottish Members in the Imperial Parliament for the advancement of Scotland in the course of the 18th century down to the time of the Reform Bill? One thing I know they did. They supported the Act of Patronage under Queen Anne, which disturbed the Church of Scotland—the National Church—from one end of the country to the other, and caused a long controversy and dissension which did not find an issue till 1843. It has even been urged, in the interests of Scotland, that the passing of that Act was a distinct breach of the Act of Union with Scotland, which provided that it should be an Article of the Treaty between the two countries that no change should be made in the doctrine or discipline of the Church. I entirely differ, therefore, from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that at the Act of Union Scotland came from darkness into light, and that the period from the passing of the Act of Union till the Reform Bill was a very enlightened or a very creditable period in the history of Scottish Parliamentary representation. Its condition was wretched, its franchise was a mockery, its results were unsatisfactory in the highest degree, and stand in disadvantageous and not in advantageous contrast with the proceedings of many Parliaments of the 16th and 17th centuries. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposes the Motion on the ground that there is no existing grievance—I will except the question of the private business of Scotland, with regard to which grievance is admitted, but beyond those narrow limits he holds that there is no existing grievance. Now I, on the contrary, hold that there is an existing grievance. Private business itself is a serious grievance, and a serious change is now to be proposed on account of that grievance. The right hon. Gentleman may think that that change will be very easily disposed of by the appointment at the will of the Executive Government of a certain number of official persons in Scotland to discharge functions that have heretofore been discharged in a free Representative Assembly. But he may find that difficulties will start up in his way even in dealing with a portion of the country, because it may be found that Scotland will expect, and even that Scotland will require, that there shall be a representative element in that body, whatever it is, which is hereafter to dispose of the private business of Scotland. But I go on to the further allegations of the right hon. Gentleman, in which, facing the matter, I am bound to admit, with perfect candour and great consistency and boldness, he treated in some part at least the cases brought forward to show that Scotland has a serious grievance. He referred to the case of the Burgh Police Bill, and he covered this case as well as the whole of this part of the question by referring to the undoubtedly great services done to Scotland, and the great labour expended by this House on behalf of Scotland, in the last Session. It is very true that last Session was a remarkable Session in the history of Scottish legislation in the House of Commons. Can the right hon. Gentleman point to any other Session like it? What has been the case of

Scotland for five, 10, 20, or 30 years before it? It was an exceptional Session altogether? It was known that it must be an exceptional Session, and if Her Majesty's Government had in the Speech from the Throne announced anything similar on the part of Scotland this year we would have had England justly up in arms against it. The right hon. Gentleman grappled with the case which the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Leng) has mentioned in an able comment on the subject of Home Rule for Scotland in the January number of the *Westminster Review*, namely, the case of the Burgh Police Bill. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that he has a triumphant answer; and what is it? He admits, in the first instance, that this Bill has been introduced in seven successive years; that it is a Bill with respect to which Party spirit does not extensively prevail; but that for seven years it has been found impossible to make any progress with it. In one point I agree with those who criticise some of the language that is used in Scotland. It is common in Scotland to treat the case as if it were a case of neglect on the part of Parliament. Neglect is a wilful offence. I am far from saying that there is wilful neglect on the part of the House of Commons. I think it would be unjust to the House of Commons to say so, but there is incapacity in the House of Commons to deal with all its business. The question for Scotland is not whether we are individually or collectively to blame, but whether Scotland has a grievance in having had withheld from her all satisfaction of her legitimate wants which may warrant her in asking for a remedy. The right hon. Gentleman says triumphantly that the Government have offered to carry the Bill through the House upon their own responsibility on a condition. And what is the condition? The condition is that on this Bill of 571 clauses all the Scottish Members, whatever their opinions and convictions may be, are to make no opposition, are to have no discussion, but to allow the Bill simply to pass through its stages whether they approve all its points or not. Does not the right hon. Gentleman see that in denying the grievances he has demonstrated the grievance? The desire of the Scottish people is not that their grievances should be shuffled through Parliament without discussion; it is not even that the discussion shall cease at the stage of Committee; it is that according to the rules of a free Legislative Assembly those Bills shall be discussed openly and freely from stage to stage; and it appears now that the strength of the case of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of neglect lies in this—that a great and important Bill, not a Party question, has been for seven years totally blocked in the House of Commons and is now offered by the Government to be passed through the House of Commons on the conditions I have mentioned. That demonstrates not the guilt or the fault of the House of Commons, but the incapacity of the House of Commons, and I am sorry to say its increasing incapacity, to deal adequately and satisfactorily with the enormous demands made upon it from every portion of the country and of the Empire. Then comes the question of something more than neglect. I am not able, naturally, to plead the case of the House of Commons as much as I did under the last head; but we now come to the case where not neglect of Scottish wishes is alleged, but contradiction of Scottish wishes, Scottish judgment and opinion. Are the facts on that subject to be denied? I wish hon. Members would again turn to the short Paper drawn up by my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, and they will there see set forth in the clearest and most convenient form the manner in which, by votes that are not Scottish and on account of considerations that are not Scottish, Scottish opinion is overridden on questions purely local in this House. Here is a list of 12 Divisions taken in the course of the proceedings on the Scotch Local Government Bill in the House, and the results of those Divisions. What are they? They are local questions. The first of them is that the County Council should have control of the police. That is a question on which Scotland is entitled to have an opinion. The next is that the County Council should have the same licensing powers as the burghs. That seems to me to have been a very moderate demand, and at any rate a demand that Scotland was entitled to make. Both those proposals were rejected, but both of them were supported by majorities of Scottish Members—the first of them, as to county

police, by a comparatively small majority, because it was only a majority of something more than two to one; 43 Members supported the proposal and 18 opposed it. Then came the proposal as to the licensing powers, and there 48 Scottish Members supported the proposal and 12 Members opposed it. Four to one of the Scottish Members were supporting that which the House rejected. Of those proposals the first was rejected by 102 to 75, and the second by 164 to 127. Now, my contention is this, that the rejection of proposals on which Scotland has a clear and distinct opinion and which are strictly local in their character, is a grievance. That is what is denied by the right hon. Gentleman. Here is a proof of it. I will not trouble the House by going through in detail all the 12 questions on the one single Bill, but the result was that on the 12 Divisions there were 530 votes of Scottish Members in favour of the rejected proposals against 158 against those proposals. Scotland cannot be satisfied when she sees on these local matters that 158 votes going contrary to her wishes are more powerful in determing the judgment of the House of Commons than 530 votes given according to her wishes. But what is the answer to that? The answer comes to this, that the true representation of Scotland does not lie in the majority at all, but in the minority; that some of the majority do not always reside in Scotland—as if all the minority resided in Scotland—and that those who do not reside there and who form the majority are so inferior in their powers of comprehension, in their powers of perception, in their powers of sympathy, that their votes are to be passed by; those are fancies, crochets, fads which are proposed by the majority; it is to the minority that you must go if you want to know the true sense of the country. Let the right hon. Gentleman, if he likes, and if he adopts that principle, show his usual courage and go through with it. Let him apply it to the House of Commons as a whole and let him get up and boldly say that it is the minority that represents the true sense of the country. With respect to the remedies for these grievances I find myself coming somewhat reluctantly into a position more approximate to that of the right hon. Gentleman. It is admitted that something is to be tried with respect to private business. I should like to have the benefit of that experience; it may open up many considerations of interest and importance. While the position as to private business is, in principle, conceded, beyond that we have undoubtedly a great variety and diversity of schemes proposed. I cannot find fault with the Mover of the Amendment or with the Mover of the Motion, because what they have done is to endeavour to give articulate form to a sentiment in Scotland which, though not yet articulate, is real and substantial. Now, there is a paramount obligation on me to make no promise to Scotland or any other part of the country until I think I see a way to the fulfilment and redemption of that promise, and I confess I do not see my way in this case. My hon. Friend the Member for North-East Lanarkshire has endeavoured to avoid committing himself to a specific proposal, and has distinctly laid down—there I agree with him—that the question has not yet been sifted, and we are not ripe for a particular plan or a particular remedy for the grievance which exists. It shows how difficult these questions are. It seems to me that the Mover of the Amendment upon the Amendment has almost become entangled by the words of his Motion in some serious difficulties, because the large and covering phrase which he uses is that there should be an Assembly of Scotch Members sitting in Scotland or—

> "some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be intrusted to the control of the Representatives of the Scottish people."

But are we to adopt such a principle as that Scottish affairs are to be intrusted, not to a Scotch Parliament, but to the Scotch Members of the Imperial Parliament? If you are prepared for a proposition which is so grave and which involves so much, have you determined what is to be the relation of those Scotch Members to the Imperial Parliament at large? If you have determined that while vested with the absolute control of Scotch affairs they are likewise to retain without limitation their control, or partial control, over English affairs, with all the different points involved in a re-constitution of that kind, you will have to adopt a very specific

plan indeed. I make that criticism not believing that it is in any degree due to failure of perspicacity on the part of my hon. Friend, who never speaks without ability, which makes it a pleasure to listen to him. What I have said shows how hard it is to make a proposal of this kind which may not be liable to the objection of being vague and unreal, or at least premature. I certainly believe that this is a very difficult question. I believe that the great Irish Question of Home Rule, viewed from one very practical point, is a part, not the largest part, of the subject of devolution arising from demands upon the time of Parliament which are growing heavier year by year. But with regard to the question of devolution, some are prepared to propose a different plan, not for the three countries, but the four countries; for Wales undoubtedly, owing to recent debates and discussions, has come to see that she has a title to obtain greater recognition in the course of three years than she has had for three centuries. Some gentlemen think themselves very modest when they say, "Our plan is that a Scotch Parliament ought to be incorporated with the plan for an Irish Parliament; or at least it ought to proceed *pari passu*." There is no doctrine of greater danger than that of *pari passu* applied to the method of legislation in the House of Commons. The only practical way of illustrating it is that which was employed by Mr. Bright when he said it was like driving six omnibuses abreast down Park-lane. Between these extremes, between a remedy for private business on the one side, and a remedy in the shape of a Federal Parliament on the other, there are floating ideas perfectly immature and not yet reduced to shape—vaporous forms that are still in the atmosphere and driving about like clouds in the wind, which it is totally impossible to grasp and totally impossible to define. In my opinion, in these circumstances, this is a time of reserve. My difference with Her Majesty's Government is that they see no grievance, while in my judgment there is a grievance, and, what is more, I believe that in the judgment of Scotland there is a grievance, though I do not think the mind of Scotland is made up as to the remedy. That question is not yet ripe for discussion, and we ought not to pass a Motion which, in its verbal shape, would signify it was ripe, unless we thought it practicable. But I am bound to say that this question is ripening in Scotland, though it is not ripe. There is no people within my knowledge less likely to be misled by fancies or mistake them for realities. But the manner in which the subject has been entertained shows me that the Scotch are not satisfied with these unqualified panegyrics upon the Scotch Union as it is in which some Gentlemen have been fond of indulging. I remember perfectly well, before this question had come into view at all in Scotland, addressing a large meeting there, and delivering sentiments in favour of the union between England and Scotland, and being astounded with the absolute coldness with which they were received. Is was impossible to get up a warm recognition of those benefits which were attributed to the Union, but most of which, in my opinion, it would be more just to say had been contemporaneous with the Union. But while this question is ripening, I believe it is one with regard to which Parliament need entertain no serious anxiety. Scotland, if there be a grievance, is perfectly able and willing to consider that grievance. I, for one, hope that whatever happens we shall not throw this question of local government in Scotland, to which I have never applied the name "Home Rule"—that we shall never throw this question of devolution on behalf of Scotland into the same cauldron as the Irish Question has unhappily been thrown for the last three or four years. Let us keep it apart from party controversies, and from national controversies. If Scotland speaks, she will speak clearly and rationally. If she speaks clearly and rationally, England will think once, and twice, and even thrice, before she puts impediments in the way. But in my opinion our duty is plain. It is to maintain an attitude of reserve. It is our duty to admit whatever facts appear to stand in the clear light of the evidence of facts, but above all to rush to no rash, unfounded, blind conclusions; but rather to say, "We will wait for further light and for the further maturity of this question in the minds of the people of Scotland, rather than run the slightest risk of misleading her, and possibly even of

disturbing the country, as well as impeding the course of the public business by the adoption of propositions upon which we as yet do not possess, and do not even see in our own mind the means of leading to a satisfactory conclusion." Therefore it is that I must take the course of voting against the Amendment. That is the proper course to take on every occasion, whatever sympathy one may entertain on the point, if you believe that to vote in support would commit you to any pledge you have not at hand the means of redeeming. But that Scotland has a grievance, is seriously considering that grievance, and that Scotland will probably bring her grievance in due time to a practical form for England's consideration, is my distinct conviction.

*MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): May I ask you, Sir, for direction under these circumstances. Neither the Amendment nor the Amendment to the Amendment satisfies me, but I could accept either if allowed to qualify it by the words of which I have given notice on the Paper. I would ask you, Sir, whether after the Division it will be in my power in any way to bring my Amendment forward?

*MR. SPEAKER: That will actually depend on the decision at which the House may arrive upon the question now before it, which is, that the words proposed to be left out of the Amendment be retained. Should that proposal be negatived and the second Amendment be inserted, then at the end it would be competent for the hon. Member to move his Amendment.

Question proposed, "That the Provisions proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

DR. CLARK: On a point of order, Sir, and to remove any misunderstanding, do we understand that the "Ayes" affirm the proposal to retain the words of the original Amendment?

*MR. SPEAKER: Those who say "Aye" to the question support the Amendment as originally proposed to the House.

(5.20.) The House divided:—Ayes 112; Noes 278.—(Div. List, No. 4.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'the Members of Parliament for Scotland, sitting in Scotland, the consideration of the domestic affairs of that Country, or to adopt some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to the control of the representatives of the Scottish people,' be added to the proposed Amendment."

Debate arising.

It being after half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

LAND PURCHASE AND DIVISIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Barclay, Bill to empower local authorities to acquire Land and to facilitate the sub-division of Large Holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Barclay, Sir George Balfour, Mr. Thorburn, and Mr. Anstruther.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 155.]

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Peter M'Donald, Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Sexton, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Lane, Dr. Commins, Mr. John O'Connor, and Mr. John Barry.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 156.]

URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITIES (FURTHER POWERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Bill to confer further powers on Urban Sanitary Authorities, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Picton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 157.]

STEAM BOILERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Provand, Bill to amend the Law relating to Steam Boilers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Provand, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read first time [Bill 158.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 20th February, 1890.

The Lord Saltoun—Took the Oath.

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN (The EARL of LATHOM) reported Her Majesty's Answer to the Address as follows :—

"My LORDS,

Your loyal and dutiful Address affords me much satisfaction. I gladly receive your assurances that you will take into careful consideration the measures which may be submitted to you; and I trust that, with your co-operation, they may form the basis of legislation which will effectually promote and increase the welfare and happiness of my faithful people."

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.

A Bill for further promoting the revision of the statute law by repealing enactments which are superfluous, or have ceased to be in force, or have become unnecessary—presented (*The Lord Chancellor*) ; read 1ª. (No. 23.)

LUNACY CONSOLIDATION BILL.

A Bill to consolidate certain of the enactments respecting lunatics—presented (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª. (No. 24.)

PARTNERSHIP BILL.

A Bill to declare and amend the law of partnership—presented (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª. (No. 25.)

HARES PRESERVATION BILL.

(No. 6.)

House in Committee (according to order.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, the effect of the Amendment which is down on the Notice Book in my name is to maintain the Ground Game Act in its entirety in respect of all nursery, allotment, market, and other private gardens. In other words, it excludes from the protection of this Bill, hares who are so ill-advised as to go into such gardens, instead of remaining in the fields. If this Amendment be passed by your Lordships it is probable that it will disarm the opposition of those persons who are greatly attached to the Ground Game Act, as well as the author of it, and, at the same time, meet the views of those who have petitioned the other House very numerously for a suspension of it during a certain time.

Amendment moved,

In page 1, line 22, after the word "conviction" to add the words "the provisions of this clause shall not apply in cases where a hare or leveret shall have been killed, wounded, or taken inside a nursery or other garden."—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Report thereof to be received To-morrow: and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 26.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 20th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

PUBLIC TRUSTEES.

(3.30.) MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, having regard to the fact that the Public Trustee Bill passed the Upper House last Session, as well as a Bill enabling companies to undertake the offices of trustee and executor, and that like Bills have been again introduced, Her Majesty's Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the whole subject in its entirety, and to examine the clauses of the Bills?

MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to re-introduce the Bill for the appointment of an official or Public Trustee; and, whether the Government will move for the appointment of a Select Committee, to which can be referred the Bill of the Government when introduced, and also the Bills introduced by private

Members for the same or similar purposes?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Government intend to re-introduce the Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee. The Bill will be introduced by the Lord Chancellor in another place, and when it comes down to this House the Government will decide how to proceed with it, endeavouring to ascertain the general sense of the House on the question.

AMMUNITION FOR VOLUNTEERS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the serious injury which will be inflicted upon the best shooting corps and best shots of the volunteer force by the recent reduction of the number of rounds of ammunition allowed from 90 per man to 75, and which will add increased expense to the more zealous members by compelling them to purchase the means of rifle practice heretofore allowed to some extent by the country; and, if, under all the circumstances, and having regard to recent official provisions to secure a higher standing of shooting, and the public declaration on February 4th of the Commandment of the School of Musketry that the supply of ammunition for recruits should be practically unlimited, he will re-consider the matter?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The reduction of the annual allowance of ammunition was made upon the recommendation of Colonel Tongue, the Commandant of the School of Musketry, and the money to be saved has been devoted to a most important purpose in the interest of the volunteers, namely, the appointment of additional Inspectors to supervise and assist in their musketry, and the formation of a special class of volunteer officers to qualify for musketry instructorships. It was found that of the 90 rounds issued only 41 were, on an average, devoted to class firing, and I think it only right that the War Office should be fully informed of the use to which the remainder of this ammunition is put. We know that in some cases a large proportion has been devoted to prize shooting, and that in others it has been sold to outsiders for the benefit of the funds of the corps. Government ammunition is obviously not issued for such an an object. On the other hand, I have no desire to deprive any corps of a single round of ammunition used for legitimate purposes; and in the case of any corps which can satisfy me that the ammunition issued to it is so used, I shall be very glad to sanction the full issue of ammunition to the extent of 90 rounds.

THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what sum of interest and instalments of principal under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, fell due for payment on 1st November, 1889, and how much of this remained unpaid on 31st January, 1890; and what arrears of any amounts falling due before 1st November, 1889, remained unpaid on 31st January, 1890?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The amount of interest and instalments under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts, which fell due for payment on November 1st, 1889, was £85,010, and of that sum there remained unpaid on January 31st, 1890, £5,922. The sum of £1,125 remained unpaid on January 31st, 1890, in respect of interest and instalments which fell due before November 1st, 1889, out of a total of £225,442.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if any case in relation to the Delagoa Bay Railway Company had been laid before the Law Officers of the Crown; and, if so, if any advice or opinion had been taken thereon to justify what our Ambassador at Lisbon wrote on 27th June, 1889, to Senhor Gomez, to the effect that it was the view of Her Majesty's Government that the King of Portugal had not the right of cancelling the concession to the Lorenço Marques Railway Company (*vide* inclosure in No. 29 of Correspondence); and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government have any objection to laying the case and opinion upon the Table of the House for the information of Members?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government were so advised by the Law Officers, but their opinions are never produced.

THE MAYOR'S COURT, LONDON.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the statement, made upon oath in the case of Smither *v.* Devereux, by the Deputy Registrar of the Mayor's Court, London, that

"he knew of no regular scale of costs as applied to the Court. He used his discretion as to the costs he taxed. He did not restrict himself at all;"

and also to the observation made in the same case by Mr. Commissioner Kerr, that he

"had sometimes seen in his own Court very heavy bills of costs in the Mayor's Court, and had spoken very frankly about it;"

And, whether there is any, and, if so, what objection to the exercise of the power vested in Her Majesty by the 2nd section of "The Borough and Local Courts of Record Act, 1872," to direct by an Order in Council the application to the Mayor's Court of Clauses 3, 4, and 5 of the Schedule to that Act, which require the Judge of the Court to settle a table of fees, subject to the allowance of the Rule Committee of the Supreme Court?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry into this matter, and I am informed by the Registrar of the Mayor's Court that the question whether there is a regular scale of costs in the Mayor's Court is the question at issue in the case of "Smithers *v.* Devereux." That case is now in the Queen's Bench Division on appeal from the City of London Court, and is likely to be reached in a fortnight or three weeks. Pending such appeal, I cannot properly express any opinion on the points raised by the hon. Member's question.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Is it the fact that the fees in the Mayor's Court are higher than elsewhere?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. and learned Member must put the question own upon the Paper.

YORK SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, although the Department first called attention to the deficiency of accommodation in York, in consequence of which the School Board was formed, more than three years ago, namely, on 16th December, 1886, and the School Board was elected on 16th February, 1889, the Education Department on 24th March, 1887, wrote, calling attention to the special deficiency of accommodation in the centre of the city, and stated that Her Majesty's Inspector, Mr. French, in 1871 called attention to this fact, and stated further that the school needed had never been provided; whether his attention has been called to the recommendation, in January, 1888, of the Committee which endeavoured to meet the deficiency by voluntary effort—

"That an entirely new school should be built upon land near to Clifford Street, or some other suitable site in the centre of the city, capable of accommodating from 300 to 400 children, probably boys only."

And, whether, seeing that he is of opinion that such a school as that projected by the Kilburn Sisters could not be accepted as supplying any part of the deficiency mentioned in the final notice, and seeing that the School Board for York has now been in existence a year, the Department will now, in accordance with its statutory duty, send a requisition to the York School Board to supply the needed accommodation in the centre of the city?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The first paragraph of the right hon. Gentleman's question can be answered in the affirmative, but I cannot trace the specific recommendation, dated January, 1888, to which he refers. It is, however, indisputable that a part of the deficiency is in the centre of the city, and the School Board have accepted the offer of the Church Extension Association to supply the school needed. Until, therefore, the Department are

satisfied that the school will not be of the required type, or in the required place, or is not being supplied with due dispatch, it will be unnecessary to issue a requisition.

MR. MUNDELLA: Are we to understand that part of the accommodation which the School Board is to get will be supplied by the Kilburn Sisters?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: No doubt part of the accommodation will be ultimately supplied by the Body mentioned.

IRISH MODEL SCHOOLS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether certain teachers in the model schools of Ireland have been dismissed through no fault of their own, but owing to the attendance having fallen below the minimum required by the National Board, and if other dismissals are imminent owing to the same cause; and, whether, in view of the hardships caused, he will consider the advisability of acting on the precedent set by previous Chief Secretaries, and retain these teachers until vacancies arise in schools where the attendance warrants the appointments being made?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education report that the services of certain teachers were dispensed with in the circumstances mentioned in the first paragraph of the question. A similar course may possibly have to be pursued in some other cases. The Commissioners inform me that they have no power to retain such teachers, the rule on the subject being explicit. They, however, point out that with the exception of two cases all the teachers whose services were so dispensed with have subsequently obtained employment in other schools.

DUBLIN TELEGRAMS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to Correspondence between Mr. T. K. Austin, J.P., of Dublin, and the Secretary of the General Post Office in Ireland, respecting a telegram despatched from Montreal, and addressed to "Battersby, Dublin, Ireland," but not delivered; whether, as the telegram referred to the purchase of house property in Dublin, and Mr. Battersby is the head of a well-known house agency firm, there was any excuse for the non-delivery of the telegram; and, if the summary method apparently adopted by the Department in Dublin, in declining to take any trouble with telegrams which they may deem to be insufficiently addressed, was in accordance with the directions issued by the General Post Office?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The Correspondence to which the hon. Member refers has now been submitted to me. The directions issued from head-quarters require that the telegraph officials shall not lightly treat any telegram as non-deliverable, and that, in cases where the sender appears to have done his best to give a full address, every effort is to be made to effect delivery. In the present case, not only had the sender omitted the name of the street, but he had given the address in such form that it was equally applicable to several persons of the same name in Dublin. I am very sorry if any inconvenience has been caused, but the Dublin Post Office appears to have acted in accordance with general rules.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a telegram and a letter which I hold in my hand, and which are addressed in the same way, were delivered by the Post Office; and is it the rule of the Telegraph Department not to apply the same principles to the delivery of a telegram for which 26s. have been paid which they apply to a letter upon which a single penny has been paid?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not acquainted with the facts of the case, but it is quite possible that it would be less difficult to deliver a letter than a telegram.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the second part of my question, namely, whether as the telegram referred to the purchase of house property in Dublin, and Mr. Battersby is the head of a well-known house agency firm there can be any excuse for the non-delivery of the telegram? I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will inquire into the matter personally.

*MR. RAIKES: I have given to the hon. Gentleman all the information

I have been able to obtain upon the subject.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W,): Is the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), on the slender foundation of the solitary instance he has mentioned, entitled to cast on the Post Office Department such sweeping and unqualified aspersions? All I can say is that in the case of hon. Members of this House—and especially of the Irish Members—the Post Office always takes the utmost care in forwarding their telegrams.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that within the last ten days other complaints have been made of the non-delivery of telegrams?

*MR. RAIKES: I can only say that I shall be glad to investigate any other complaint?

CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS (SECOND DIVISION).

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to Clause IX. of the Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1890, concerning the Clerks of the 2nd Division, whether the £190, on obtaining which a Clerk is to receive an annual increment of £10, is intended to include his gross salary, *i.e.* ordinary salary, together with duty pay when in receipt of the latter?

*THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Under the Treasury Minute of February 4th, 1890, the annual increment of £10 is intended to take effect when the salary, apart from duty pay, has risen to £190.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether under the terms of the Treasury Minute of February 4th, 1890, the right of promotion to the First Class of the Second Division will be secured to the clerks serving six hours a day on their attaining their maximum salary of £200, provided the necessary certificate of merit can be granted; and whether under the terms of such Treasury Minute it is intended to compensate clerks subsequently called upon to give a regular daily service of seven hours by the sum of £15 per annum for the extra hour, as prescribed by the Orders in Council of February 12th, 1876, and July 15th, 1881?

MR. JACKSON: It is not provided in the Treasury Minute of February 4, 1890, that a vacancy shall be created in the First Class of the Second Division whenever a Second Division clerk, working six hours a day, reaches a salary of £200; but it is the hope of the Treasury that the seven hours' system may shortly be adopted for all clerks of the Second Division, in which case they will be entitled to the benefits of Section 10 of the Minute. The compensation to be given to six-hours' clerks who are called upon, before promotion to the First Class, to work seven hours will be £15.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he would state what was the number of cases under the Sale of Food and Drugs and the Margarine Acts which have been brought before the magistrates sitting at the Wandsworth Police Court during the past year, and the amount of fines inflicted in the various cases?

MR. MATTHEWS: There were 23 cases under the Food and Drugs Act and 13 under the Margarine Act. I shall be happy to show the hon. Member a Return of the fines inflicted in each case.

IRELAND—LAND PURCHASE COMMISSION CASES.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of applications for purchase and sale to the Land Purchase Commissioners in Ireland, and refused by them, up to the 31st of January, 1890; the names of the estates concerned; and the amount of money involved; and, whether he will also state the number of such applications which, having been first refused, were subsequently sanctioned; the names of the estates; and the amount of money involved in these cases?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that from the passing of the Land Purchase Act of 1885 down to January 31, 1890, 2,352 applications for advances, amounting to £1,110,097 were refused. These cases were not limited to applications for advances upon holdings which did not appear to be sufficient security for sums

agreed to be paid for their purchase, but included applications which fell through by reason of delay on the part of the applicants, defective titles, existence of charges, or other difficulties. Of the applications so refused 772 were subsequently sanctioned for sums amounting to £319,177; the original sums applied for in such cases being £383,071. The Commissioners add that the classification of these cases in the manner indicated in the question would involve considerable labour and serious loss of time.

BURMA—OIL CONCESSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether it is a fact that a concession has been granted of certain oil-bearing country in Burma, and to what extent; and, if so, whether the Secretary of State will state the circumstances and conditions under which, and to whom, the concession has been made?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): A lease has been granted of certain oil-bearing country in Burma for 12 years. I believe that the concession is accompanied by particular regulations and conditions, and that many applications have been received for similar concessions. The Secretary of State has asked for further information on the subject.

THE CHAUDALIN MAHARANI OF REWA.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether, as promised on the 15th August last, the attention of the Government has been called to the grievances of H.H. the Chaudalin Maharani of Rewa; and, whether any, and what, answer has been received?

SIR J. GORST: What I stated on the 15th of August last was that the attention of the Government of India had been called to the Maharani of Rewa by the question of the hon. Member. A Memorial upon the subject was addressed by the Maharani to the Government of India on the 21st of January, 1890, but that Memorial has not yet been transmitted by the Government of India to the Secretary of State.

THE CHIN-LUSHAI EXPEDITION.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether any replies have yet been received from the Government of India to the telegraphic inquiries as to the health of the troops engaged in the Chin-Lushai Expedition?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir; no reply has yet been received.

MR. BRADLAUGH: On the very first day of the Session the right hon. Gentleman promised to telegraph for information. Are not nine days an unusual period to wait for a reply from Calcutta?

SIR J. GORST: It would not be very difficult to get a reply from Calcutta, but the hon. Member must recollect that the troops engaged in the Chin-Lushai Expedition are a long way from Calcutta, and some time must necessarily elapse in receiving a reply to any communication.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the Government has succeeded in acquiring from the London County Council the vacant plot of land at Hemming's Row; and, if so, when it is intended to commence the building of the new National Portrait Gallery?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): The Government have agreed to purchase from the London County Council the vacant plot of land at Hemming's Row for £7,000, and Mr. Christian, the architect appointed by the donor, is now engaged upon plans for the new National Portrait Gallery. As soon as those plans are completed, the building will be begun.

THE NAVY ESTIMATES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether contracts have been concluded for the total sum to be expended under the Supplementary Vote of last Session; and, if so, whether, and by what sum, the Estimates have been exceeded owing to increased costs for wages and material

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): By Supplementary Vote I assume the hon. Gentleman means the sum of £10,000,000 appropriated to naval purposes, but not included in the annual votes. Contracts for the whole of that sum have not been concluded. The great recent rise in wages and price of materials has affected the Estimates made previous to that rise, but no contracts have been made or liabilities incurred in excess of the sum alluded to. If, on further examination, it is found that the whole of the work and supplies which this sum of £10,000,000 was to cover cannot at present and prospective prices be satisfactorily completed, it will be my duty to make to the House a further statement on the subject. A statement of all the contracts made for the hulls, machinery, and guns of the ships ordered has been laid upon the Table of the House and should shortly be circulated.

NATIONAL DEBT REDUCTION.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any steps have been taken to reduce the interest on the portion of the National Debt, amounting to £13,645,000, due to the Banks of England and Ireland?

MR. GOSCHEN: Under the Act of 1844 the debt to the Bank of England (£11,015,100) forms parts of the securities against which the Bank issues notes, and the share of the profits payable to the Government was based on the assumption that these securities would yield 3 per cent. Accordingly, so long as the present agreement is in force, it is as broad as it is long, whether the Bank receive 3 per cent interest on the debt in question and pays into the Exchequer somewhat more in respect of profits, or whether the Bank receives a lower rate of interest on the debt and pays into the Exchequer somewhat less in respect of profits. But the remuneration payable to the Bank of England as the bankers of the Government is being examined by a small Committee; and the question of the profits derived by the Bank from its issues, and accordingly of the rate of interest payable on the securities held against the issues, will naturally be included. The debt to the Bank of Ireland (£2,630,769) is not on the same footing, and must be separately considered afterwards.

MR. SEXTON; Will the question be separately considered immediately, or left to an indefinite period?

MR. GOSCHEN: It will not be left to an indefinite period, but some time will probably be necessary.

IRELAND—CASE OF MR. JOHN SLATTERY.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether, in the case of Mr. John Slattery, President of the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association, who was sentenced at Cork on Saturday last, by Messrs. Gardiner and Redmond, Resident Magistrates, to a term of six months' imprisonment (in default of giving bail) on a charge of having used intimidation towards a man named Quinlan, the charge was brought under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act or under the Statute of Edward III.; and, if under the former, under what section or provision of the Act?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the charge was brought under the 2nd section of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act.

MR. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman quite certain that there is power under that section to imprison in default of giving bail?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that the question is likely to come before the Superior Courts.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Messrs. Gardiner and Redmond are the two Resident Magistrates whose decisions have already been altered by the Court of Exchequer, and that both of those gentlemen are ex-police officers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of the hon. Gentleman has not the most remote connection with the question on the Paper.

MR. MAC NEILL: I will put it down for to-morrow.

PROSECUTION OF MR. JOHN KELLY.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland is it the fact that Mr. John

Kelly, having been arrested in Tipperary on a charge of conspiracy to compel and induce the tenants of Mr. Smith-Barry not to pay rent, applied for particulars of the acts alleged against him to the Crown Solicitor, but received a reply from Mr. George Bolton, ignoring altogether this request, and merely supplying a copy of the charge; whether it is the constant practice of the Crown to supply such particulars, as being the right of the accused; and whether he has sanctioned the refusal of Mr. Kelly's request for particulars by the Crown Solicitor?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): I have inquired into the facts of this case, and am informed that in reply to a letter of Mr. Kelly on the 13th, Mr. Bolton furnished next day a full detail of the charge against the accused, with as much particularity as was usual in such cases. There does not appear to have been any refusal to supply any information to which the accused was entitled, or any departure from the usual practice of the Crown in such cases.

MR. M. HEALY (Cork): Is it the fact that an application for particulars of the overt acts relied upon in support of the charge of conspiracy was refused?

MR. MADDEN: The facts are these: The accused person was arrested on a warrant. He asked for particulars, and Mr. Bolton wrote a letter giving them.

MR. M. HEALY: Did he ask for particulars of the overt acts?

MR. MADDEN: He asked for particulars, and received a letter containing particulars of the charge. It is not usual to furnish particulars of the evidence by which the charge is to be sustained. Had he asked for a copy of the information I have no doubt it would have been furnished.

MR. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of the refusal of the Crown Solicitor to give particulars of the overt acts charged?

MR. MADDEN: It is not usual to go beyond what Mr. Bolton did, which was to furnish full particulars of the charge.

SHANNON DRAINAGE.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when will copies of the evidence taken last summer by the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries, relative to the effect of the recent and proposed Shannon Drainage Works upon the fisheries of the district, together with the Inspector's Report thereon, be furnished to the Limerick Board of Fishery Conservators?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Copies will be furnished in the course of a few days.

AGRARIAN CRIME.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a tabulated statement of agrarian crime in Limerick, Cork, Clare, and Kerry, from 1887 to 1889, both inclusive, which was published in the *Cork Constitution* of the 13th instant; whether he can say if this statement has been furnished from official sources by Divisional Commissioner Turner, or his subordinates, or by his or their authority; whether, with a view to testing the accuracy of the statement that 93 evicted farms were taken by new tenants in the counties above named during the year 1889, he will name the localities in which the farms alleged to be so taken are situated; and, whether it is any part of the duties of Divisional Magistrates or their subordinates to supply the Press with statistics?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Divisional Commissioner informs me that the tabular statement was prepared by himself personally, from figures which have been officially published from time to time. I must entirely decline to particularise evicted farms which have subsequently been taken. It is no part of the duty of Divisional Commissioners to furnish statistics to the Press; neither is it contrary to their duty, unless such communications are injurious to the public service.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman arrange to instruct the Officials of the Crown in Ireland to certify information of this kind with their names?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it is necessary to lay down any general rule. It is not the practice.

ROMAN CATHOLIC POLICEMEN.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached of the manner in which Sergeant Chase, of the Dublin Metropolitan Police (mounted force), who has been for some time Station Sergeant in Kevin Street, habitually treats the Roman Catholic members of the force over whom he is in command; whether he is aware that six Roman Catholics have had, in consequence, to resign their positions since his appointment, and to join the unmounted force again; that, of the men appointed to fill their places, three were Protestants, though, by right, five out of the six should have been Catholics; and that, on the 29th June and 15th August last, two holidays in the Catholic Church, the men under Sergeant Chase were prevented from hearing mass, being at an early hour taken to Phœnix Park and drilled there on those days; and, whether steps will be taken to remedy the grievances complained of by the Catholic policemen under Sergeant Chase's command?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioner of Police reports that no complaints have ever been received of the nature indicated in the first paragraph. Neither is it the case that the men referred to as resigning their position did so by reason of any action on the part of the sergeant mentioned. They did so voluntarily, for the purpose of obtaining promotion in the unmounted service. The men appointed were selected not on account of their religion, but because that, in the opinion of their officers, they were the fittest for the position. The officers who made the selections were, as a matter of fact, all Roman Catholics. The allegations as to the men having been prevented from hearing Mass is equally groundless.

MR. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman know whether the men referred to were unable to attend mass on the occasion in question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that mass is celebrated during every half-hour from 7 a.m., and the men were able to attend if they had desired.

MR. M. HEALY: The allegation is that on the day in question they were removed to a place which made it impossible for them to attend mass.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am distinctly informed that the men could have attended mass if they liked.

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of the children of Mrs. Bone (widow), who, although they have been attending Thomson Street School, under the School Board for Glasgow, for years, had, a fortnight ago, their school books taken from them by the master, and were told to go to David Street School, which is much further from their residence than Thomson Street School; whether he is aware that Mrs. Bone refused to send the children to David Street School, and that the children were kept at home; whether the children have since been re-instated in Thomson Street School; and, if so, when, and why; and under what authority the Glasgow School Board acted in thus expelling the children from Thomson Street School?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): Since receiving yesterday notice of the hon. Member's question the Glasgow School Board have been communicated with on the case raised therein. My information is that on account of the crowded state of Thomson Street School the master was instructed to ascertain which children resided nearer to other schools where there might be room for them. Understanding that Mrs. Bone was engaged all day, he sent a message by one of the children asking whether it would be agreeable to her to send them to the David Street School, which, I am informed, is not further from her residence. He asked at the same time to see the books of one of the children, so that such new books as might be necessary might be supplied to them. This occurred on Wednesday, the 12th of February. On Friday, the 14th, Mrs. Bone stated that she preferred the children to remain in Thomson Street School, and they have attended there since that day.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State

for War whether an order for 500 bandoleers was given to Messrs. Hobson and Sons; and, whether it is a fact that the order, either whole or in part, is being executed by Messrs. Ross and Co., who were struck off the List of Contractors in 1888?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: The answer to the first question is in the negative. In any such contract there is now contained a clause forbidding the contractor to sub-let any portion of his contract.

AUXILIARY POSTMEN.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether auxiliary postmen are employed from 4 to 8.30 a.m. and from 8 to 12.30 p.m. for the sum of 1s. 6d. for each period of four and a half hours?

*Mr. RAIKES: There are no auxiliary postmen employed from 4 to 8.30 a.m. and from 8 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. for the payment mentioned by the hon. Member. Auxiliary postmen employed at night or early morning would receive wages of from 11s. to 12s. a week. Besides this, they are provided with uniform clothing and free medical attendance whilst on duty. It is, however, a rule of the Department to employ as auxiliaries such persons only as have some private business or other means of livelihood.

COLONIAL STOCKS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Chancellor of Exchequer if there is any foundation for the report that Her Majesty's Government, departing from their resolution of previous years, are now preparing a measure to enable trustees to invest in Colonial Stocks, although they could not do so under their trust deeds?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Baronet will remember the discussions that took place in this House and elsewhere on the subject, and in what degree the question of enabling trustees to invest in Colonial Stocks has been pressed upon the House and the Government. When the clause conferring this power upon trustees was withdrawn from the Trustee Bill, I made an engagement with the Agents of the colonies that a Committee, in which they should be represented, should be appointed to consider under what conditions assent would be given to the plan. I have not yet received the Report of this Committee.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. M'HUGH.

Mr. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, after the removal of Mr. M'Hugh from Sligo to Tullamore Prison last week, he was visited by Dr. Moorhead, who found him suffering from a severe cold, and who, in consequence, noted in the report book that he should be removed to a larger and better warmed cell; and, whether this recommendation has been carried out?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that, with the exception of the fact that Dr. Moorhead visited the prisoner, the allegations in the question are without foundation.

MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, under the new rules regarding medical certificates and pensions, a man can still take up or put aside a medical certificate as suits him; for instance, whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd, who got a medical certificate of incapacity after service in Ireland, but instead of using it accepted other employment, and was allowed to go back upon his medical certificate and get a pension when he desired to do so, having now again been employed by the Foreign Office, drops his claim to a medical pension and will have to make fresh application with fresh certificate if he desires to return to the position of an incapacitated pensioner?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: No; neither under the new nor the old rules could a man take up or put aside a medical certificate as suited him. If the health of a civil servant is sufficiently restored to permit of his re-employment, it is the duty of the Government to appoint him to the first available vacant office for which he is qualified, and thus to save the whole or a part of his pension. If the second office is of not less value than the first the pension ceases altogether. If it is of less value, only so much of the pension is paid as makes equal the value of the two offices. Mr. Clifford Lloyd has been

appointed to an office in the permanent Civil Service of equal value to that from which he was formerly retired on a medical certificate. He can only again become entitled to any retired allowance—(1) By serving until he has completed 60 years of age; (2) or on the production of a further medical certificate that he has become incapable from infirmity of discharging the duties of his office; (3) by the abolition of his office.

THE MURDER OF JAMES DALY.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that Dennis Connell, who has been tried four times for the murder of James Daly, and who was to have been tried for the fifth time at Maryborough next month, has been released, and sent out of the country?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is the case that Connell has been released and has left the country. On the advice of his legal advisers he made application to the Government in this behalf, at the same time undertaking if released to leave the country and not return thereto. This application, after careful consideration by the Law Officers of the Crown, was acceded to.

MR. ALFRED PEASE (York): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of a young man named Dennis Connell, who was tried before a special jury under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act at the last Assizes held at Tullamore, in King's County, for the murder of one Dennis Daly, at Ballyknock, County Kerry, on 22nd November, 1888, for which murder a man named Hickey had already been tried, found guilty, and hanged, and in whose case the jury disagreed; if it is true that this same Dennis Connell had been already tried on this same capital charge on three previous occasions, on each of which the jury had been unable to agree upon a verdict; whether in each instance the venue was removed from the county in which the murder took place, and the jury, a special one, empannelled under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; if it is a fact that at the third trial 41 Catholic jurors, and at the fourth trial 47 Catholic jurors, were ordered to stand aside by the Crown, and that on both these occasions the prisoner was tried by a jury exclusively Protestant; and if the newspapers are correct in stating that after being tried for the fourth time, and the jury being unable to agree upon a verdict, the prisoner was ordered back by Mr. Justice O'Brien to stand his trial for a fifth time at the next Assizes?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My answer to paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the question are in the affirmative. I have no information as to the religion of the jurors.

MR. SEXTON: Do the Crown make inquiry, or do they abstain from making it? Are not the lists in the hands of the Crown Agent, marked so as to indicate the religion of every juror?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not intimately acquainted with the process to which the hon. Gentleman refers. Perhaps he will be good enough to give notice of the question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—BOATS.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the various descriptions of boats sanctioned by the Committee of the Board of Trade, under the Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Act of 1888, have been submitted to any practical test; and, whether the rules made by the Board of Trade, as to the number of persons which may be carried by these boats, are founded upon any such test?

*MR. HOWARD VINCENT: Before my right hon. Friend answers this question, I should like to ask him if it is true that the enforcement of the rules under the Saving Life at Sea Act, 1888, have been postponed by the Board of Trade until June, and if it is well understood that they will not be longer delayed?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It is true that the rules in question have been delayed in order to refer a point raised to the Committee. I hope it may not be necessary to further postpone them, and as far as it depends upon me it shall not be done. In reply to the question of my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to say that in one case only has it been found necessary to submit to a practical test the various de-

scriptions of boats referred to in the rules founded upon the Report of the Life Saving Appliances Committee, as in the other cases no new principle or method of construction was involved. The rules made by the Board of Trade upon the Report of the Committee as to the numbers of persons which may be carried by these boats have not been founded upon any such tests, but are founded on the advice of the Committee, who are practically acquainted with the subject.

IRELAND—KILKENNY COUNTY INFIRMARY.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the recent proceedings of the Governors of the Kilkenny County Infirmary, and to a letter from the Bishop of Ossory, dated 12th February, 1890, in which he deprecates the intention of the Governors to place the nursing of the infirmary in the hands of the Protestant Nursing Institution of Baggot Street, Dublin; and whether he will take steps to prevent any interference with the non-sectarian character of this infirmary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to postpone the question for a day or two, until I am able to make the necessary inquiries.

THE GENERAL DRAINAGE CODE OF IRELAND.

MR. MARUM: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the unsatisfactory condition of the General Drainage Code of Ireland; whether he is aware that in the Sessions of 1883, 1884, and 1885, Bills were introduced, with the approval of the Government, for the Improvement of Landed Property, and for the Drainage of Land in Ireland; whether his attention has been called to the statement contained in the Report in 1887 of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, that "confusion reigns in Ireland" in reference to river and arterial drainage, and to the valuable recommendations of the Commissioners as to legislation; and whether, inasmuch as certain local Drainage Bills have been brought in successively for the past two Sessions, but have been objected to for local reasons, or by local parties, the Government, in view of the foregoing, are prepared to bring in, early this Session, a general drainage measure, to consolidate and amend the existing Drainage Code, and based upon the lines of the Irish Light Railways Bill, or otherwise?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member rightly points out that the protracted opposition which the Government proposals for arterial drainage have met with in past Sessions has prevented them from becoming operative. I fear that if the still larger proposals of the hon. Member were entertained even greater opposition might be anticipated.

THE TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in view of divergence of opinion expressed in the country as to the working of the provisions of "The Technical Instruction Act, 1889," especially with reference to the powers of the Department of Science and Art, he will undertake to publish a statement of those powers; and, whether the powers thus conferred interfere with the action of the local authorities; and, if so, to what extent?

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): Is it the fact that the Education Department decline to give any interpretation of the Act?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The powers of the Department of Science and Art under the Technical Instruction Act are so very limited and are so clearly defined that I am at a loss to understand the divergence of opinion to which the hon. Member refers. But if he will be so good as to inform me of the specific points with regard to which it exists I will see whether a statement of those powers can be prepared. Local institutions have the right of appeal to the Department under certain circumstances if they consider themselves unfairly used by the local authority; and the latter cannot grant aid to subjects of instruction other than those contained in the Science and Art Directory, except in a Minute sanctioning the same, made on the representation of the local authority by the

Department and laid before Parliament. But as this is a protection to the local authority by affording it an authoritative interpretation in a matter which would otherwise rest with the auditor and the Law Courts, it can scarcely be called a power of interference.

THE SALFORD GAS FRAUDS.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Ellis Lever, against whom an action is pending for corrupting the late Gas Manager of Salford by offering him bribes, has been permitted to have a private interview with that person while in prison; and if such permission is in accordance with the Prison Rules?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; the Prison Commissioners granted an order to a solicitor, Mr. Godfrey Rhodes, and his client, Mr. Lever, to visit Hunter in prison, a representation having been made to them in writing by the solicitor that the prisoner was a material witness for the defendant in the action, and that the visit was necessary in the interests of justice. I am informed that the permission was in accordance with the Prison Rules.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that no charge of corruption has been made against Mr. Lever, except by the man Hunter, who is now in gaol? Does not the charge, at the present moment, absolutely rest on the statement made by Hunter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have not received any evidence in regard to Mr. Lever which enables me to answer that question offhand.

IRELAND—THE DUBLIN HOSPITALS BILL.

MR. SEXTON: I had intended to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the obstacle which prevented the passing of the Dublin Hospitals Bill last year has been since disposed of by the Treasury; and whether the pledge to re-introduce the Bill will be fulfilled at such a time as to allow of careful consideration of the details of the measure; but at the request of the Minister to whom the question is addressed I beg to postpone it until Thursday next.

FISHERY PIER IN GALWAY BAY.

MR. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a letter from Mr. F. Comyn, published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, offering a site, building material, &c., for the construction of a fishery pier in a suitable part of Galway Bay, possessing great natural advantages for the development of the fishing industry; and whether he will take steps to ascertain if the facts are as stated in the letter; and, if such should prove to be the case, whether he will consider the advisability of affording every assistance in the power of the Government to carry out such a scheme by suitable means for the benefit of the poor and industrial population of that district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall take steps to inquire as to the facts of the case. If the scheme be found desirable, I shall be glad to consider what power the Government have to promote it.

CARETAKERS.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, how many tenants have been turned into caretakers by notice of ejectment; and whether the Government have the means of ascertaining how many of that number have been re-instated as tenants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman does not specify any period for which he desires the information alluded to in the question. I may, however, point out that the Government present to Parliament Quarterly Returns of the eviction notices filed in Courts under Section 7 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, the last such Returns being for the quarters ended September 30 and December 31, 1889, presented on February 12. As regards the number of actual evictions which follow the serving of such eviction notices, the fullest information at the disposal of the Government is likewise presented quarterly to Parliament, and is now before the House up to December 31 last, Returns for that and the previous September quarter having been also presented on February 12.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I am sure it is likely that the Government are unable to give this information; but, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, there are a good many Gentlemen of both ways of thinking in this House who are extremely anxious to have information as to how many tenants have been turned into caretakers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite understand the object of the right hon. Gentleman; but I do not think it possible to give the information without entailing a large amount of labour.

INFLUENZA IN THE NAVY.

MR. KNATCHBULL HUGESSEN (Rochester): At the request of the First Lord of the Admiralty I beg to postpone until Monday a question, whether his attention has been called to a statement which recently appeared in a naval and military journal, to the effect

> "That a sailor was lately taken from one of the ships at Sheerness suffering from influenza; that the next day he was sent in a tug to Chatham Hospital, a two hours' journey; that on the following day he died;"

and, if this be true, whether he will take steps to insure that in the future such cases shall be treated in the locality where they occur?

LABOUR CONFERENCES.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Government has now determined to allow the British Delegates to discuss the International Regulation of the Hours of Labour at either the Berne or Berlin Conferences?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government have not yet replied to the invitations addressed to them by the German and Swiss Governments; and until those replies have been received it would not be proper to state their purport.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: May I ask whether hon. Members will have to wait any long time for information?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No; I think not.

CHARITY COMMISSION—SUTCOMBE.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Penrith Division (Mr. J. W. Lowther) whether the Trustees of the Sutcombe Charity lands invited tenders for them in one or more lots; whether a carpenter in the village tendered for three lots, comprising 10 acres in all; and three other cottagers for the remaining 14 acres; whether these applications, as well as subsequent ones, for allotments were all refused, and the land let in one lot to a tenant of one of the Trustees for less money than the aggregate rent offered by the cottagers; and whether, looking to all the circumstances of the case, the Charity Commissioners will use their influence with the Trustees to make provision in some way for letting land or allotments to these men?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The information before the Commissioners relating to the second and third paragraphs is incomplete; but it appears that on the 25th of November, 1889, application was made to the Trustees by 12 men, including certain labourers, for allotments; but a tender for the whole land had been accepted by the Trustees on the 1st of that month. In reply to the last paragraph, a local inquiry into the general administration of the Charity will shortly be held by an Inspector, who will be directed to include in his inquiry the question of what provision exists or can be made at Sutcombe for letting land or allotments.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON: When will the Report be presented?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I think it will be made very shortly; at all events before Lady Day next, which is the time the tenant takes possession.

FEE-PAYING (SCOTLAND) SCHOOLS.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Government consents to the Address for the Return, Fee-Paying (Scotland) Schools; and, if so, whether the Government would endeavour to have the Return in the hands of Members prior to the expiry of the period allowed for the Education (Scotland) Code lying upon the Table of the House, before becoming final?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: We are prepared to consent to the Address for the Return, so far as it relates to the name of each School Board, in whose district a school or schools have been

sanctioned in which fees may be charged in any or all of the standards; the name of each school so sanctioned; and the scale of fees charged in each. We are also prepared to give the average attendance at each of such schools at the date of the last Return in the possession of the Department. But we are unable to give the average attendance of the infants and each standard separately, or the average attendance for the special four weeks referred to. The Department does not possess this information; and it would not only involve much labour, which my Lords do not feel themselves justified in imposing upon the staff of the schools, but might be misleading, as it would be based upon the Returns for an insufficient period. I must also point out that it would be impossible that the Return could be in the hands of Members within the period during which the Code must lie upon the Table, if it were delayed for these statistics.

CROFTER COLONISTS.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate what Report he has received of the condition and prosperity of the Crofter Colonists sent out with Government aid last spring to Western Canada; whether any, and, if so, what amount of the £10,000 voted last Session for this purpose remains unexpended; and if it is proposed to send out any more crofter families this spring to Western Canada?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I am informed that a Report has been received which will be submitted to an early meeting of the Colonization Board, the general purport of which is that the families are comfortably housed and have more or less land ready for crop. A small balance of the money voted last Session remains unexpended; but until the accounts are fully made up it is impossible to say what it amounts to. It is not proposed to send out any more families this spring, and no steps in this direction will be taken until the Committee appointed to inquire into the State-aided emigration have issued their Report.

*MR. SETON-KARR: When will the Colonisation Committee be re-appointed?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I am not in a position to say.

THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANIES.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why the Southern Railway Companies have not complied with the Order of the House to furnish a Return of the running of their passenger trains for the year ending June, 1889, but have only presented a Return for three months; and from what sources the Returns have been compiled?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In the correspondence appended to the Return on this subject the Southern Companies have given explanations as regards their not having fully complied with the terms of the Order. The compilation of the Returns has rested with the Companies, who are solely responsible for the information given.

MR. BAUMANN: Will the right hon. Gentleman produce all the correspondence which has passed between the Board of Trade and the Railway Companies in reference to the matter?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: If my hon. Friend will give me notice, I daresay I shall be able to do so.

PROSECUTION OF A SURGEON AT WARWICK.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the trial on the 20th December, 1889, at Warwick, of a surgeon in Birmingham for manslaughter; whether it is correct that the jury acquitted the prisoner without hearing the defence, and that Mr. Justice Wills stated—

"I think that this is a very harsh prosecution. I cannot help feeling that very hard measure has been dealt out to this man. Everything has been pushed against him in a fashion and spirit which makes it difficult for me to speak quite calmly about it There was no reasonable case against him, and, in order to mark my sense of these proceedings, I shall disallow the costs of the prosecution;"

whether it is correct that the prosecuting counsel stated that he had himself

"Formed a strong opinion about the case, and had made that opinion known to the Treasury;"

whether this prosecution was instituted by the Director of Public Prosecutions; and out of what funds will the costs of the prosecution, which the Judge disallowed, be paid?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): My attention has been called to the trial in question, and I have carefully considered the whole case. I believe the words quoted are a correct report of the observations attributed to Mr. Justice Wills and the junior prosecuting counsel; but the learned counsel, as he has since frankly admitted to me, was mistaken as to his having communicated to the Director of Public Prosecutions the opinion he had formed. The case was one of a charge against a medical man for causing the death of a woman in humble circumstances, and the Coroner's Jury had found a verdict of manslaughter. The prosecution was undertaken by the Director of Public Prosecutions, who acted throughout under the advice of two members of the Midland Circuit of great experience in criminal cases. Having considered the depositions, I am of opinion that, as the Grand Jury had found a true Bill, the Director was right in presenting the case for trial. Certainly the responsibility, if any, rested with the learned counsel and not with him. I am informed that, had the Grand Jury thrown out the Bill, it was not intended to offer any evidence in support of the Coroner's inquisition. The costs of the prosecution, which the Judge disallowed, will be paid out of the Vote for the expenses of the Public Prosecutor.

MR. MAC NEILL: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman give the House an assurance, as one of the principal Law Officers of the Crown, that he will do all he can to check and discountenance all distinctions between the English and Irish Law Procedure?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not a question which arises out of the answer.

PUBLIC TRUSTEES.

MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to re-introduce a Bill for the appointment of an Official or Public Trustee; and whether the Government will move for the appointment of a Select Committee to which can be referred the Bill of the Government when introduced, and also the Bills introduced by private Members for the same or similar purposes?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Government intend to re-introduce the Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee. The Bill will be introduced by the Lord Chancellor in another place; and when it comes down to this House the Government will decide how to proceed with it, endeavouring to ascertain the general sense of the House on the question.

THE LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACTS—ADVANCES.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what were the total sums applied for and sanctioned as advances under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, up to the 31st January, 1890?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The total sums applied for and sanctioned as advances under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, up to January 31, 1890, were £8,302,659 and £6,575,636 respectively.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUTE LAW.

MR. HOWELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the publication of a revised edition of the Statutes, and the desirability of there being a reduction in bulk of the "Statutes in force," the Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee, to confer with the Statute Law Committee as to the practicability of further consolidating the Statute Law, and of repealing old, virtually obsolete, and spent Statutes, and thus purge the Statute Book of such matter as may be deemed to be no longer needed in a collection of the Statutes?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have communicated with the Statute Law Revision Committee, and with the permission of the House I will read a letter I have this afternoon received from the Chairman, Lord Thring, who is well known to hon. and right hon. Members as the able and conscientious draftsman to successive Governments, and who now gives his valuable services to the Revision Committee. The letter is as follows:—

"On behalf of the Statute Law Committee, I beg to thank you for having afforded us the opportunity of considering the subject of Mr. Howell's question to the Government.

"We welcome most heartily the prospect of the encouragement and assistance which would be afforded by the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to deal with the subjects upon which we have laboured; and we should be very glad to learn that there would be submitted to them the Bills whose preparation we have advised and superintended, and the passing of which would enhance so greatly the value of the new edition of the revised Statutes now making rapid progress.

"Such a manifestation of the desire of the House that the several Bills (as well for the repeal of obsolete enactments as for the consolidation of scattered Statutes) which have been prepared for the different Departments of the Government should be presented without delay and referred to the proposed Committee would be of inestimable value in furthering the work, and the Bills would return to the House after examination by that Committee with an authority which we cannot claim for our unassisted labours.

"I have only to add that my own services and those of the other members of the body of which I am Chairman will be entirely at the disposal of the Committee if appointed."

I shall place myself in communication with hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, with the view of obtaining their concurrence in the appointment of a Committee to deal with Consolidation and Statute Law Revision Bills, so as to secure the passing of measures for the declaration and improvement of the law which are of great public utility and are altogether devoid of any political or Party character.

TELEGRAPH ENGINEERING INSPECTORS.

MR. BAUMANN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the scheme recommended by the Postmaster General for the improvement of the position of the telegraph engineering inspectors, which was under the consideration of the Treasury in June last, will be sanctioned?

MR. JACKSON: I am unable to say that the scheme referred to by the hon. Member will be sanctioned; but the preliminary difficulties which prevented the Treasury from coming to a decision have quite recently been removed, and I hope shortly to communicate the Treasury decision to the Postmaster General.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the 10 volumes of Evidence, upon which the Report of the Special Commission is founded, will be issued to Members; and what interval he proposes to allow between the delivery of the Evidence and the day when it is proposed to move that the Report be adopted, and inserted on the Journals of the House?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The evidence of the Special Commission occupies 11 volumes, consisting of the Evidence and the Appendix, and they will probably be followed by a 12th, containing index matter. I am informed that the first 11 volumes could not at the earliest be delivered to Members who may apply for them before March 1. As at present advised, I do not propose to postpone the Motion which stands in myname, as the evidence has been in the Library during the course of the proceedings of the Special Commission, and has been published in the newspapers from day to day.

*MR. HUNTER: Is it not the fact that every sentence and almost every line of the Report purports to be based on evidence, and is the House to be asked to consider that Report without being furnished with the evidence on which it is based?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: With great respect to the hon. and learned Gentleman, I think he will find that I have answered his question.

*MR. P. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman supply copies of the proceedings to persons incriminated other than Members of this House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No application of the kind has been made to me.

*MR. P. O'BRIEN: If application is made will they be supplied?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is open to them to obtain the evidence by purchase.

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.

In reply to Mr. A. S. HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford),

*MR. W. H. SMITH said: I hope the House will read this Bill a second time to-night, it being distinctly understood that the Bill is to be referred to a Select Committee.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that he has given a distinct pledge that full notice would be given, so that the Bill would not be read without full discussion?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not recollect having given any distinct pledge of the kind; but, of course, if it is so I will carry it out.

NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether there is any foundation for the statement that it is contemplated to hold a series of Naval Manœuvres on a very large scale in the vicinity of Gibraltar?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am glad that my hon. Friend has asked this question. I am informed by the First Lord of the Admiralty, who has been obliged to leave the House, that the statement in question is entirely without foundation.

IRELAND—ARRESTS AT NEWBRIDGE.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) put a series of questions to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, of which he said he had given private notice, in reference to the arrest at Newbridge of persons who were alleged to have been engaged in building houses for the shelter of evicted tenants, and who had been taken in handcuffs to Newbridge barracks.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked for a little longer notice of the question than the quarter of an hour which he had received. If the hon. Member would put the question down he would answer it to-morrow.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

EAST INDIA (BOARD OF REVENUE, BENGAL.)

Address for—

"Copies of, or Extracts from, Correspondence relating to the appointment of Mr. Beames as a Member of the Board of Revenue, Bengal."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

GLEBE LANDS (SALES),

Address for—

"Return of Sales effected of Glebes under 'The Sale of Glebes Act, 1888;' showing in each case the acreage, purchase money, and the number of purchasers; stating also whether any Sales have been made to artisans or agricultural labourers; and showing the Glebes in respect of which applications are still under consideration."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

ARMY AND NAVY GUNS.

Address for—

"Return showing the number, description, name of designer, place of manufacture, and actual cost of the various Rifled Iron and Steel Guns supplied by the War Department to the Naval and Land Service during the year 1888-9, showing whether each Gun is Land or Naval (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 95, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Duff.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Amendment, as amended [19th February] proposed to the Question, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, &c.—[See page 128].

And which Amendment, as amended, was—

At the end of paragraph 11, after the word "Scotland," to insert the words—"But we humbly submit to Your Majesty that the present mode of legislating for the domestic affairs of Scotland is unsatisfactory; that measures affecting the welfare of the Scottish people are not considered, in consequence of the pressure of business of the other portions of the United Kingdom; that when Bills relating to Scotland alone are being dealt with, the decision of the often contrary to the wishes of the great House is majority of the Scottish representatives; and that it is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to devolve upon."—(*Dr. Clark.*)

And the Amendment to the proposed Amendment, as amended, was,

After the word "upon" to add the words "the Members of Parliament for Scotland, sitting in Scotland, the consideration of the domestic affairs of that Country, or to adopt some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to the control of the representatives of the Scottish people."—(*Mr. Donald Crawford.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Debate resumed.

*(4.33.) MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): I move that the Amendment to the Amendment to the Address be amended by adding the words "at such

time, and under such conditions as may be desired by the Scottish people." I desire not, Sir, to trouble the House on this question. I hope that when my Friend the hon. Member for North East Lanarkshire has heard my explanation he may be induced to adopt the Amendment without further discussion.

*MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I have no objection.

(4.35.) Amendment made to the Amendment to the proposed Amendment, as amended, by adding, at the end thereof, the words "at such time and under such conditions as may be desired by the Scottish people."

(4.36.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): I wish at this point to say a few words as to the course which I venture to recommend the House to adopt with reference to this Amendment. We have now before us fragments of the Amendments proposed by the hon. Members for Caithness and North-East Lanarkshire, and it appears to me it would be for the convenience of the House if, without further discussing the principles involved in the Amendments, words were introduced so as to make sense of what is left of them, and that then the House should express its opinion on the Amendment as a whole. If that is done the voting will be perfectly intelligible.

Words, as amended, added to the proposed Amendment, as amended.

(4.39.)—Question proposed,

"That the words 'But we humbly submit to Your Majesty that the present mode of legislating for the domestic affairs of Scotland is unsatisfactory; that measures affecting the welfare of the Scottish people are not considered, in consequence of the pressure of business of the other portions of the United Kingdom; that when Bills relating to Scotland alone are being dealt with, the decision of the House is often contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Scottish representatives, and that it is desirable, while retaining the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, to devolve upon the Members of Parliament for Scotland, sitting in Scotland, the consideration of the domestic affairs of that Country, or to adopt some other means whereby Scottish affairs shall be entrusted to the control of the representatives of the Scottish people, at such time and under such conditions as may be desired by the Scottish people' be inserted in the Address after the word 'Scotland' at the end of paragraph 11."

(4.41.) MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): I rise to a point of order, Sir. Is it not a fact that you are putting words involving a proposition which has already been negatived by the House on a Division?

*MR. SPEAKER: The House yesterday omitted certain words: the question now is whether other words shall be substituted, and I am now putting all the Amendments in their collective form.

(4.42.) The House divided:—Ayes 141; Noes 181.—(Div. List, No. .)

(4.53.) Main Question again proposed.

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) rose to move the Amendment of which he had given notice, which was, in paragraph 12, to add the words "And we humbly submit to Your Majesty that the said Bill should apply to all Tithes and Tithe Rent-Charges, whether they be the property of any ecclesiastical or other person or Corporation."

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot move the Amendment which stands in his name because it raises a discussion on a Bill of which notice has already been given by the Government.

*(4.55.) MR. GEDGE: I am obliged to you, Sir, for having pointed out the fact, but I presume that I am in order in discussing this particular paragraph of the Address, without moving an Amendment or alluding to the Bill, which is the subject of it. I hope the House will believe I should not, as a warm supporter of the Government, take up its time or move an Amendment to the Address, if it were not on a matter which seems to me to be of paramount importance. Now this paragraph runs—

"We thank your Majesty for the information that a Bill for improving the procedure by which Tithe is now levied, and for facilitating its redemption, will be laid before us."

First, I desire to take exception to the terms of the paragraph, for it speaks of levying tithe—a term never before applied to that class of property—as though it were a charge of the same nature as rates and taxes We no more levy tithe than we levy any other rent. That word "levying" first raised my suspicions, but those suspicions were increased and strengthened by the manner in which the leader of the House referred to the matter last Wednesday. On that

day the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said—

"With respect to tithe, I feel that it is tender ground, but I venture to say one thing, and one thing only, upon it. I hold that we should carefully sever in our own minds those questions which relate to the present appropriation of tithe from those questions which relate to the tithe itself."

I am entirely at one with the right hon. Gentleman on that point. But he went on to say—

"The tithe itself is a property which ought to be respected and preserved with due regard to the rights and position of all those who are concerned in the administration and the use of it—I think it ought to receive that consideration and respect from those who hold it, as I for one do, to be national property; and in giving it that consideration we must take care that in our disputes about modes and circumstances we do not allow it to be frittered away."

There, again, I cannot make any objection to the statement that we ought not to allow tithes to be frittered away because of any disputes as to the future application or apportionment of them. It does not surprise me that the right hon. Gentleman calls them national property, although I believe it is the first time he has made such a declaration publicly, and that such a declaration is opposed to his previous statements and acts. But we on this side of the House are not responsible for what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian, who makes many statements in which we cannot concur. If the matter had rested there I should not have taken part in this discussion. But the leader of the House, in his reply to the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian spoke as follows:—

"The right hon. Gentleman referred in terms which I desire to echo to the question of tithe. He said that tithe ought to be respected and preserved as national property. I also echo that sentiment, and it will be the effort of Her Majesty's Government to present a measure to that effect. While I regard tithe as national property, I do not regard it as fitting that the owner or occupier of the land should appropriate it to himself, and whatever our difficulties may be as to the application of the fund, it is our duty, and the duty of the House of Commons, to take measures that the fund itself shall remain intact."

Now, as to some of these opinions, I make no hostile criticism. But my right hon. Friend emphasised the statement that tithes are national property, and I hope I shall be able to elicit from him an explanation of that statement. It certainly is the first time he or any other Conservative leader has made such a statement. I think I shall be able to show to him that, as a matter of fact, tithes are not national property. My authorities for this are Blackstone and Freeman, and Lord Selborne—who certainly is not a Conservative and who was Lord Chancellor in a former Liberal Government. If you consult any of these authorities, and especially Lord Selborne's last work, *Ancient Facts and Fictions*, you will find it is modern fiction—it certainly is not an ancient fact—that tithe rent charges are national property. You will also find it proved to demonstration by the learned Nobleman that tithes were given by individuals to different parishes and to different Ecclesiastical Corporations long before Parliament existed, and although Parliament has of course the power to regulate tithes, as it regulates the use of all other property, as it seems fit, yet tithe stands precisely in the same position with regard to ownership as any other property. I will take another witness—Professor Freeman—who shows that while the State has absolute right and power to deal with any property for the benefit of the nation—just as it has a right to deal with our lives—it has no more right to act in this way with regard to tithes than it has with regard to any other property held in trust or belonging to individuals. My right hon. Friend's observation has been made a text by the newspapers which represent the views of the "National Liberation Society," and unless my right hon. Friend can say that his observation has been misunderstood, or unless he retracts it, I fear that a heavier blow has been struck at the property of the Church by my right hon. Friend than it has received for a very long time. I am not at all surprised to find that these remarks are cheered by the opposite side. If they were cheering me I should regret it, because I never wish to make a speech which will draw forth applause from my opponents. I regret to make these observations, and I should not do so if I did not consider the interests of the Church of England—I would rather say the interests of Christianity—in this country are far paramount to any other interests we have in this House. It is quite clear that if the tithes are national property the State is now using that national

property in paying the clergy. The highest authorities tell us that the clergy are not State paid. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) lately wrote a letter, which has been quoted publicly and never withdrawn, to the following effect—"Mr. Gladstone, in reply to your letter, desires me to inform you that the clergy of the Church of England are not State paid." Lord Granville's Secretary recently wrote—"I am desired by Lord Granville to state that tithes existed in England before Acts of Parliament," and he refers his correspondent to an article on the origin of tithes in *Blackstone's Commentaries* and other text books. The Commentaries lay down that the tithes are not national property. Tithes can be divided into three classes: First, there are tithes which belong to the parishes to which they were originally given for the support of the clergy. Next there are tithes on which the State forcibly laid hands, and which were given by Henry VIII. to private individuals. These tithes are, I believe, largely enjoyed by some Gentlemen opposite, who would like to take from the clergy the tithes they receive for doing their duty, but who, at the same time, desire to keep their own tithes though they do nothing in return. There is a third class of tithe, namely, the tithe which, having been taken away from its original destination by Henry VIII. and given to his favourites, has been purchased back within the last few years and handed over to the clergyman of the parish for which it was originally intended. A society exists for the purpose of buying or redeeming these tithes. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) has been for many years a member of that society. Until two years ago he was a trustee, and that society, with his authority, has been asking people to give money for the purpose of buying up tithes taken away four centuries ago, and handing them back to the parishes. Is it possible the right hon. Gentleman would have been a trustee of this society if he had been of opinion that when the tithes were handed back they would not belong to the Church but to the nation, which would then do what it liked with them? If so, I do not think there would be a clearer case of obtaining money under false pretences. I think I may, therefore, fairly argue that as long as the right hon. Gentleman was a trustee of that society he did not consider the tithes national property, for if he did he perpetrated a fraud on all those who were induced by seeing his name among the trustees to contribute to its funds. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) who is not a very Conservative politician has said that, in his opinion, when tithes have been legally alienated to private uses they acquire more the character of personal than of public estates. Are we to suppose that property which is no longer national, but is personal, becomes national again because it is brought back and restored to the use for which it was originally granted. I cannot believe that my right hon. friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) intended to imply that, and therefore I hope I am doing a kindness to him, and I am sure I am doing a kindness to the Christian Church in England, when I ask him to take this opportunity of explaining his remarks to the satisfaction not only of his supporters in this House but of the Church of England at large.

*(5.7.) MR. W. H. SMITH: Mr. Speaker

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman cannot speak again, as he has already spoken on the main question, except with the indulgence of the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I intended, Sir, to throw myself on the indulgence of the House, as I am aware I have no right to speak again, having taken part in the debate on the Address. I am really surprised that my hon. Friend should have thought it necessary to call into question the words I used and to insist on an interpretation of them which certainly never occurred to me as being possible. I referred to the tithes as national property in contradistinction to tithes as private property. I look upon tithes as appropriated to the discharge of duties which are of the highest importance to the nation itself, namely the duties of the clergy of the Established Church, which is a National Church. If it is necessary to go into every minute particular in explanation of every phrase used in the course of debate, I am afraid

our discussions will be very much lengthened. But, Sir, I am sure the House and the country quite understood the distinctions I drew between national and private uses. I referred to tithe as being appropriated for ecclesiastical purposes to the clergy, whose duty it is to discharge certain functions of the highest value and importance to Members of the National Church, and as being in that sense national property. The House would hardly permit me to refer to the other portions of my hon. Friend's speech, and I only regret that my hon. Friend has attached so much importance to what I said.

*(5.9.) MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I do not propose at present to move the Amendment which stands in my name. I hope I may have another opportunity.

(5.10.) MR. STANSFELD (Hafax): The Amendment I have the honour to move runs in these words—

"And we humbly express our regret to your Majesty that the Local Government Legislation of 1888 and 1889 is still left defective, and that no intention is announced either of proceeding during the present Session to the constitution of District and Parochial Councils in Great Britain, or of carrying further, in the Metropolis and elsewhere, the organisation and powers of Local Government."

The proposition contained in this Amendment is a large one, but it is a distributive one. I have cited a number of cases in which local government has been left defective, and the effect of my Amendment is to express my regret that we have no distinct promise or any reasonable expectation of legislative proposals on the part of the Government with regard to any one of these various subjects. I do not suggest that Her Majesty's Government are to undertake to legislate this Session on all the subjects I have mentioned, but there is considerable reason why they should at least make some attempt in one or more of these directions. It is one of the misfortunes of our time that there are many urgent subjects which it is impossible for Parliament to dispose of immediately. But there is no reason why we should not make what attempts under present conditions are possible to do something at any rate to redeem the obligations which rest upon the House. Yesterday week the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) in answer to a question put by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) gave us to understand that District Council Bills for England and Scotland were already drafted and that he saw no reason why such measures which were of a non-political character should not be introduced and passed during the present Session. I will only say with regard to the invitation then made by the right hon. Gentleman that he has every reason to expect assistance from us on this subject. He passed a Local Government Act last year largely with our assistance, and if he had had our opposition rather than our assistance the fate of that measure would have been very different indeed. I am quite sure that if another measure carrying further the same reform were now introduced, it would be treated fairly. We should have to reserve our rights as to points and *bonâ fide* differences, but I do not think the measure would receive anything but fair treatment on the part of the Members of the Liberal Party. I hope that before this debate closes we may hear something from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board on the subject of the District Councils Bill, which I understand has been prepared. We propose in the Amendment to express our regret that the Local Government legislation of 1888 and 1889 has been left defective. As the right hon. Gentleman knows County Councils or Boards are not county government, although they are good in themselves. They are only a part of county government; they are, so to speak, the superstructure, the crown of the arch which has been reared and at present left without any sub-structure to support it. When the Local Government Bill of the right hon. Gentleman was introduced, objections were urged against the principle of the measure—not from this side of the House, but from the right hon. Gentleman's own side—doubts being entertained as to the expediency of placing the administrative duties hitherto performed by selected bodies in the hands of bodies elected on a broad and popular franchise. It was pointed out, however, that if men of leisure and intelligence, who had hitherto formed the County Authorities, would take their places as representatives of the people in the

County Councils instead of nominees of the Crown, they would gain, and not lose, in influence in their respective localities. By this time those gentlemen must be satisfied of the truth of that view, which I shared with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board himself. I want to say with regard to County Government reform, that it means more than County Councils; it means, first of all, simplification of areas within the county, and this is not pedantry. This conception is based upon a practical knowledge of the difficulties of local administration and government with inlerlacing areas and crossing boundaries in the various counties and districts. As a matter of fact we have begun our simplification of Local Authorities at the top instead of the bottom of the structure. We should have begun with the unit of local administration and built upon that unit. In my opinion the unit from which we should have started is the parish. It is true that a parish is a variable quantity; some are too large and some are too small, but those that are too large should be divided, and those that are too small should be grouped together. What we should not do is to form the unit out of a congeries of portions of parishes, or the result will be great confusion with regard to boundaries and interlacing areas. All this is quite clear to those who have been in the habit of studying the question. When you pass from the unit of the future you will necessarily come to intermediate districts before you come to the county at large, and the principle of simplicity, not only for the eye upon the map, but for the knowledge of the working of public affairs, is that these districts should always consist of groups of the unit—and that in the constitution of a district of that kind no unit of local government should suffer division. At present you have a multiplicity of Local Authorities for sanitary, highway, Poor Law, and other purposes, exercising jurisdiction over districts that are not coterminous and that interlace each other. As far as practicable it is desirable that all these areas and authorities should be brought into line and placed on the same popular basis. I do not go so far as to say that all the Local Authorities should be united; as, for instance, it might be advisable that the functions of School Boards should not be taken over by the ordinary Local Authorities. But in our view Parochial Councils and parochial organisation are of all things the most absolutely essential for the development of local government. For a great deal that I have been saying I can claim the support of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. On March 19, 1888, in bringing in the Local Government Bill, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It would be impossible for us to set up a new body for the management of the affairs of counties without extending our plan to the other bodies having control of local affairs within the areas, or to shut our eyes to the number of Local Authorities that now exist."

With regard to the boundaries of areas, the right hon. Gentleman promised that the Reports of Boundary Commissioners should be considered with a view to bringing the boundaries into line, but he has now announced that the consideration of the Reports is postponed. On that decision I express no opinion, but I invite the right hon. Gentleman to explain his motives in arriving at it. The right hon. Gentleman further said—I think on the same occasion—that the Bill divided counties

> "Into Urban and Rural Sanitary Districts, and as it is obviously impossible that we should have a County Council elected on one franchise and a District Board on a more restricted franchise, we propose that the Local Board Districts should be elected on the same principle as Municipal Boards, and the same with Rural Sanitary Districts."

If the House has been good enough to follow me it will have seen that the utterances of the right hon. Gentleman show that Her Majesty's Government are quite in accord with the views I have now put forward, except as to the parish being made the unit of area, and on that point there is some divergence of opinion. But let me deal with the parish. I have already given one reason why it should be organised. There is some public work for which the parish of the future is the fitting area, and it ought to be organised with a view to that work. But I am bound to say that our ideas and wishes go further than this. We want to bring local government home to the doors of the people. It is not simply that we think that the public work of the

parish needs organisation, but we desire that the organisation should reach the small men of the village and the labourers, in order that they may begin to have a training in public affairs on a small scale. They have a vote for the election of Members of Parliament, of County Councillors, and they certainly would have a vote for the District Councils. Is it not the best training, and a necessary training, that they should have something to do in the small area of their parish? The small country shopkeeper knows nothing about Local Government, except that once in three years he is called upon to vote for one candidate or another; he needs to be trained to take some part in local government, and in the smaller affairs of the parish. I venture to think that principle of local government is essentially of a Conservative character, and is acknowledged by all persons who have made themselves familiar with the subject. I believe that this concession would result in most useful training, and in developing the public spirit and independence of the population of our counties. When the Local Government Bill was going through the House, I put some clauses on the Table which were not extravagant, dangerous, or large in character, but the right hon. Gentleman would not be persuaded to accept them. He was inflexible, but I must say that while he was inflexible he clearly put it on the ground that there was not time; he did not put it on any other ground. Before the debate closed we had the advantage of obtaining some admissions from the right hon. Gentleman. The first was this. On the 3rd of May the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Government thought it desirable that at some future period all these questions of the parish, and even the question of taking in the whole Poor Law system, as well as sanitary matters, should be administered by one Local Authority. That is a very remarkable admission of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman indicated that, sooner or later, when he had got the area fixed for the District Board, the functions of local government should be concentrated on the Board. At the end of the debate, in answer to the hon. Member for Rugby, the First Lord of the Treasury said the Government recognised fully the desirability, even the necessity, of doing much for the improvement of the parish vestry, and of giving to it the strength and power that it once possessed. I have another admission which refers to district councils. The House will remember that the clauses relating to district councils in the original Bill were withdrawn. It would have been in our power to have discussed those clauses, and to have moved Amendments upon them, but we agreed to withdraw the Amendments in order that the clauses themselves might be withdrawn. On their withdrawal my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), spoke of them as a material part of the Local Government scheme, and trusted that it would be regarded as a paramount obligation that this part of the subject should be dealt with in the next Session. That Session, Sir, was concluded some months ago. The Member for Rugby (Mr. H. P. Cobb) said he understood the First Lord would bring in a Bill next Session in lieu of those clauses. The First Lord replied—Certainly, that was so, and he did not know what had occurred to give rise to any suspicion to the contrary. It was thus that the clauses were withdrawn without opposition. Now we know that a promise was made in the Queen's Speech, and that it was the intention last Session to fulfil the obligation. It was not fulfilled, and an obligation postponed becomes stronger and not weaker by the fact of postponement, and from that I do think that there is a considerable obligation on the part of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with this question. I now pass to a part of the Amendment which deals with the Metropolis. The Government has no proposal for carrying out the further organisation of London, or increasing its municipal powers. My case here is obviously not based so much upon any specific obligation on the part of the Government as upon the extreme urgency of this enormously complicated question. The utter want of any cohesive organisation in London is a great mischief, and a possible danger to the good government and safety of the Metropolis. Awakening London, for there are signs of a somewhat rough awakening, to employ again, a

phrase which is not original, however, "wants home rule;" it wants to be organised; it wants to set to work the ordinary powers of municipalities, so that it may know how to exercise those powers. You cannot organise London as a whole, but that you must have some organisation is a necessity: you must have District Councils. And here the very same rules and principles apply as apply in the case of the rest of the country. The district must be self contained. The great want of London from the point of view of Parliamentary representation is want of local individuality. As far as my own view goes, I think the functions of local government in London cannot all be concentrated in one Public Body in the future "Districts" of the Metropolis, but in London, as in the country, there should be no crossing of areas, there should be no Poor Law area sitting astride the vestry area or the Parliamentary areas. The only way to make every Parliamentary borough in London an area of municipal life is to organise the whole body of opinion, and to accustom the inhabitants to live together, and to have a common collective opinion—that is, the opinion of the majority of the people, on all subjects of local government and of representation. I will take such arrangements as are essential for the safety and organisation of a democratic town: I consider that nothing is more urgent than that there should be a new and complete organisation of the municipal life of London, such as exists in provincial towns and municipalities. Why, at this moment the whole of London has far less Parliamentary powers than many a petty borough. There is for that no excuse capable of presentation in argument except this—that we have not had time. That is another illustration of the way in which we are worked and overdriven, so that we cannot organise our local government. However, it is not to be supposed that London is content, or will rest content, with such treatment. Men are discontented, and will remain discontented, and they very naturally and rightly feel that, at the least, they ought to be put in a position to deal with their water and gas supplies. And in our view also, certainly in my view, they ought to be put in a position to control the police, a power which belongs to many sister boroughs in the country. That is a question which gives rise to a difference of opinion. I put this simply by way of illustration, and I am not inviting him by my Amendment or trying to compel him to say "aye" or "no." My proposition really amounts to this: That we regret that no attempt is being made to deal with any one of these important matters in the course of the present Session. How long is the great Council of London to be deprived of the power and opportunity of dealing with this great problem of the dangerous poverty of the richest city in the world? We have been content for generations to live amid a huge population unorganised and hardly controlled, and circumstances might easily arise in which a population so unorganised might become a danger, not only to the Metropolis, but also to the State. No one can dispute the need and urgency of the great reforms I have indicated as far as the Metropolis is concerned. I should like, before resuming my seat, to touch, though briefly, on the question of the Liquor Law. I know, Sir, from your ruling that I am not at liberty to anticipate the discussion of any Bill which is before the House, and therefore confine myself strictly to the proposition that the proposals of the Government on this subject are evidence that, in their opinion, it is one which calls for consideration at their hands. I might be told that I have answered myself by showing the greatness and complexity of the task; but I would point out that I am putting forward the greatness of the task as a reason for the expression of our regret that the Government have not pledged, or committed, themselves to any definite attempt to deal with any portion of this important subject this Session. I admit that the subjects with which I have dealt are subjects of grave and serious importance; and I trust we shall hear before long from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board something, if not as to his intentions, at any rate as to his hopes. I beg, Sir, to move the Amendment I have placed upon the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

After paragraph 16, to insert the words, "And we humbly express our regret to Your Majesty that the Local Government Legislation of 1888 and 1889 is still left defective, and that

no intention is announced either of proceeding during the present Session to the constitution of District and Parochial Councils in Great Britain, or of carrying further, in the Metropolis and elsewhere, the organisation and powers of Local Government."—(*Mr. Stansfeld*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(5.47.) MR. H. P. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I must express my surprise that Her Majesty's Government have not announced their intention of dealing with the important subject mentioned in this Amendment. I may say I do not join with those who think the Government wise in not having touched it, because they do not entertain the same views as are held by the population of the rural districts. I know from what I have heard in this House, and have read in speeches outside this House, that Her Majesty's Government believe in a great many things in which the rural population do not believe. Her Majesty's Government believe in the system of rule which now appertains in the parishes; they believe in the administration of justice by the county magistrates; they believe in the existing Boards of Guardians; they believe also in the plural vote; in the Rural Sanitary Authorities; in giving those authorities the control and management of allotments; in the present administration of the Poor Law; in the management of public elementary schools; in the enclosure of commons; in the administration of charities; and in the present system of licensing. There is not one of these subjects with which the Government propose to deal; but, although the Government believe in all these things, the rural population have no belief in either of them. They have no belief in the magisterial system; they do not believe in the present mode of administering the Poor Law, or in the Guardians who administer it; they do not believe in the plural vote, by which the Guardians are elected, or in the property qualification, which is still insisted on; they do not believe in the Allotment Acts, or the mode in which they are carried out. They do not believe in the existing management of schools, in the election of whose managers they have no share. They do not believe in the system by which common land is enclosed; they do not believe in the manner in which parochial charities are administered, especially as they see that that administration is, in the main, for the glorification of the Established Church; and they do not believe in the method by which the licensing system is controlled. They want to see these matters so dealt with by the Legislature that some real and effective popular control may be established. We can hardly wonder that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board should speak with so much contempt of the parish vestries, as vestry management is carried on under the existing law. That system is a scandal in itself, and it is impossible to recognise in it anything resembling a genuine right of popular control. We know that in the rural vestries the incumbent of the parish has the right to take the chair, whether the other vestrymen like it or not; and the whole system is so bad that one of the first things the Government should do in establishing a popular system of parochial government would be to institute an entire reform of the parish vestries. If Parish Councils were established they might deal with nearly every one of the subjects I have mentioned. The suggestion might meet with a good deal of opposition; but I do not see why the chief man of the village—call him chairman or mayor if you like—should not sit on the County Bench as a county magistrate. These Councils might deal with the Poor Law; they might, with the greatest advantage, deal with allotments, and manage the schools of the parish. They might have power, as Local Authorities, to deal with enclosures of land, and they might also be *ex officio* Trustees of every parish charity. I do not say they should have the whole responsibility as to licensing; but they might, for instance, be empowered to order the closing of public houses on Sundays, and upon the occasion of polls for Parliamentary or parochial or other purposes. The Government hardly seem to appreciate the great feeling there is in the villages upon these questions. There is very intense interest taken upon all these points, and the Government would do well to turn their attention to the matter. I have great pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness): I do not intend to go into the contentious matter raised by the hon. Gentleman; indeed, my only object in rising is to impress upon my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board the great disappointment which will be felt all over the country if we are not so fortunate as to get District Councils, or whatever will answer for them, set up this Session. It is not upon sentimental grounds connected with County Councils that I urge the speedy establishment of District Councils; but because the delay in constituting these bodies is responsible for inconvenience in the administration of the counties. This is especially so in the case of the roads. County Councils at present anxious to undertake or initiate a complete scheme for the maintenance of roads throughout their district are practically unable to do so on account of the uncertainty arising from the want of knowledge as to what will be done in the matter of District Councils. I do not think I need press the point at greater length. I know the President of the Local Government Board is alive to the importance of settling this point; and I only hope he will yet use his influence with the Cabinet to postpone a measure which is important I admit, but which bristles with difficulties, and which is not of such supreme importance to the country—the Land Transfer Bill—until the District Councils Bill is passed. If he does this I am persuaded he will give the utmost satisfaction to both sides of the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) has reference to the time when further reform in county government should take place, and I wish to confine my remarks to the question of urgency for the reform. One remark which fell from the right hon. Gentleman requires notice. He said that the work, so far as it has gone, is defective. I scarcely think that is an opinion that will be endorsed by any Member of the House.

MR. STANSFELD: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I said the work was good as far as it went.

MR. COLLINGS: I am glad to have that explanation, because when the measure passed through the House distinguished Members of the Front Opposition Bench spoke of it in terms of highest praise. I think we must all agree that, as a piece of machinery, the Local Government Act is one of the greatest administrative reforms of modern times, because it gives to the rural classes those rights of citizenship which have been so long enjoyed by the people in municipal boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has characterised it as the basis, or first instalment, of a great edifice. I think we might defer any criticism of the measure until we see the next instalment. We are told it is ready; and if I may judge from the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment, he and the President of the Local Government Board seem to be very much in accord as to the principle on which that instalment should proceed. There is no doubt it is urgent that the next instalment should be granted. There are many valuable laws on the Statute Book affecting the rural districts which are not dead letters, but which are only partially effective, simply because they wait for a proper administrative body. There are laws affecting sanitation, housing of labourers, and so forth. Therefore, if this were a simple Resolution of regret that this measure is postponed, I think we should all be inclined to support it. But then we are obliged to remember that the right hon. Gentleman's Resolution amounts to a Resolution of Want of Confidence, and that if it is carried the Government would have to leave office. I wish to confine myself to the all-important question whether, by the carrying or the rejection of the Amendment, the people mostly affected are likely the sooner to obtain a realisation of their wishes. The next question we have to consider is, by what course the rural districts are to obtain these reforms. I will examine that question, because I wish to influence hon. Members on both sides of the House to adopt that course which will be most likely soon to realise those reforms which will confer such benefits on the rural classes. Four years ago I moved a similar Amendment in direct and absolute terms. The Government was thrown out upon it, and our Government came in. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr.

Stansfeld) supposes, I presume, that if his Amendment were carried the aspirations of the rural districts would be sooner realised; and I have always thought that when a Government comes into power on a distinct issue laid down in a definite form it is their duty to deal with that issue by means of legislation without delay. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman should defeat the Government on this point, and the Opposition come into power, one would think they would immediately drop everything else in favour of District Councils and Local Government. But that did not happen in 1886. The contrary happened. As soon as the Government got in upon a demand to benefit the rural classes they threw the subject aside, and we heard nothing more of it. On what ground, then, are we to suppose that if we vote for this Amendment, and thereby throw out the Government, another course will be adopted by the next Government? Every hon. Member knows that if this Amendment were carried the very measures for which the right hon. Gentleman now claims urgency would be postponed for Sessions, and perhaps indefinitely. The right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues say so in their speeches. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) has said, and almost every one of his followers has repeated, that all subjects would be set aside in favour of one great question, to which I will not more particularly refer, but which "stops the way." I would appeal to hon. Members who represent county constituencies to say whether, in their wildest expectations, they think that that great question which all admit stops the way can be finally settled for one, two, or three Sessions, or before one or two General Elections have taken place? By voting, then, for this Amendment we should postpone for an indefinite period those great benefits for which the country districts have been so long waiting. I think I should have no difficulty in showing to a rural audience how important it is in their interests that we should defeat this Amendment, in order to prevent their reasonable claims being made use of as they were in 1886. I believe people in the counties are wise enough to see that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and that they are not foolish enough to stumble twice over the same stone. What, then, will happen if the Amendment be not carried? In that case, I think, the reforms for which we are all anxious are at our very doors. [*Opposition laughter.*] Hon. Members may laugh; but, at any rate, they are not postponed for several Sessions and until after one or two General Elections. The Government have given us an earnest of their intentions in the constituting of the County Councils, which hon. Members all admit are excellent, and on a true popular basis. Reference has been made to the abolition of the Quarter Sessions. Well, what do we see now in the County Councils? Some of the members of Quarter Sessions did not seem to believe in the new legislation, being asked, as it were, to abolish themselves. In some other countries these gentlemen would have felt bound to make the new form of Local Government a failure. Here we see men coming forward and putting their own views in their pockets, being intent only on making this new legislation a success. It is a spectacle of self-abnegation, public spirit and patriotism, that cannot be equalled in any country in Europe; and I am sure everybody in this House is glad that the administration of the Act has revealed so much public spirit in our rural districts. We ought not to suppose that the remaining part of this legislation will not be of a satisfactory character. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government (Mr. W. H. Smith) said recently that measures have been prepared for constituting District Councils in England and Scotland, and gave us an assurance that, at the earliest possible moment, an attempt would be made to complete the legislation. The District Councils Bill is not in the Queen's Speech, but is a sort of postscript, made by a right hon. Gentleman who does not mislead the House, and who does not say what he does not mean or less than he means. He has entered into what I regard as a real business arrangement, to be carried out, if possible, this Session. For the reasons I have given, I think that if you carry this Amendment you put back legislation on this subject. As I have said, I should have no hesitation in putting these arguments before a rural audience, and showing them in which direction their interests lie. I regret

that some political and Party matters have been imported into the debate, but in the words I have uttered I have looked solely at the interests of the rural districts. In 1886 the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) said that this subject should be dealt with by a strong Government. I quite agree with him, and I would point out that, thanks to certain operations that took place in 1886, we have in power a strong Conservative Government—a Government which has been built on the ruins of the Liberal Party. That being so, and having personally some interest in these questions, as they affect rural districts, I propose to accept a course which makes sure at no distant time of the completion of county government reform, by the Government which has given earnest of its intention by an absolutely sound Radical measure, admitted by our opponents to be so. I prefer to have this state of things to realise what we require for the rural districts than to trust those interests to the direction of a Party who, I was going to say, deceived us, but who certainly disappointed us in 1886 under stronger pledges; for in 1886 there was no intention expressed to interpose a great political question before dealing with rural government reform. Now, however, they are under a solemn pledge should they come into power to interpose this large Party question before undertaking these reforms. It is evident, then, where our true interest lies, and I have no hesitation on these grounds in opposing the Amendment.

*(6.32.) SIR WALTER BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has placed very clearly before the House the position of those who support the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, and it will be agreed that, should that Party come into power, they certainly would not have the opportunity for years to carry out those reforms in rural government they are so anxious for now. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) always brings forward a proposal in a fair, temperate, and moderate way that always commends itself to the consideration of the House, but knowing, as he must, the complexities and difficulties that attach to the subject, I would put it to him whether he thinks that by raising this discussion now he is advancing the business of the House? I suppose we all profess our anxiety to discharge the duties entrusted to us, but to raise discussion after discussion upon the paragraphs of the Queen's Speech must show the country that the only object is to prevent the Government passing measures they have shown their desire to proceed with. Why, if hon. Gentlemen are really earnest in their desire to carry on the business of the country, do they persist in preventing the Government from proceeding with those measures of great importance of which notice has been given? I have no right by the slightest word to attempt to lecture the House; but, at the same time, I do say that the country is looking at us anxious that we should go on with the business for which we are called together, and these discussions are preventing actual business from being approached. I hope the good sense of the House will recognise this. Let us look back at the older days and see how we got through business, especially that of the Queen's Speech, which we knew was only a form on which we had no right to delay the House of Commons. I hope we may be allowed to go to a Division, for we know this is a subject we cannot discuss now in all its details, and even if we could we should come to no satisfactory conclusion.

*(6.35.) MR. JAMES ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth): It is not every hon. Member who can speak from practical personal acquaintance with matters of rural government; but, as Overseer of the Poor and Waywarden, and as having taken part in many matters interesting to villagers, I wish to tell the House that so far as matters have been delegated to local control in villages, the result has been a success. The meetings of the people do not tend to strife; the people come together, and things are discussed in a quiet, business-like manner in these little villages, with less controversy and bitterness than in this House, and often to better purpose. I do earnestly desire, and whenever opportunity offers I shall urge it, that you should give to villages throughout the country some powers of self-government, something they can take an interest in, something by which village life may be made brighter and better than it is. So far as I know, and I have mixed in village life a good deal,

the inhabitants have all the capacity for making worthy citizens. If you took one of our village communities and transplanted it to Africa or Australia they would very soon choose a superior I do not know whether he would be called a Mayor or not—and a good governing Council. Englishmen everywhere have the power of self-government. I do entreat the Government to delay no longer. This is not a Party question; it is a matter of material importance to the people, and it should have more interest to hon. Gentlemen opposite than to us, for it is truly Conservative to enable people to acquire little holdings of their own. In doing what we can to keep men in our villages, making their lives and homes happier and brighter there, no time could be better bestowed, and it is this with which the Amendment is concerned. We all know that we have no chance of turning out the Government; if we had, we should bring in a direct Resolution. We want simply to urge on every Member of the House measures that I am quite sure, if taken up in a proper spirit, could be worked out with great benefit to every member of the community.

(6.40.) *THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The Government have every reason to view the introduction of this Amendment not only without dislike or apprehension, but with absolute contentment and satisfaction, because it is not only not a Vote of Censure upon the Administration, but it is actually an expression of approval of what we did two Sessions ago in legislating in the direction of local self-government, and merely urges upon us to continue to carry to a conclusion the work we have commenced. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, have no reason whatever to complain of this Amendment having been brought forward, and still less to complain of the spirit and the manner in which it has been moved. As the hon. and gallant Baronet behind me has remarked, the right hon. Gentleman opposite is distinguished among many other things for the courteous and moderate way in which he brings questions before the House. We noticed with profound satisfaction that at the commencement of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks he promised that if it should be our good fortune to introduce a measure for the extension of local self-government he and those who sit on the Opposition side of the House will do their best to assist the Government in extending still more those principles of local self-government laid down in the Act of 1888. Before I deal with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to refer to that of the hon. Member for the Rugby Division. He has told the House of Government opinions and beliefs, but he has not been good enough to take the House a little further, and say upon what authority he made these statements; nor did he trouble the House with any expression from the Government which led him to attribute to the Government opinions which, so far as I know, they have never expressed. He credited us with a general condemnation of local government, and even went so far as to say we had expressed profound contempt for parish vestries. I am not aware that any Member of the Government has expressed contempt for parish vestries in any form whatever; and I say, further, that so far as the Government are concerned, or so far as Members on this side are concerned, we no more entertain any feeling of contempt for parish vestries and those who form them or for the interests with which parish vestries are charged than do hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member, however, conducted his rather violent attack upon the Government in such a good-humoured fashion as to deprive it of half its bitterness, while there certainly was no poison in the weapons he used. He told us we believed a great many things which I am not sure we do believe, and went on to attack the Boards of Guardians and the system of Poor Law relief. I am not about to enter into any lengthened defence of the Poor Law, but I earnestly hope that no hon. Members in this House will give expression to hastily-formed opinions with regard to the Poor Law which may lead the poorer classes of the country to believe that those who administer relief are concerned chiefly in dealing harshly with the poor, and in safeguarding the rates with which they are entrusted. From what has been said by some Members, it might almost be inferred that guardians are not guardians of the rates as well as of the poor,*

but that they are Charitable Associations set up for the purpose of giving relief to all who ask for it. The hon. Member told us that the state of affairs before the new Poor Law was not due to the granting of outdoor relief but to the system upon which it was administered. But that is a distinction without a difference. It is, I believe, admitted that the extreme state of poverty in the country, and the terrible pressure of the rates in rural parishes, was due to the fact that out-door relief was the practice and custom and indoor relief the exception. What do we find now? I appeal to hon. Members who are concerned with administration by Boards of Guardians. Do they not give the greatest care and attention to every case that comes before them, and try to administer the law without harshness and severity, but at the same time so as to protect the rates of which they are guardians as much as they are guardians of the poor. After the experience of the past, I hope nothing may be said in or outside the House which would lead the poorer classes to look upon guardians with suspicion, or to believe that the House could help them to a more liberal system of relief than that which now prevails. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Government had admitted that the Allotments Act of the Session before last was a failure, and he supported that statement by pointing to the Bill for admitting an appeal from the Sanitary Authority to the County Council. It is a perfectly unfounded statement; the Government have admitted nothing of the kind.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

*MR. LONG: The hon. Member who says "Yes" was not a Member of the House when the Government introduced their Bill, and he has not taken the trouble to read the debates of the time, or he would be aware that when the Allotments Bill was before the House, my right hon. Friend said that the reason why power was to be conferred upon the Sanitary Authority was because it is the only available Authority other than the Court of Quarter Sessions; but he looked forward to the time when, following upon the formation of County Councils, there would be District Councils elected, upon whom these powers would devolve. When the Local Government Bill was introduced, the District Council clauses which would have set up these purely elective Councils had to be dropped. It is for that reason that my right hon. Friend brings in the measure of which he has given notice. It is not put before the House as an admission of failure in the Allotments Bill, and I hope it will be accepted in the spirit in which it is offered. We absolutely deny that the Act has failed, and our only object is to carry out the principle of local government, on which, from the first, it was our wish to act, by giving dissatisfied villagers an appeal to an elected authority, when the authority under the Act fails, as in some cases, we are told, it has failed, to provide the necessary allotments. That is the reason for the Allotments Act Amendment Bill; but neither by word or implication can we allow the opinion to pass unchallenged, that the introduction of this Bill is an admission of the failure of the existing Act. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld), in his very interesting speech, threw with great skill more than one fly over my right hon. Friend to induce him to give some details of our new Bill. It is not for me to take the House into our confidence now as to our proposals, and the right hon. Gentleman's experience ought to tell him that he is not likely to get very much information as to future proposals from my right hon. Friend. I should like to endorse what the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Collings) has said in reference to our experience of the Local Government Act. I am not concerned to deny the fact that doubts and fears may have been expressed, but I think hon. Gentlemen opposite will agree that if there were any such doubts and fears with reference to the working of the County Councils, those doubts and fears have long ago disappeared, and the great majority of magistrates all over the country have co-operated heartily to bring about the success which has been achieved by the operation of the Act. The right hon. Gentleman told us some of the results he looked for by the passing of a District Councils Bill, and he told us that one of the most important questions is, and undoubtedly it is so, the division or amalgamation of parish areas. The

division and amalgamation of parishes that must attend the formation of District Councils presents many difficult problems, owing to the amount of local prejudice and sentiment which has to be overcome, which I believe cannot be overcome by the action of the Executive Government or by Commissions, but which will probably yield to the popular realisation of the improvements that would result from better local government and the re-adjustment of areas. I am not concerned to contend with the right hon. Gentleman as to the principle we ought to adopt. No doubt in some localities there is a strong desire for representative institutions; but having some knowledge of labourers, among whom I have some good friends, in spite of my belonging to the condemned class of landlords, I believe that in my own neighbourhood there is no pressing call for better local government. Of course, there is dissatisfaction, as I fear there always will be with many existing institutions, and with whatever we may constitute in place of Boards of Guardians or Highway Boards, or any other Local Authority. There is no doubt a desire that labourers should have the right to elect representatives to the control of local affairs which so intimately concern their happiness. As my right hon. Friend will, I am sure, tell the House later on, the Government are desirous and are prepared to give the House the opportunity of considering measures for the purposes laid down in the Amendment we are now considering. Nothing could please them more than to see such measures brought forward, but the decision as to when they shall be brought forward does not rest with the Local Government Board; it is a matter of the general policy of the Government; but when the right hon. Member for Halifax says we promised in the Session of 1888-9 to bring forward such a measure as he refers to in the following year, and that we went so far as to repeat that promise in the Queen's Speech, he tells us we are much more to blame because we have not repeated the promise for 1890. Far be it from me to venture to criticise anything that comes from so distinguished a Member as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld), but I would ask him with great respect to look back over the many years during which he has been a Member of this House, and during which for a considerable time he occupied a seat on this Bench, and say whether he does not remember a long list of measures promised Session after Session by the Government of which he was a Member, but as to which Parliament never saw an attempt made to bring them in? We have considered it better to limit our early proposals to measures that are likely to be considered, and to add to them if we find we can do so, instead of introducing more than can be dealt with, only to drop them at the end of the Session. This is not the time or occasion to discuss the exact details of a District Councils Bill. It is valuable and helpful to us to have drawn from right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite what it is they want and what it is they are likely to criticise. It will enable us, I hope, to produce our Bill in a satisfactory form. We have had the opportunity, too, of hearing our Friends behind me, and our strength will be the greater because, if necessary, we have the time to improve our measure. One question an hon. Friend behind me has referred to—the question of highways. He called the attention of the House to the fact that very grave inconvenience does result in many cases from the want of District Councils to act with the County Councils in the management of main roads and highways. I agree with him, and believe there is no stronger reason for the creation of District Councils than the difficulty that does exist in the administration and management of the roads of the county. The Government are very sensible that we have thrown upon County Councils a very heavy responsibility in calling upon them to look after the main roads, and we feel it is due to them that they should have that relief they will have when District Councils are set up to act conjointly with them in looking after all the roads in addition to the main roads of the county. I have only, in conclusion, to thank the House for having allowed me to say these few words. I can assure the House I believe every Member of the Government to be actuated by a sincere and honest desire to complete the scheme of local government. We consider it a great privilege to have been allowed to introduce the measure which is on the Statute Book, and we shall be only too

glad to finish the work. I may add, in the words of the hon. Baronet, the Member for the Horsham Division, behind me, that it rests with the House and the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite to give us an opportunity of so doing, and if they will only give us that opportunity, we will do our best to make good use of it.

*(7.1.) CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I did not say that the Allotments Bill had proved a failure, on my own responsibility, but on the responsibility of the Prime Minister, who, in a speech delivered at Nottingham, told the audience, in guarded language, that in some respects and in some places its working had not been altogether satisfactory. I think we all know what that means. That was the ground on which I ventured to contradict the hon. Baronet the Member for the Horsham Division. I cannot think that the time of the House is being wasted in discussing this Amendment. I am glad that that is not the opinion of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches. I am glad that they think they can learn something from the opinions of hon. Members on this side, as well as from supporters on their own side. I am glad also to find myself following the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division. He did me the great honour in 1886 of asking me to second the Amendment which turned out the Government of that day, and I am happy to follow him, because I am very much in accord with him in many of the remarks he has made. In the first place he tells us that the question of time now comes in, and if the Conservative Government are left in power there is some hope for the labourer, but that if the Liberals come into office there is no chance of anything being dealt with except the great question of Home Rule. I should like to quote to him the old proverb, "Once bit twice shy," and to point out that the Liberal Government having once suffered through neglecting the claims of the agricultural labourer when brought forward by the hon. Member himself, are not likely to neglect those claims on a second occasion. I do not think that the hon. Gentleman can to-day speak in the name of the agricultural labourer. He has told the House what he can do when he goes down among the agricultural labourers, but I venture to think that if he goes down among them now he will find he is not in touch with them. I regret that fact, because I do not believe that anybody in this House has more at heart the welfare of the agricultural labourers than the hon. Member. I deeply regret that he is out of touch with these men, but I trust he may still recover his position and be able to render further signal services to them. This Amendment ought not to be considered as a Party Question. I do not so consider it. I follow the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Leicestershire, in his remarks on that point, and I say, unhesitatingly, that I shall not scruple to vote against any Government that neglects the cause of the agricultural labourer. The claims of Party in my own case, and, I hope, in the case of many other hon. Members, must give way to sympathy with the great cause of the agricultural labourers. Something has been said about the decay of village life. Sir, the decay of village life is largely due to the villages being owned, in many cases, by one single proprietor. What would an hon. Member of this House feel if he lived in a parish entirely owned by one man who practically holds him in the hollow of his hand, and who can, when he likes, turn him out of his house and cottage? Yet that is the position of the agricultural labourer; and in many counties these cottages have been occupied by the same family from generation to generation, and are as dear to these poor men as are our homes to us. Now, these labourers know, as a matter of fact, that they will be sent away if they make themselves public nuisances in the village by interfering in public matters on which their opinion is not asked. That is the state of many of our villages to-day. There may be two tyrants in a village, the Clergyman, and the Poor Law Guardian; and when I say that these men are often tyrants, I do not wish to ascribe to them improper or unworthy motives. They grow to be so out of the very circumstances under which they live. Take the case of the village clergyman. He begins by knowing the children in the school. His wife, too, in the early days of childhood gets influence over them, By these means the clergyman obtains knowledge of their private family history, which he does not scruple after-

wards to avail himself of. Then there is the question of the administration of charities which are again and again utilised for purposes of religious or political oppression. There is the well-known case of the Vicar of Winwick in which an allotment was taken away from a labourer because he had attended a chapel Sunday school. In that case the rector of the parish started these allotments expressly to use them for political and religious oppression. These cases are not rare, but it is not often that we get so open a confession of motive. Yet the motives are well known to the labourers. In the case of most of the charities the labourers have no voice whatever in their administration. The trustees are usually clergymen. Endowments left for educational purposes are often lost to the poor, and I can mention a case in which an endowment of £50 in one parish is so lost. One trustee is a gentleman 90 years old, now unable to attend to public business, and the other a gentleman of 80, who lives far away. Neither of them interests himself in the charity, and the money goes into the pockets of the rich.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): Will the hon. Member give me the name of the parish?

*CAPTAIN VERNEY: I have no objection to giving the name of the parish to the hon. Member privately. But I do not attack individuals: nothing is to be gained by holding persons up to obloquy; what is best to be done is to point out the evil itself and suggest a remedy. The remedy I suggest in such a case as this is that the House should take these powers out of the hands of individuals, and place them in the hands of duly elected representatives of the people.

MR. LLEWELLYN: I shall avail myself of the offer of the hon. Member to give me the name of the parish privately.

*CAPTAIN VERNEY: Again there is tyranny in the matter of holding vestry meetings. The hour appointed is almost invariably in the morning, when it is impossible for the agricultural labourer to attend, although matters are discussed which are of the deepest interest to him. Further, there is the question of the control of the school buildings. In many villages the labourers have absolutely no place in which they can hold a meeting. There is, of course, the village school, but the use of it is often withheld, or only granted on impossible conditions, such as that the vicar himself shall take the chair, that no resolution shall be put to the meeting, or that no matters of a contentious character shall be discussed and no vote taken. The consequence is that when we go down to address our constituents in the rural districts we have to do so in the open, and at night from a waggon, often times in pouring rain while our audiences stand ankle deep in mud. Nothing causes more bitterness and ill-feeling in a parish than the refusal to lend the school for the purpose of holding political meetings. And then again, the villagers are powerless in the matter of free libraries. I believe that not a single rural parish in the kingdom has availed itself of the Free Libraries Act. Such matters as these might be efficiently dealt with by Parochial Councils. Hon. Members who say that the labourers do not desire the establishment of Parochial Councils cannot be familiar with the wants of the labourers. If the Government will give us an opportunity of gauging the opinions of the labourers on the point I think we can soon prove that there is a great demand for the creation of Parochial Councils. And now I come to the question of District Councils. These will supersede the Boards of Guardians. The Poor Law Guardian is the second tyrant under whom the labourer suffers. The question of indoor and outdoor relief is naturally one of the greatest interest to every labourer, who has to take into account the probability or possibility that at some time or other he may be dependent on Poor Law relief, and he is consequently timid of offending the Poor Law Guardian. At present, however, the labourers have little voice in the election of their Poor Law Guardians. It is almost the only election now left, which is not by ballot, and which is not conducted on the principle of "one man, one vote." I know an instance of a man who has never since been able to obtain employment from any farmer in the district because he voted for me in 1885. I can give an instance, on sworn testimony, of a man who, during the election, went to the market place of one of the principal towns and

said that if the Liberal was returned he would bring the labourers' wages down to 8s. per week. I attended a meeting in this recent election, where there were 40 labourers and one farmer, a Poor Law Guardian, who was watching to see which way the men voted. Seven hands out of the 40 were held up in my favour, and three against me, a fact which shows that the other 30 labourers with a Poor Law Guardian watching them dared not give any indication of what their views were. Then the Guardians have to do with the question of insanitary dwellings. They press hardly on the poorer owners, but are afraid to tackle the wealthy ones. I know a wealthy man, one of whose houses was reported on for its insanitary and overcrowded condition. He is now, or was, at that time, a Member of this House; he was a man of great influence in the district, and the Guardians took no action on the Report. And then we come to the Allotments Question. It really amazed me to hear the hon. Gentleman opposite get up and say that there is no difficulty about the Allotment Question. Does not everybody know that the men of Twyford have for two years been trying to get their allotments? At last there came a day when the village was placarded with the news that these allotments were to be given. It was said that a letter had been received from the Rector of Lincoln College, and the placard was put all over Twyford. And what day was it? It was the day before the polling day. However, it did not much affect the labourers, who had been befooled for two years, and who have not got their allotments yet. I am astonished to hear anybody contend that the Act, as regards the compulsory clauses has been in any way a success. With regard to the voluntary clauses, the case may be different, because if a landlord voluntarily grants allotments that gives him a great pull over the labourers at elections, so it is we find that the parson frequently lets out his glebe lands for allotment purposes. Then there is the question of the *ex officio* Guardians, who troop down to the meetings when an appointment is to be made, in order to give a place to some *protégé* of their own. If we had elective District Councils I think that scandal would be wiped out. I cannot see why, with a certain population, the chairman of the District or Parish Council should not be a member of the County Bench during his year of office, for the County Councils in many respects resemble only the old gang of magistrates. In North Bucks we made the County Council election a political question and we got elected a *bonâ fide* agricultural labourer. I hope hon. Gentlemen opposite are as pleased at the fact as we are, for after all it only carries out the principle of the Bill to welcome the people into a share of the government of their own locality. We are all grateful to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) for the Local Government Act, which is a wise and statesmanlike measure. It may be, and it will have to be, improved, but the Act will always be associated with his name. It is not, however, enough for the agricultural labourer. It is not what he wants, I am reminded of the reply made by the newly-appointed boatswain to his captain who asked him to have a glass of wine, "Thank you, Sir, I ain't dry; I will take a potato." It is the potato which the agricultural labourer wants. I am told that the adoption of this Amendment would mean the defeat of the Government. The Japanese nation have a method of avenging insult by what they call the "happy despatch," and underneath that there lies a very fine principle, namely, "that it is better to die honoured than to live dishonoured." If the Government are not prepared to fulfil their pledges to bring in a District Councils Bill, if they are deaf to the demands of the agricultural labourer, their memory will not be honoured in the rural districts. I am amazed at the patience shown by the labourers. The message which the agricultural labourer has given me to deliver to the House is not one of defiance, or anger, or bitterness, but a reasonable request that the Government will carry out the pledges already given to the House to bring in a District and Parochial Councils Bill. The lot of the English agricultural labourer is in many respects by no means a happy or satisfactory one. There is no opening for him into a higher and better life; you leave the door ajar for him to see things better worth living for than the public-house, but you give him no time to pursue his education, because he has to work from early morning till late at night. These

men lead a most unwholesome life, exposed as they are to all sorts of weather, and working as they do under all kinds of difficulty. In a letter recently published in the *Essex Chronicle* it was related how these men have to go out day after day without the opportunity of getting their boots dried. You may say it is a healthy life, but you would hardly hold that opinion if you really inquired into it. When the labourer reaches the period of middle life, at which hon. Gentlemen in this House are just commencing a career of public service in the full vigour of their physical faculties, he is almost bent double by rheumatism, with his eyes already turned towards the workhouse and the pauper's grave. He leads a sad and a hard life, but it has not produced any feeling of bitterness up to the present time among the labouring class, nor is it likely to do so if you would only listen to their cry, and pay some attention to their demand for a reasonable control in matters of local government. I am speaking perhaps under some disadvantage as a new member who has but just taken his seat, but hon. Gentlemen know how it is with a shot from a gun; it sets out in almost a horizontal line, but when it has got a few hundred yards it begins to fall. So it is with hon. Members of this House. When they first start they go very straight, but when they have been here a few years different pressures are brought to bear upon them, and they are not quite so keen and ready as they were at the outset. I have come straight from the cannon's mouth. The message given to me is not a message of defiance, or of anger, or bitterness and ill-feeling as between class and class; it is only a moderate and reasonable request that the Government should carry out the pledges they have given to bring in their District and Parochial Councils Bill. What I desire is to translate the inarticulate longings of the labouring class, and to express to the best of my ability what are their views on this important subject. I deny that they are actuated by feelings of hostility or anger against the squire of the parish or the village parson. They merely demand that they shall have some share in the management of their own affairs. Already we can see the enormous change which the new system of local government by County Councils has produced. In Wales even labouring men have been elected as members of County Councils, and are sent up as representatives of their class from the villages of that province, and among them there are men who can write as good a letter, as well spelt and expressed, as any member of this House. Many of them are capable of speaking even in this House, were they elected to it, in clear intelligible language that would bring home to our feelings whatever message they might be charged to deliver. The rural population simply ask the House to pay some heed to their earnest petition for that measure of justice which they have a right to expect. They desire that at least some opportunity may be afforded them of rising in the social scale and of giving utterance to those views which they may entertain on questions of local government, especially in regard to those questions of education, parochial charities, and other matters in which they are so deeply interested. I support this Amendment with all the more confidence after the extremely kind and conciliatory speech we have listened to from the Front Bench. We want the Government to know that we are ready to support them in any well conceived measure. The labourer does not care from which side of the House he gets it. All he wants is that it should be given to him, and he will support those who are disposed to give it. If the Government need it we are quite ready to supply the steam. We are told that the President of the Local Government Board will not have time to bring in a measure, but I think he would be able to find time if hon. Members on that side of the House would agree with hon. Members on this to give him their assistance. Public spirit on this important question ought to rise superior to Party considerations. Why, therefore, should not both sides of the House join hands, and show a real determination to assist the Government in carrying any measure that will have the effect of organising such a system of District and Parochial Councils as would gladden the heart of the agricultural labourer.

*(7.37.) ADMIRAL FIELD (Eastbourne): I have no desire to intervene in the debate further than to say that I hope the question will be soon settled; but I

cannot sit quiet and hear my hon. and gallant Friend who has just spoken make such a speech as he has just inflicted on the House. I cannot let that speech pass without entering my humble protest against a brother officer speaking in the way the hon. and gallant Gentleman has done. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has alluded to straight-firing and straight-hitting. I hope the hon. and gallant Gentleman will permit me to remind him that it is a cardinal principle in the Service in which we have both been trained that charges should not be levelled at men unless they were able to meet them. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has made an attack upon the clergy in his own constituency, and apparently also in all parts of the country with which he is acquainted. I venture to think it is unfair to attack public men charged with the most sacred functions, and charge them with being village tyrants. He coupled in that charge the village landlord, and included in his suggested system of tyranny the guardians of the poor. Well, I cannot pretend to much knowledge of North Buckinghamshire, or, indeed, of any part of Buckinghamshire, though for that matter I was born there; but certainly I know enough of it by hearsay to believe that all these charges have not one atom of foundation or truth at the bottom of them. I venture, therefore, to appeal to the good feelings of the hon. and gallant Gentleman—because among his brother officers he shared as good feelings as most of them—I appeal to his good feelings whether he ought to make these violent charges without backing them up by evidence? The hon. and gallant Gentleman, after making these charges against those he termed village tyrants, went on to speak of his election experiences. I do not think hon. Gentlemen want to hear these experiences. It was enough to have the hon. Member back again in his place in the House, and it was to be hoped that the House would receive more assistance from him in the discussion of naval questions than on former occasions, and have the benefit of his naval training, without hearing from his lips violent charges levelled against men who could not answer them. In that part of his speech recounting his election experiences—and, by the way, the greater part of his remarks had no reference to the Amendment before the House—the hon. and gallant Gentleman charged guardians of the poor with coercing men against holding up their hands for him in local meetings. The hon. Gentleman told them of one case of a meeting at which seven men held up their hands for him in spite of that coercion. I am astonished, for one, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman found even seven men willing to hold up their hands for him. Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman went on to attack the Government because the Allotment Bill was not perfect. Well, no man pretended to be infallible. Governments were as weak as other men, and they were not infallible, and no Bill, I presume, had ever passed that House that had not required amendment after some experience of its working. The Allotments Question was a new and very important question, and the measure which the hon. Gentleman attacked was passed after full discussion and consideration by Members on both sides of the House. No doubt some defects have been found in it, and the Government have shown a desire to bring in an amending Bill. It was not fair, therefore, to attack so fiercely the Government and those hon. Members who sat on the Ministerial side of the House, and tell them that the Bill was a sham, simply because certain men in the hon. and gallant Gentleman's own County of Buckinghamshire had been unable to get allotments, and because something was wrong with the Local Authority there. I wish, with all my heart, that the Local Authorities in Buckinghamshire had granted allotments, because then we would not probably have had the misfortune of listening to the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. For my part, I am sincerely desirous to see this Act amended. I will heartily support the Government in their proposed Amendments, and I hope that no mistake will in future be made by Local Authorities, for I should be very sorry if we were made to suffer in consequence of the shortcomings of the measure, and have other hon. Members returned to the House to make similarly violent speeches. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke as though he had a monopoly of benevolent feeling towards the agricultural labourers. I deny him that monopoly. The

hon. and gallant Gentleman is, no doubt, a benevolent man—all naval men are benevolent: but I also represent an agricultural constituency, and I, too, know something of agricultural labourers and their wants. Agricultural labourers are not, as a class, discontented, and they do not feel that the squire and the parson are tyrants, as the hon. and gallant Gentleman has stated. Indeed, I am afraid the hon. and gallant Gentleman must have been in very bad company lately. All Members from his County of Buckingham do not share his opinions. There was once an old and very revered gentleman in that House, a Buckinghamshire squire—the father of the hon. Member—and I have never heard that Sir Harry Verney was a tyrant in his own district. Does not the hon. and gallant Member now regret making such charges against Buckinghamshire squires, of whom his father was one? When his revered father went to his rest, as we must all do at some time, the hon. Member will have a chance of doing better even than his father has done. In a word, then, I dispute the right of the hon. and gallant Member to speak in the name of the agricultural labourers of England. Let him speak in the name of those who returned him. I cannot, however, congratulate either them or him on the speech we have just heard; and while I am willing to welcome him in the hope of the future I believe that when his constituents and the country read this speech they will regard it as one of the most mischievous ever delivered by a Member of this House.

*(7.45.) MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Eye): I do not think the House will see in the speech which has just been delivered sufficient reason for rejecting the Amendment proposed by my right hon. Friend, nor can I see any ground for a refusal on the part of the Government to accept it. The hon. and gallant Admiral who has just spoken referred to himself as a Member representing an agricultural constituency. I know something of the constituency he represents, and I certainly must look in vain on the sands of Eastbourne for the agricultural labourers on whose behalf he has spoken. I think the hon. and gallant Admiral is hardly as great an authority on rural questions as the hon. and gallant Gentleman who preceded him, and who has come here fresh from a constituency consisting almost entirely of agricultural labourers.

*ADMIRAL FIELD: I would remind the hon. Member that I am not Member for Eastbourne, but for the Eastbourne Division of the county, which has a large agricultural element connected with it.

*MR. F. S. STEVENSON: But I would point out to the hon. and gallant Admiral that Eastbourne is essentially of an urban character, and that the population of Eastbourne form by far the larger portion of the constituency. With regard to the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), it appears to me that no adequate reason has been assigned for a refusal on the part of this House to accept it. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Collings) did not once refer to the real merits of the question at issue. He has told us that the Government have given sufficient pledges to the House that they intend to deal with the question; but if he will refer back to the declarations made by the Government before the Local Government Bill was brought in he will find that so long ago as September, 1887, the Government gave very distinct pledges that they did intend to deal not merely with the question of County Government, but also with the entire question of Local Government in the small areas, and in the Bill they brought in proposals were made in that direction. The President of the Local Government Board stated on that occasion that it was the intention of the Government to bring forward a measure which would not only provide a local government for the counties, but would also deal with questions relative to Boards of Guardians, which he trusted would be placed on a more popular basis. In the Bill then brought in there was a clause dealing with District Councils, and those clauses furnished evidence that the Government had made up their minds that that was a matter which was pressing for solution. I may mention that on the 7th of June, 1888, I moved an Instruction on the subject of parish vestries, and the only objection to that made on the part of the President of the Local Government Board and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that before the matter could be properly dealt with it would

be necessary to arrange the re-adjustment of the boundaries. Now, I would remind hon. Members that the re-adjustment of parish boundaries has been going on for years. In 1881 there was only about 1,800 parishes which had less than 100 inhabitants, and since then the smaller parishes have been absorbed into the larger ones, so that at the present moment the number of very small parishes is considerably smaller than it was then. I cannot understand why that process should not have been hastened or accelerated. However, the question of boundary re-adjustment is after all only a small one. There seems to me to be no real difficulty why you should not deal with the larger parishes of upwards of 100 inhabitants, and extend to them the benefits of local self-government. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax draw a distinction between the large and the small parishes, because I think that that is a distinction which ought always to be observed. What, I ask, is the reason why, in spite of all the pledges given by the Government, their promised Bill is not put forward as a matter of urgent importance? I would remind the House that on the occasion when the District Council Clauses were withdrawn from the Bill of 1888, not only the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), but also the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) distinctly stated that that question would be dealt with in a measure they intended to bring in in 1889, as a matter of great importance. In 1889 we had a reference made on the subject of the District Councils in the Speech from the Throne. What, I ask, is the reason why the subject, having been mentioned in the Queen's Speech of 1889, it has not been thought fit to mention it in the Speech of 1890? But I would here call attention to another point. We have had before us the Reports of the Boundary Commissioners, which fills two volumes, and has been sent to the different County Councils. We have also had the letter of the Local Government Board, March 1889, asking the County Councils to report upon that subject. These bodies examined the question, and sent their Reports to the Local Government Board; and now we find that a portentous document has been sent to the County Councils from the Local Government Board, saying they are not to deal with this question at all, and that it is indefinitely postponed. I should like to hear from the President of the Local Government Board an explanation of the reason why this course has been adopted. As far as I can see there is no adequate reason why such a postponement should take place. I should also like to understand why it is that we are not this year to be called on to deal with the question even as amended in the Queen's Speech. The Secretary to the Local Government Board has stated that the Board was desirous of dealing with the measure; and I should like to ask why is the desire of the Board to be subordinated to considerations of general policy, and what considerations of general policy have arisen since last year? The programme of the Queen's Speech this year is more meagre than that of last year; and I ask why is this question of District Councils, and the diffusion of the vestries into larger areas, to be indefinitely postponed? The hon. Member for Bordesley has said the measure is at our doors. If so, why does it not come inside? We shall all be glad to welcome it, provided it deals with the question of intermediate areas and the reformation of the parishes on the lines we believe are desired by the bulk of the population. We desire that the Boards of Guardians, as now constituted, should be abolished, and that property qualification should be done away with, and that the plural vote should cease. The people take the keenest interest in the management of local affairs, especially in questions relating to charity lands and allotments. Surely this is an important part of the work of local government, and it cannot be said that the edifice is complete, or even approaching completion, if you will not include in it those things which the people generally most keenly and strongly desire. The question has been agitated for years. No less than 19 years ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward a measure on the subject, and since then the progress of the question in other forms has been considerable, notably in regard to the establishment of County Councils, and to the increasing capacity of the labouring class to take part in the management of their own affairs. What they

want to do away with is the system under which vestry meetings are called at hours when the parishioners cannot attend, and the incumbent of the parish takes the chair by virtue of his office. They also want to do away with the plural vote, and to substitute the system of one man one vote. They also think it would be safe and judicious in the larger parishes to institute a system of Parochial Boards, which would serve as a sort of executive to the vestries themselves. Why is it that no mention has been made of such a measure? If the tithe question is the obstacle, surely it was as much an obstacle last year when the production of such a measure was pronounced in the Queen's Speech. At any rate, the fault does not lie on this side of the House. We are quite prepared to welcome a measure of this kind and accord it the fullest consideration. For my part, I cannot see why any opposition should be offered by the Government to this Amendment. They say they are prepared to assent to the principle of local government in smaller areas; why, then, do they not propose a measure by which that principle would be carried out? I am unable to see the force of the remarks made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. I remember hearing one of these agricultural labourers, for whose welfare we are so desirous and whose capacity for self-government we desire to increase, declare at a village meeting that the Government were very much like wheelbarrows, and never would run unless they were pushed. Well, the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax is designed for the purpose of pushing on the Government; and I trust that Members will be found, not only on this but on the other side of the House, to give it that support which it ought to receive.

(8.32.) MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): I very much regret that the hon. and gallant Member (Captain Verney), who has now left the House, should have delivered one of the most bitter speeches I ever heard in the House. I cannot go back many years; but I can say that for the past four or five years speeches such as his have been rarely uttered in the House. One of the most objectionable phases of speeches of this kind is that the hon. Gentlemen who deliver them avail themselves of the privileges of the House to attack individuals—who, by the way, are unable to answer them—in a manner that they would not dare attempt outside these walls. I am one of those who regret, and have always regretted, that the Government were unable two years ago to pass a District Council Bill. Joint Committees of the District and County Councils would, I believe, save much of the difficulty that arises through multiplication of areas, and as to the necessity of arranging matters between Sanitary and Highway Boards. Another question which crops up in this connexion is that of allotments. Some alteration should be made speedily with regard to the carrying out of the Compulsory Clauses of the Allotments Act. Those who have had the necessity of putting in force the Compulsory Clauses find that the difficulties are overwhelming on account of the legal technicalities and the delay. My own experience teaches me that some alteration is necessary. I will give an instance to prove my contention. In a case with which I am acquainted the Sanitary Authorities from the first expressed the greatest anxiety to obtain land for the parish, and application was made to the County Council to put the Compulsory Clauses in force. But what happened? Unnecessary delay. Notices had to be served at a time that rendered it impossible to enter on the land that year, and then other difficulties arose which rendered it impossible for the men to obtain possession of the land next year. I firmly believe that none of these difficulties would have arisen if the powers which are now vested in the County Council had been held by District Councils. I have listened with great interest to the speeches made not only on the Front Opposition Bench, but by gentlemen sitting behind that Bench in regard to some new idea as to Parish Councils. I do not object to their formation, provided it is said what these Councils are to do. In creating Parish Councils we shall be creating a new authority, and therefore new offices, involving further expenses in respect of clerks, surveyors, and all sorts of expensive officials. But what is the work that these Parish Councils are to do? I remember on one occasion it was

said that the Parish Council could have the management of the parish cricket club, cow club, and pig club; but beyond that I am bound to say I have not heard any practical suggestion made as to the employment of these Councils. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax said these Councils would be useful for the discussion of political subjects.

MR. STANSFELD: I did not say anything of the kind.

MR. LLEWELLYN: Then I was mistaken. Perhaps they may have powers with regard to the management of certain parish roads; but there, again, there will have to be employed extra officials. It has been suggested that these Councils should have the management of charities in the parish; but how are charities to be vested in the Council when the trusts distinctly vest them in other hands, as is always the case in these charities? Then it has been suggested that the Chairman of the Parish Council should be an *ex officio* magistrate; but I would ask hon. Members, who are likely to be made Chairmen of these small Parish Councils? Very often it will be the clergyman, and I object to clerical magistrates. They have plenty to do as it is, and I do not see how very much will be gained by that suggestion; while another objection is that the Chairman of such a Council, who is also a magistrate, will be practically disqualified from attending in the Council to matters which also come before him in his judicial capacity. I have often been obliged, and have indeed desired, to retire from as many as half the cases that came before me in local affairs, and upon which I had previously adjudicated. With regard to the terms of the Amendment, I contend that it rests very much with hon. Members opposite whether the Government are to be allowed to introduce Bills on these subjects, which I hope and believe they have in a very forward state. It is most absurd and ridiculous for hon. Members opposite to get up and move Amendments regretting that the Government do not propose legislation on various subjects, when we have direct statements from other hon. Members opposite that they consider it their duty to make legislation impossible.

(8.45.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*(8.48.)—MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): The hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset (Mr. Llewellyn) made what I suppose he regards as an effective point against the Opposition. He said that while we asked the Government to introduce new measures we were prepared to oppose other measures of the Government. That is a most unreasonable suggestion on his part. Does he deny the Opposition the right to pick and choose between the measures of the Government and to say which they prefer the Government to press? Most of the Members who sit upon the Opposition Benches think this Session might be far more usefully given up to the promotion of popular institutions, and to the consideration of one of the most important matters of English rural life—Poor Law administration—than to passing, by a vote of a blind and mechanical majority, a Bill sanctioning the squandering of £20,000,000 or £40,000,000 amongst the Irish landlords. The hon. Member seemed to be friendly to the idea of Parish Councils; but, at the same time, not to know much about the present powers of parishes. He asked what Parish Councils would be given to do. My hon. Friend the Member for the Rugby Division (Mr. Cobb) took the trouble to state to the House the various powers which might be handed over to the Parish Councils—information which was supplemented by my hon. Friend the Member for Suffolk (Mr. F. Stevenson), whose acquaintance with the subject is well-known. Two years ago the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board took a course which we thought prejudicial to the interests of parish institutions. The various enactments which parish vestries still have power to carry into effect were by the District Council Clauses to be narrowed and circumscribed, and those powers which still are possessed by parish vestries were by those clauses to be handed over to bodies elected in a larger area. That is one of the chief reasons which make us anxious to take part in this debate. The hon. Member for Somerset said that if Parish Councils were established it would mean an

expansion of the cost of local government; that we should have new bodies of officials appointed, and that that would involve additional cost to the ratepayers. The hon. Member (Mr. Llewellyn) has, for a Representative of a rural district, shown a striking ignorance not only of the powers actually possessed by parish authorities at the present moment, but also of the history of this question. If he had been familiar with the admirable speech which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made in introducing his Bill in 1871, he would have known that the Chancellor of the Exchequer contemplated the creation of these Parish Boards, and the handing over to them of considerable powers. In that speech, too, the right hon. Gentleman drew special attention to the fact that the Parish Boards which he contemplated would not involve any addition whatever to the expenses. Now, the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), who seems to me the very Cassandra of local government, said that if this Amendment were carried we should effect the disastrous result that all the objects we have in view in the Amendment would only be illimitably postponed. It is only fair to judge the hon. Member's prophesy by his statement of the history of the question. The hon. Gentleman said he moved an Amendment to the Address in 1886 which caused the fall of the Conservative Ministry, and that the immediate effect of the replacing of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in power was to postpone and destroy the chances of carrying out reform of local government, and especially the granting of powers with regard to the provision of allotments and small holdings which he had at heart. But whose fault was that? The whole country knows perfectly well that the reason legislation was postponed was that the hon. Member, and his right hon. Colleague the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), ran away from their leader, ran away from their principles, ran away from the posts which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian entrusted to their charge. It is notorious that one of the first duties entrusted to the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division was to prepare a Local Government Bill with powers for the provision of allotments and small holdings — a Radical and Liberal measure—and there was no reason why that Bill should not have been passed in 1886 if the hon. Gentleman and his friends had but supported our Home Rule policy. I will not echo the very extraordinary compliments, the almost injudicious compliments, which have been passed on the Local Government Act of 1888. I have always held the opinion, and I hold it still, that that Act was in its conception, and its carrying out an anti-democratic Act, brought forward with a democratic profession. The policy which underlay that Act was to withhold from the people those institutions which go to the hearts of the people, and give the humblest man in the community an opportunity of taking part in local government. We remember well the withdrawal from even the body which the Act constituted—the County Councils —of those powers which would have made the Councils really popular bodies. The licensing question, the question of Poor Law administration, and the like, were withdrawn from the purview of the Councils. Last year a District Councils Bill was mentioned in the Queen's Speech: this year there is no mention of the Bill there. We have had almost enough of the sudden impromptu pledges of the First Lord of the Treasury. I had not the advantage of being present the other afternoon when the right hon. Gentleman suddenly made some promise to the House that the Government would deal with the question of District Councils; but it is an extraordinary spectacle to find no mention of the subject in the Queen's Speech, and then to have the right hon. Gentleman suddenly announcing that the measure is ready for introduction, and will be passed through the House. I think it is scarcely respectful to the House that it should be treated in this manner, upon so urgent and so important a question. We have seen something of pledges of right hon. Gentlemen in regard to other matters. My hon. Friend on my left, and those of us who fought through the allotments campaign of 1887, remember the cross questions and the crooked answers, both in this House and in the House of Lords on this subject: how Her Majes-

ty's Ministers could not make up their minds on the allotments question; how the First Lord of the Treasury, when my hon. Friend the Member for the Rugby Division's Bill was before the House, announced that in a short time the Government were going to introduce an Allotments Bill in another place, and in the House of Lords a few days afterwards the Prime Minister said, in shelving the Allotments Bill brought in by Lord Dunraven, all these questions must practically be put off until the Local Government Bill was disposed of. We know perfectly well that the Gordian Knot brought about by these cross questions and crooked answers was only cut through by the incisive knife of the Spalding Election. We have in the present instance something of the same kind. Look at the extraordinary contradiction in the promise by the First Lord of the Treasury of a District Council Bill, and at the same time the introduction of a Bill to amend the Labourers Allotments Act. We were told by the Secretary to the Local Government Board, just now, it was contemplated when the District Councils were brought forward, or when District Councils were constituted, that they should be the authority to deal with allotments, and at the same time we are told we are to have an Allotments Amendment Bill introduced, the very principle of which is to continue the powers of the authority in the hands of Guardians, giving power of appeal from the Guardians to the County Council. Now, when a Government talks fast and loose in this way, and promises two Bills, one to constitute an authority which is to supersede another authority —and in the other Bill offers an appeal from that authority—we can hardly regard these pledges as serious or intended as anything more than stop-gaps to stave off criticism they may be subjected to in the country. I do not know that we should be entitled to deal with the question of allotments on the present occasion; and I will not detain the House with it, beyond emphasising the point that we must insist on going to the bottom of local government, and giving labourers a chance of taking part in this government. This question of land never can be fairly dealt with until you have an authority directly elected by the labourers in their own villages, and on the same system as the elections for the County Councils—one man one vote—and the system of ballot; you must give this authority power to take land, and the only appeal you should give would be from this authority to the County Council on behalf of those farmers or landlords who might here or there be unjustly treated by harsh or hasty action of the Parish Councils. I heartily disapproved of the District Council clauses in the Local Government Bill, and I think this debate may be of some use in the House and in the country if we take the opportunity on this side of fearlessly, I will not say in a hostile spirit, stating to Her Majesty's Government what, I believe, we are commissioned to state by those we represent, the profound feeling in the country parishes against the constitution of District Councils on the lines of 1888, or an authority of that nature such as was contemplated in the Local Government Bill of 1888. I do not agree entirely with some of my hon. Friends, but I feel that I am only doing my duty to my own constituents in the various parishes and villages I represent when I lay their earnest feeling before the House, that instead of taking away any of the powers existing and now possessed by parish authorities the first object of local reform ought to be to expand and extend these powers, and the only powers that ought to be given to District Councils are those which cannot rightly be exercised within the smaller area. You must go for the Parish Councils first. Your District Councils may have functions in the future in regard to roads, and in regard to Poor Law administration when these are dealt with, but I am only speaking the feeling, the earnest feeling, of many agricultural labourers and village artisans when I say the first demand, and I say it without any Party spirit, the first demand is for local institutions, within their own parishes and villages. The feeling of many of them is, that it is very possible when you constitute such Parish Councils and get them into working order in connection with Committees of County Councils, it is very possible you will find no necessity whatever for creating these District Councils, which District Councils certainly would involve an amount of expense, by the creation of

new officers and salaries, which Parish Councils need not do. The necessity for these Parish Councils has been dealt with eloquently and in feeling terms by my hon. Friend the Member for North Bucks (Captain Verney), so I will not trespass on the time of the House further than to say this:—What would be these District Councils according to the Government proposals of 1888? The President of the Local Government Board during the debates on that Bill was challenged by my hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) as to creating institutions which would enable labourers and artisans to take part in local government, and the right hon. Gentleman then interrupting my hon. Friend said, "There are the District Councils." Now, that is just what I want to push home to him. Let him give an authority that labourers and artisans can take part in. What would these District Councils be according to the proposal of 1888? They would meet under the same conditions as Boards of Guardians do, in some central market town, in the day-time and under conditions that would practically exclude the attendance of labourers and village artisans. Now we all know—those of us who are familiar, as I have been for the last four or five years, with the conditions of rural life—that labourers, after a long day's toil, return weary and filthy from their work from long distances in the dusk of the evening, and can only take part in Boards which meet in the evening. Those who have had to deal with these men know perfectly well that there are amongst them men of singular independence, force of character, and fairness of judgment. I have myself been greatly struck by the extreme moderation of tone of the English agricultural labourer in dealing with all questions as between man and man, the extreme consideration for the rights of others, and the good spirit they show. They are quite fit to be trusted, and I feel I should be justfied in using the strongest language in asking that they should have institutions placed within their reach which would really enable them to exercise and develop their great powers, their sound judgment, good feeling, and good sense, in work for the benefit of the locality in which they dwell. There is one more matter I should like to touch upon before I part with this question. In his speech in 1888, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in dealing with the Local Government Bill, alluded to many questions which he reluctantly—and I have no doubt he spoke sincerely—was compelled to leave out of that Bill. One of these questions was that of valuation. I hope I may be in order in referring to that question, for I should like to enter my protest on this occasion, perhaps the only one I shall have during the Session, against any further postponement of this most important question of valuation. I do so with the more earnestness because I read a short time ago—in December, I think—an account of the proceedings when a deputation waited upon the Local Government Board, and met with a fair and courteous reception from the right hon. Gentleman the President. He stated then his own belief that the valuation of property was not in a satisfactory condition; he regarded it as in an unsatisfactory condition; in fact not to detain the House by repeating all the right hon. Gentleman said, he certainly expressed his own feeling that the question was urgent, of enormous importance to taxpayers and ratepayers, and ought to be dealt with without delay. He regretted parting with these clauses in the Bill of 1888, but all he hoped was at some other time to get Parliament to consider and deal with this most important question, which all parties agree ought to be dealt with. Well, after long discussions and assurances that this question of rating and valuation should be dealt with, here we are in the second year after the passing of the Local Government Bill, and I think we have serious reason to complain that Her Majesty's Government still further postpone this question of valuation. I think the Government will have only themselves to thank, when this question affecting the purses of the ratepayers is discussed, if those who are opposed to them represent this as an interested policy calculated on the lines of considering the interests of the rich, not considering the interests of struggling occupiers throughout the country. On these grounds I am exceedingly glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax has thought it right

to start this debate. It has been a debate of considerable importance, and I hope it may bear considerable result, but I do feel, and what I wish to conclude with is this, that we do not think the Government have approached the problem of local government in a true democratic spirit. They have deliberately begun at the wrong end in order to postpone handing over local government to the people in their own homes and villages. I trust, however, that this debate may result in practical suggestions being laid before the Government as to the Measures I hope they will ultimately bring before Parliament.

(9.15.) MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): No doubt in considering the terms of the Queen's Speech, Her Majesty's Government must have felt themselves under the necessity of making a choice between a measure for constituting English District Councils and an instalment for Ireland of that local government extended to England in 1888, and to Scotland last year. It is impossible that two measures of such importance, of such detail and complexity, could be passed in one Session, and, for my part, I heartily congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the choice they have made. I had an opportunity of consulting my constituents lately, and I can testify to their opinion heartily in favour of the claim that Ireland should have such an instalment of local government as has been given to England and Scotland, and that the challenge of the hon. Member for Cork that the Irish people should have liberty to spend their own money on their own local affairs should be accepted—I mean, of course, that the local authorities in Ireland should be genuinely adapted for local business. I submit, therefore, that the question of fair dealing between the three countries makes the choice of the Government the proper one, and that local government in Ireland is more urgent than the question of establishing District Councils in this country. This policy will afford a practical opening for dealing with Home Rule in a practical way; it will afford an opportunity of coming to close quarters with the question, and will bring the people of this country face to face with the dangerous and impracticable part of Home Rule. I do not understand how it can be contended that the remainder of the English Bill is really urgent. I am a Member of a County Council, and can, therefore, say from my own experience that the County Councils have not yet settled to their business. They do not understand what County Council business is, nor the real way of dealing with it. It would be most unfair to those new bodies to place upon them, with their present inexperience, the embarrassment which the creation of a new and untried body would inevitably bring. It is patent to the House that there are enormous difficulties in dealing with the question of District Councils, and I think the discussion has certainly shown this in an unmistakable way to the House and the country. The question of the union area, for example, is one of the greatest difficulty, because on an average in rural districts this area is not less than a hundred square miles. I am in favour of very large powers being given to parishes, because I feel that there must be local knowledge for local purposes. The union area, therefore, is too large and too unwieldy for anything like local knowledge. The Guardians of the Poor are very much interested in particular matters pertaining to their own parish, but they are neither interested in nor have they the requisite knowledge of matters in parishes adjacent to their own. There is the greatest possible difficulty in getting persons to consent to serve as Guardians of the Poor, because of the great difficulties connected with attendance and the large amount of time which the duties consume. On that ground a measure of great detail and great difficulty, as to which much difference of opinion is sure to arise, ought not seriously to be attempted, unless the larger part of a Session can be given to its consideration. The first duty before the Government is to endeavour as much as possible to recover for the House of Commons the mastery of its own business, and in the selection the Government have made I feel that they have done a great deal to arrive at that result.

*(9.20.) SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I cannot congratulate the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken on his consistency. He now thinks that local government for Ireland is more necessary than the completion of local government for England, but when an

instruction was moved on the second reading of the Local Government Bill by my hon. Friend the Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, I think he voted in favour of Parish Councils, and surely the matter must have been urgent then, to induce him to vote against his own Government and in favour of an instruction moved from this side. I think the Amendment must have a good deal of sympathy from the President and Secretary of the Local Government Board. I can quite understand that they should feel regret at this matter being postponed. Surely they are anxious to complete the work begun by the Local Government Act of 1888, an Act we always thought imperfect. Time has shown that it is so, and that its completion ought to be made as early as possible in the interest of the rural population of this country. There is another and a strong argument in favour of this Amendment. The President of the Local Government Board himself promises a Bill in reference to the question of allotments, because the Sanitary Authorities are inefficient, and is actually going to take from them, on the ground of inefficiency, certain powers now allotted to them, transferring those powers to County Council. So then we have from the right hon. Gentleman himself a condemnation of those authorities we want to reform. I want reform on several grounds, but mainly on sanitary grounds. It is necessary for the health of the people that these Local Bodies should be reformed in order that they may be enabled to cope with the insanitary conditions amid which the rural population in many cases live. We have ground for saying this question is urgent, for when the Royal Commission on the "Housing of the Working Classes" reported they admitted the urgency, and the hon. Member for the Bordesley division (Mr. Collings) was so convinced of this and the necessity of reform—though he does not appear to be so confident to-night—that he stated in an addendum or supplementary Report that one of his chief recommendations was that rural municipalities should be established without delay. But, what was urgent in 1885, must be matter of still greater urgency now. On sanitary grounds I mainly base my argument, though I am also anxious for the reform on account of allotments and the administration of the Poor Law. The rural sanitary authority is elected on a wrong principle. It is elected on a property qualification, and the poor people in the villages have no sufficient authority over that body which has their lives and the lives of their families practically in its charge. What we want, therefore, is to give the people that power which will be of advantage to the sanitary condition of the rural community as a whole. The hon. Member for North Bucks (Captain Verney) has spoken of the tyrannies and evils of village government, but he did not refer, as he might have done, and I am glad he has left it to a member of the medical profession—to the insanitary condition of a large portion of the area he so well represents. Dr. Gresswell's Report to the Local Government Board on the general sanitary condition of the Buckingham Rural Sanitary District, deals with a population of something under 10,000. The population is decreasing, as in rural parts it generally is, on account of the departure of the people to places where they can get better wages and better housing, and because of the serious diseases continually breaking out. The population of 13 of the larger parishes he mentions, was in 1871 7,274, and according to the last census (1881) it had fallen to 6,404, a decrease of 870, so rapid had been the diminution in a district within an easy distance of London. We cannot wonder at this when we know the sanitary circumstances under which these poor people live. In this district there are 1,969 dwellings of which 1,656 are described as cottages, and of these 1,378 are rated at yearly values under £5—

> "They are four-walled two-storeyed structures, built of mud and wattles, of brick, or of local stone, floored with irregular flags or brick, and roofed half or more of them with thatch. They are divided into two or three compartments, the upper, approached directly from the ground-floor room, being quite commonly in the penthouse roof with the bare rafters presenting inside. In many cases there is an additional small compartment either within the four walls of the building or as a 'lean-to' or 'barn' outside, which is used as a back kitchen or as a store and washhouse."

Some of these buildings are so bad that I will read one or two extracts from this Report to show their insanitary condition—

"Instances of dwellings which for one or two reasons are a source of nuisance or of danger to health, may here be mentioned. The 'parish house' of Charndon, a dilapidated one-storeyed thatched cottage, is rented of the Guardians for a yearly sum of twenty shillings. It is divided into three compartments, of which one formerly used as a 'barn,' is in ruins. The bed-room occupied by the whole family (man, wife, and four children) has a cubic capacity of about 500 feet,"—

not a quarter of what it ought to be—

"a single window of about three feet square (the whole of which, however, admits of being opened)"—

but a window which opens is an exception in these hovels

"and a floor formed of marl. Along the length of this cottage at the back, and immediately under the bedroom window, there is a ditch, in which various kinds of filth are placed, including human excrement, for the making of manure Another thatched two-roomed mud cottage hard by, with bulging walls, worn-out thatch, and marl flooring, is occupied by a family of six. A woman, her four sons (one 20 years of age and another 16), and a daughter slept in one room, which is in the roof, and into which light and fresh air are admitted only on one side through the window openings, together about two and a half feet square."

Now, are the ordinary decencies of life possible under such conditions as these? And then we go on,—

"At Beachampton, a cottage, much of which is in ruins, and which is deluged with rain in wet weather, is occupied by a man and his wife, at a yearly rental of 35s. The bedroom has no flue and but one window, which is about one square foot in area, and cannot be opened.

"At Padbury, a dilapidated cottage is occupied by a man, his wife, and four children, at 1s. rent per week. The floor of the bedroom, which is in the roof, and in which all sleep, is so dilapidated that there is danger of its giving way almost at any time.

"At Thornborough, a cottage is occupied by a man, wife, and six children, at a rent of 1s. per week. It has two bedrooms, in which all the family sleep, and which together have a cubic space of 990 feet. Wind and rain pass freely through the roof, and walls and rafters, rotten and covered with toadstools, present on the inner surface.

"At Akeley a bedroom of 794 cubic feet capacity, with one small window, of which only two square feet can be opened, is occupied by a man, woman, and five children."

One finds it almost impossible to believe that such a state of things should prevail within a journey of an hour or so from London. But so it is: again we find from this Report that not only is the housing of the poor thus disgracefully bad but the sanitary condition of the places is equally bad. For instance, we are told that—

"At Padbury there are several filth ditches in the proximity of dwellings, especially to be noted at Lower End and Lower Way. In the latter part, where there are some 15 cottages, the roadways are most unwholesome, owing to sewage matters being cast directly upon them, and to their being bordered by sewage ditches."

I might go on making quotation after quotation from this report to show the horrible insanitary condition in which these poor people live. It is the same in other parts of the country. One of the most essential things is a good water supply, and the Report says on this subject—

"The wells, from which it is taken direct, are numerous; they are for the most part draw wells. In general they are six to ten feet deep, and are sunk on the cottage premises, in farmyards, or by the roadside. Provision has been but rarely made for preventing entrance of water from the surface, or (by puddle or cement) from the superficial layers of the earth; the walls of many of the wells are merely drysteyned; several wells are but holes in the ground. And yet the soil about the wells is very generally permeated by sewage matters which have been thrown carelessly upon it, or which have escaped into it from badly-constructed drains, outdoor sink catch-pits, privy pits, slop and refuse holes, sewer ditches, muck heaps, or piggeries. And while the water of these wells is commonly muddy in wet weather, in dry seasons it commonly fails. The wells, moreover, are in very many instances not reasonably accessible; they are often distant 200, 300, 400 yards from the cottage."

"The supplies for the several villages are as follows:—At Adstock, where there are some 85 dwellings, the water for half of them is fetched from a pump well by the side of the road, sunk eight feet in sand and gravel. On one side of the well there is rising ground on which, not more than 12 yards or so from the well, are filth nuisances. Some cottagers have to go 600 yards there and back for this water. Six other cottagers get their supply from a shallow, roadside dip-well. The drainage from several cottages and from a slaughter-house passes close by this well, in an open ditch up to it, and then by a pipe past it. There are also a few other pump and dip-wells amid filthy surroundings."

"At Gawcott Road some 16 cottagers (besides many others in the Urban Sanitary District of Buckingham) take their water from the Bath Lane Spout, where it issues in a copious, and it seems, a never failing stream. Specific pollution of this water in the lower part of its course by leakage from a drain was found by Dr. Parsons to have been the cause of the extensive outbreak of fever which took place among persons who drank of it early in the year 1888; and he advised the authorities that the spring which feeds the spout should be intercepted at the highest practicable point in the hillside, and the water there received into a tank and thence brought down to stand posts, with a view to secure the safety of the water from pollution and to afford a more readily accessible

supply. Instead of this, the upper part of the water conduit (some 25 yards long) has been allowed to remain, as it has always been, *i.e.*, a mere rubble drain lying at a depth of only two to three feet in the field (a pasture and meadow field), and the lower part only has been replaced by galvanised iron pipes."

Thus not only are the people disgrace fully neglected but even the directions of the medical officer are not carried out. The sanitary arrangements at the schools, too, are shocking. We find from the Report that

"The sanitary circumstances of the schools deserve special mention. At Thornborough the school, which has an average attendance of 86 children of both sexes, is supplied with but a single privy, and the receptacle (a vault) has evidently been overflowing on all sides. At Twyford the privy for the school-girls is so placed that emanations from it must needs enter the school-room. The privy receptacles at this school discharge into a closed cess-pit, the overflow from which is carried off by piping into a ditch. The gases formed in the cess-pit, which has not been cleared out for four years, can escape only by way of the privies. At the Padbury school the privy receptacles are vaults; the urinal discharges, it seems, directly into the roadway; and the pump, from which the children obtain water while at school, is not 10 yards from the privy vault. Other schools have defective privy arrangements, as at Maids Moreton, and the ventilation of several schools is insufficient."

A more disgraceful condition of things I have never before heard of in my life. The House will not be suprised to find that, as a result, there are numerous deaths from typhoid fever. For a period of 20 years, from 1868 till 1888, there were only three years in which there were no deaths from typhoid; and as each death signifies that there have been at least 10 cases of the disease, it may easily be understood how prevalent was the malady. In addition to that, there was prevalent another disease due to the pollution of the air and water—I mean diphtheria; that, too, was practically endemic in these villages; children constantly died of the malady; and others, when they grew up, fell victims to respiratory diseases. In the worst place these latter deaths represented 7·2 per 1,000 of the population: in another village the rate is only 1·9 per 1,000. The Report continues—

"The figures presented show that typhoid fever is, as would be expected from the sanitary circumstances of the district, of frequent occurrence. At Maids Morton, in 1887, there were 17 cases of enteric fever with three deaths, all at about the same time. Seven of these cases 'apparently began on the same day.' This outbreak began in that part of the village called Well More, the drainage of which is still defective, and the water supply for which is as unsatisfactory now as it was then. . . . The sequence of multiple cases in one and another restricted locality suggests inefficiency in the remedial measures adopted by the authority, a matter to be reverted to below for dealing with this readily limitable disease. At Padbury, in 1880, a man fell ill of enteric fever, then his wife, then his mother, aged 53 years, took it and died, and her two sons also, who lived with her, took it; and 11 other persons in different parts of the village fell ill of it, and a woman aged 32 years died. In 1881, in the same parish, a woman died of this disease; and her son, aged 21 years, died shortly afterwards of it. In 1883 there were five cases of enteric fever there."

Now, Sir, the conclusion of the Report is given on the deliberate authority of a Government official, and it is as follows:—

"The repetition and multiplicity of cases of sickness and of death from the above causes in particular localities is a strong indication that the Sanitary Authority has not properly exercised the functions for which it was constituted."

This, Sir, is a deliberate condemnation of one authority; but I venture to say that there are scores of similar authorities equally neglectful of their duties. Before I leave this part of the subject I should like to point out that the medical officer reports that this work is carried on under great difficulties, for it is difficult to get the authority to enforce the alterations he makes. The authority gives to sanitary work half-an-hour once a month. In Essex similar conditions exist: we are told of dwellings where the people have not proper sleeping accommodation, and where a man and his wife and grown-up children all have to sleep in one room, making morality impossible. In Hertfordshire we hear of houses unfit for habitation, and described in a Report by a competent observer as "miserable hovels." This state of things accounts for the depopulation which is going on in our villages. In showing the absolute neglect of sanitary laws in rural districts I think I make out a strong case for Parish Councils for the rural population. They are citizens and voters of this Empire, and have a right to have their grievances attended to. Surely it would be easy for the Government to find time to pass a simple Bill giving the people more power of regulating these authorities than they now possess. Again

there are great inequalities in the matter of rating, and not long since I had the pleasure of presenting a memorial from Long Eaton, a model little town, which although it contributes a seventh of the rates has only one-twentieth of the representation on the Board of Guardians. Again, there is the matter of the administration of the charities. In many little villages there are several charities under the control of Trustees, and these little gifts add sunshine and gladness to the dreary life of the poor. But the Trustees often neglect their duties altogether, with the result that the charities are lost to the people. I find from a Return moved for last Session that in four counties—Devon, Derby, Suffolk, and Cumberland—164 rent-charges belonging to the poor have been mostly lost through inattention of the Trustees. This would not be the case if every village had its own Council. On the contrary, we should have hundreds of these charities saved to the country, and the starving and misery of the poorer classes would be greatly lessened.

*(9.50.) MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I wish to say a few words in support of the Amendment. I must myself plead guilty to being a landlord, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wilts (Mr. Walter Long) did; but I do not entertain the same views as those which he has expressed as to the wants and aspirations of the agricultural labourers. The hon. Gentleman, too, said that he considered that the Allotments Bill had been a success. Well, if the Allotments Bill has been a success, I want to know why, two years after it was passed, it requires amendment? If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had only accepted my Amendment, to the effect that any applications for allotments should be evidence of the desire for allotments, and that upon receipt of applications the Local Authorities should take the necessary steps in order to obtain allotment ground, the act would have been a success, and he would not have had to come to this House to amend it this year. Then, Sir, reference has been made to the County Councils, as being evidence of the Government success in dealing with local government. I admit that it is a step in the right direction, also that there is great activity at the present time among members of County Councils, and as a new toy they claim a considerable amount of attention. But I do not think that the County Councils will be satisfied unless they get the control of the police in their own hands. Then, Sir, we have had no promise whatever of those further powers with which the County Councils were to be endowed, namely, the powers of Parliament in dealing with small local Bills—such as Gas and Water Bills, &c. And I think hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will agree with me that the County Councils may fairly be entrusted with powers such as these. I was very glad that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wilts did not deal with this as a Party question; I can assure him that we desire to see something done in this matter, irrespective of Party. I am sorry, however, with all due respect to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley (Mr. Jesse Collings), that he should have addressed this House in the spirit in which he did, and which I think is lamentable. For for about the hundredth time the hon. Gentleman treated us to an oration of his grievances against the Liberal Government of 1886. It seems to me a sufficient and complete answer to the hon. Gentleman to point out that he happened to be a Member of the Government in question, and his repeated accusations against it appear very much like fouling his own nest, which is a very congenial occupation on the part of gentlemen from Birmingham. He threatened us that he could persuade rural audiences that it is better to support his Government than to vote in favour of the Resolution now before the House; but all I can say is this—and I

speak from experience, for the hon. Gentleman has frequently addressed audiences in my neighbourhood—that the result of his so addressing them is that he only makes himself a laughing stock, and I certainly should welcome his advent into my constituency, for I am perfectly certain that by coming he would render my seat perfectly safe. I observed that the hon. Member for Wilts only promised to deal with the question of District Councils. He said nothing whatever as to the establishment of Parochial Councils. Now, I believe that the people will not be satisfied until they get these Parochial Councils, for they are the root and bases of the reform which is desired. I am confident, from my knowledge of the agricultural classes, that what they desire is to get into their own hands complete control of parish affairs. They wish to elect for themselves all the parish officers. At the present time they are governed by an aristocracy. It consists generally of two members, one being the parson and the other the Poor Law Guardian, and occasionally the squire forms a triumvirate. But I am sorry to say that squires do not now live in the country so much as they used to do, and I welcome the Amendment which is to be proposed by the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire, in which he proposes to divide the rates between the landlord and the tenants, because I am certain that when the landlord has to pay the rates directly out of his own pocket he will take a much more active part in parish affairs than he does at the present time. Now, I observe that the reference made to what may be called the parsonic domination in many of our parishes by the hon. Member for Bucks was received on the other side with scorn. I can only say, for my own part, that in many of our rural districts the domination of the parson is resented most deeply by the agricultural classes. The hon. Member for Bucks was asked for a list of places and names; but you can hardly open a paper except you see, especially on burial questions, evidence of the intolerance of the parson, which is entirely unintelligible at this present day. Now, Sir, what we want is to establish a Parish Council upon the lines which were shadowed out in the excellent speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Rugby. We want that Parish Council to have the control of allotments; I will go further, and say that we not only want them to have the control of allotments, but we want them also to be in a position to give small holdings to those who require them. In rural districts, at the present time, we want the power of local government which existed in this country in historic times, and which has now, I am sorry to say, passed away. I think that by giving the agricultural population power to control their own affairs, you will certainly prevent them from leaving the country districts, you will give them an interest in their villages, and you will find that the population of the rural districts, instead of diminishing, will increase. If Her Majesty's Government will only attempt to deal with this question beginning at the right end, namely, at the foundation, by reforming the parish, I am perfectly certain that they will earn the gratitude not only of Members who represent agricultural constituencies but of the people of England at large.

*(10.13.) MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): Before any reply is given by the Government, I desire to occupy the attention of the House for a very few minutes by putting the case as respects Scotland. We have had something done in regard to allotments in England; we have also had something done in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; but for the general agricultural constituencies, which I and others represent, in the Lowlands of Scotland, we have had nothing done whatever. Certain pledges were given by Her Majesty's Government, and by the First Lord of the Treasury as representing Her Majesty's Government, during the discussion of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill. On that occasion it will be in the recollection of the House there were certain clauses, similar to the clauses granting allotments in England, introduced to this House by the Lord Advocate. My hon. Friend the Member for the Ilkeston

Division then intervened on behalf of allotments in England, and my hon. Friend representing the Kirkcaldy Burghs also intervened in the debate. The consequence was that the First Lord of the Treasury rose in his place and said that we could only have these clauses applied to Scotland if they were received without any discussion; and in order that there might be no mistake as to the position in which the Scotch Members were placed on that occasion I will quote the words used by the First Lord of the Treasury. He said—

"We are anxious that the power of granting allotments should be extended to Scotland. The Government will consider it during the recess, and endeavour to submit a measure which will meet, as far as possible, the views of hon. Gentlemen."

Now, the First Lord referred to the hon. Gentlemen representing Scotland, and upon that occasion, having accepted in good faith the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, they were willing to facilitate the Act generally they were then endeavouring to pass on behalf of Scotland, and they supported the Government in withdrawing those clauses under the most distinct pledge that the matter would be brought before the House in the present Session of Parliament. And in order that there may be no mistake about it, the discussion went on, and because certain Members had expressed doubt as to the good faith or, at all events, the ability and full resolution of the Government to introduce the subject in the coming Session of Parliament, the President of the Local Government Board spoke as follows:—

"We shall, of course, keep our promise; if we can see our way to introduce a measure next Session we will be extremely glad to do so."

On that occasion also my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow stood up in his place and said that these undertakings of Her Majesty's Government were as clear as a Minute. This House, as well as the Scotch Members, accepted these pledges, of Her Majesty's Government in full faith, and on that occasion we went into the lobby in favour of the Resolution of the First Lord of the Treasury to withdraw these clauses. I desire to bring very seriously to the attention of the President of the Local Government Board these circumstances of our case, and I am sure he is acquainted with many of the circumstances. In regard to allotments, all that has been said on behalf of England is as true on behalf of Scotland. In regard to District Councils, our parochial and local affairs in counties are, as to management, in exactly similar circumstances—no worse and no better practically than they are in the English communities. But in regard to dwellings we are placed under most unfortunate and exceptional conditions; and I can hardly hope to engage much the attention of the House, because the grievances to which I refer are exceptional and local. In our fishing villages along the East Coast of Scotland, the men who pursue the fishing industry have built themselves hundreds of houses with their own money, and on ground which they hold from year to year at the pleasure of the landlord. They are bound to these localities by the exigencies of their industry, and they are prevented from holding property in their dwellings by reason of their holding from the superiors of the soil their tenancies from year to year. I am most desirous that this discussion should not be unduly prolonged; but I believe it is still in the power of Her Majesty's Government, though they have made no reference to it in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, to fulfil the covenant, which cannot possibly be denied. In relation to having ground for allotments, I could give most painful instances which have occurred throughout the constituency which I represent. We have still the Law of Entail and Settlement in regard to many of the estates there. There is one parish in my constituency where the land had been acquired for two or three houses at the time when the estate was not under the Law of Entail. It has since come under that law, and now the proprietor is offering these tenants, who have built their own houses on leases of 99 years on the understanding that the proprietor would be bound to renew or take the houses at valuation, £10 for the capital value of their houses for which he is to receive an annual rental of £10. I could give you many more instances

occurring in the fishing towns along the East Coast of Scotland. I am, however, quite sure that both the Lord Advocate and the President of the Local Government Board are perfectly well aware of the circumstances; and I call upon the Government, in the name of those who believed in their promise last year, to renew at least the pledge that some opportunity will be given for putting the counties of Scotland in a position not inferior to the English counties.

(10.17.) MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon), who had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

"As an Amendment to Mr. Stansfeld's Amendment to the Address, par. 16, at end to add the words 'or of making the promised division of rates between owners and occupiers,'"

said: Before I deal with the subject of the Amendment which I have upon the Paper I must say just one word or two by way of making protest against a portion of the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Rugby, in which he advocated, as one of the benefits arising to the poor, an extension of the system of outdoor relief. No more cruel injustice can by any possibility be done to the labouring people of this country than to extend the system of outdoor relief. I am certain that I will be borne out by everyone who has laboured among the poor, and who has watched the effect in these days of outdoor relief, when I say that anything more effective in demoralising the people and lowering wages, and making men paupers and women prostitutes, it is impossible to find in the whole course of our legislation. And when the hon. Member alludes to it as a matter which is to be gained by democratic reform I think he must be utterly unaware of the course taken by other countries in regard to this subject. In America, where you would suppose that pauperism would be impossible, by a certain amount of laxity in the administration of relief it was artificially created, and no one in this country would dare to propose the stringent measures for remedying this matter that have been adopted in the United States of America. I was surprised to hear anyone who had considered at all what is beneficial to the population advocate such a dangerous measure. By all means let us give relief outside the workhouse to those who are suffering, but with that relief we ought to give up our time, and attention, and sympathy, to avoiding the disadvantageous effect of pauperising people, which invariably accompanies the lax administration of outdoor relief. What I rose particularly to advocate was the matter of which I have given notice on the paper. In putting this notice on the paper my motive was to induce the Government to take up the subject, and to make that change in the incidence of rating which, nineteen years ago, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) told us was necessary, in justice to the poorer part of the community, and for the security of those who owned property. Both he and the leader of the House promised, two years ago, in the debate on the Local Government Bill, that the matter should be dealt with as soon as possible, and again, at the earliest possible moment. In that debate the Chancellor adhered to the opinions he had previously expressed, when he urged that as you do not allow people to contract themselves out of Imperial taxation, you ought not to allow them to contract themselves out of local taxation. I most emphatically agreed with him when he said that he valued the division of rates, not merely for the sake of relieving ratepayers, but also for bringing the owners, who are, of course, the leisured classes, into bearing their fair share, not only of local taxation, but also of local administration. At present the rise in rating in times of pressure and hardship falls exclusively on the occupier, that is, on the poorer class, which is cruel and unjust. On the other hand the owner, who does not feel the first impact of the rise and fall of local taxation, as a rule neglects to take the part or interest in it which he otherwise would do, and only awakes to find large loans and indebtedness incurred, for which his property is ultimately responsible. This is not a mere money

question; it is not even a mere question of physical comfort and well being, though these are seriously imperilled by the present system. Loose, careless expenditure is not only accompanied by bad, inefficient administration and increased taxation, but it means corruption and demoralisation, and these evils of corruption and demoralisation are worse in local than in Imperial administration, as affecting a larger number of persons, and acting on the individual life of every part of the nation. Now, I wish the Government to remember this very important point; that is, that the pledges which were drawn from that debate came not only from this side, but from the other side of the House. Friend after friend on the other side of the House got up and said that they had over and over again discussed these things in agricultural districts, and had pledged themselves to this great reform; and I would really urge the Government to pluck up its spirit and to deal boldly with this question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer maintained that representation ought to go hand in hand with taxation. Well, I entirely agree with him, and I agree with him because I think it is important from the point of view of producing better administration. Representation accompanying taxation would force the leisured classes into a more active part in local affairs. Now, I am perfectly aware that on our side there is a very considerable objection to the institution of aldermen, but I am quite convinced that if you would have the courage of your own convictions, and introduce a system of division of rates between owners and occupiers, even if you accompanied that as you think it necessary to do with some direct representation of the owners, for instance, by enabling owners to choose the aldermen, you would not find it very difficult to carry such a measure through the House. Bear in mind those who are interested in this matter. They are the ratepayers, and who are the electors of this House? Why these very ratepayers. Now, I would ask you whether it is likely that those who are elected by these ratepayers would refuse so very great a boon if accompanied by some new mode of appointing aldermen? Many Friends around me would rather have the aldermen chosen in the manner proposed than by the present system which is very strongly objected to. One other point. You will be obliged to introduce shortly a Local Government Bill for Ireland. Now, I defy anyone to draw up a system of local government for Ireland without introducing this system of division of rates between owners and occupiers accompanied by representation. One of the most prominent leaders of the Radical Party says in an article that it would be impossible to introduce any system of local government in Ireland which would work without the introduction of that principle. It seems to me that there is no difference of opinion on either side of the House on this question. The principle has been admitted as freely by Gentlemen on the other side of the House as on this side. If the principle has been admitted to be just as regards the poor, and to be necessary also to the safety of the wealthier classes, is it not absurd that we should go on from year to year without having courage to carry out the principle to which I have referred? I do not propose to move my Amendment, of which I have given notice, because I am informed it might interfere with the discussion of questions relating to London.

*(10.30.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I apologise to the House for interfering in this debate, which I did not intend to take part in, but I am bound to take notice of certain remarks made by the last speaker, because I utterly and entirely dissent from them, and they were received with such rapturous applause by a few hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, that I cannot allow them to pass without a protest. I allude to what he said about indoor as opposed to outdoor relief. I know it is not of much use to make any appeal to the doctrinaires who are always pointing to the reckless manner in which outdoor relief used in other days to be given, and defending the system which to-day is constantly forcing the aged poor into the workhouses by offering them the "workhouse or nothing." [MR. RATHBONE was understood to say that his observations

referred to able-bodied paupers only.] The hon. Member said that the system of outdoor relief "made men paupers and women prostitutes;" and I protest on behalf of the working class population, against that great calumny. I have lived among the poor in rural districts all my life, and I think I know something about their feelings on this question I say that the system of the Poor Law is a system which is simply hated and detested by the agricultural poor as it is administered in many parts of the country. It is a system under which, after a life on starvation-wages, the old people go into the workhouses to end their days, and the next generation are made more poor and more wretched than they otherwise would be by being obliged under the Poor Law to contribute towards the support of those poor parents whose only crime has been that they have been fools enough to work for the wretched wages given them. There is a Gloucestershire case tried last week in which a poor fellow earning 9s. a week had been ordered to pay 1s. a week towards the support of his old father and mother, and was summoned for 37 weeks' arrears. The magistrates said they would take a very lenient view of the case and ordered him to pay a pound! A pound on 9s. a week! And this man had his family, including a crippled son. This is a common thing in the village life of England, and it is one of the things villagers hate and detest. It costs, perhaps, 3s. 8d. or 3s. 9d. to keep a poor old person in the workhouse, and he would far rather have 2s. or 1s. 6d. and a loaf, so as to be able to live among his friends, to sun himself in his little bit of a garden and keep his little home about him. I say, Sir, this system of the doctrinaires which declares that people must go into the workhouse or have no relief at all is one of the curses of the rural life of England. Now I am on my legs I should like to say a word or two on a point which has not been sufficiently alluded to by previous speakers. One of the things which the villagers of England want is a little more independence in the exercise of the vote which has been given them by Parliament. They want a little less intimidation and a little less boycotting. With regard to allotments the Government have promised us a better system, and I am glad to to bear testimony not only to the able but to the moderate and considerate way in which this question was dealt with by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wiltshire (Mr. W. Long). Another point which requires attention is the tenure of cottages. Many of the English cottages are held in the rural districts at a week's notice. I want to ask hon. Members now that these labourers have votes, now that we are all agreed that we want to better their condition, is it a wise thing to allow them to continue in a state of dependence consequent on a week's tenure of their cottage? I should also have liked to speak on the question of free education, but as that is to be dealt with in a separate Amendment, I will not deal with it now. I think this debate will result in no waste of time, because it will bring home to the Government the opinion which I believe is held on both sides of the House, that there is nothing they can give their time and attention to more pressing and important than the needs of our rural population.

*(10.35.) MR. DUFF (Banffshire): The Amendment moved by my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax refers to the provisions of both the English and Scotch Local Government Bills, and it is, therefore, not out of place for a Scotch Member to intervene in the debate. The right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson) took considerable credit yesterday for the success of the Local Government Act in Scotland. I think, however, if he had watched the elections in my part of the country, he would hardly have done so, because almost every candidate, whatever his politics, who stood for the County Councils, declared that he wished to see the Act very largely extended, and additional powers given to the County Councils with regard to the

licensing system and the control of the police. I entirely agree with what fell from my hon. Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Mr. Esslemont) with regard to the omissions in the Bill of last year. There is one point I wish particularly to allude to. No power has been given under the Bill to harbour authorities in Scotland. This leaves many of the fishing villages in country districts in a very unfortunate position. Many small harbours have been made by poor men who have raised considerable sums of money, but are unable to take advantage of the provisions of the Loans Commissioners Act, and I know cases where it is impossible to carry out the necessary extensions of the harbours because no administration is provided under the Act. Last year I put down an Amendment to the Bill on this subject, but as there was no provision in the measure dealing with it, my proposal was ruled out of order. The Government, however, admitted that it was an extraordinary thing to leave the harbours without any management whatever. In many cases the local authorities are raising rates to pay for the harbours, but in so doing they are acting illegally, and they have no power to enforce such rates. The right hon. Gentleman, the Lord Advocate, admitted this was an anomaly, and that there had been an omission in the Bill. The Solicitor General for Scotland, writing to one of my constituents, pointed out that an attempt had been made to deal with the matter, but that the Amendment proposed had been ruled out of order. I would put it to the Government, however, whether the fact that the matter was not dealt with is not really owing to an omission in the Bill? We have in Scotland a large fishing community having considerable interests, but no means of obtaining that which is essential to the success of their industry. I do not say that the Lord Advocate made a definite promise last Session, but he held out hopes that the omission would be rectified this year. The grievance is felt so keenly in many parts of my own constituency that I was rash enough to say that if the Government would not undertake to deal with it I would endeavour to bring in a Bill myself to give these people power to deal with the subject. Under the circumstances I would appeal to the Government as to what action they intend to take in the matter. The grievance is felt not only in my own constituency, but along the whole of the east coast of Scotland, and I am sure any measure of the kind I indicate, so far from meeting opposition on this side of the House, will receive the general concurrence and support of all hon. Members who represent constituencies such as mine. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board when he gets up to reply will tell us what the Government intend to do in this matter.

(10.45.) MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I do not think that people are justified in moving Amendments to the Gracious Speech from the Throne unless there is a distinct issue to raise, but I think that there has been that distinct issue raised to-night, and that the Amendment has elicited a most important and practical debate, from which the Government must have derived much benefit. I am strengthened in that belief by the cordial speech we had from the Secretary to the Local Government Board, which gave me a great deal of encouragement to hope that the Government have not lost sight of this question of District Councils. Having seen the subject mentioned in the Speech from the Throne last year, and having lost sight of it this year, I confess I thought the Government intended to leave it out of view; but there is every reason to believe now that, though the subject is omitted from the Queen's Speech, the Government have not abandoned their intention to carry out a measure setting up District Councils throughout the country. The County Councils Act will never be complete until we have District Councils

as the complement of it. At present the County Councils are like a great machine with little work to do. We want to see the control of the police brought within their purview, because I foresee that friction will arise with the present Joint Committee arrangement. The care of the poor should be entrusted to the County Councils, also the provision of allotments and the questions of education, the housing of the poor, and the management of the churchyards. I was glad to have the admission of the hon. Member for North Somerset that the compulsory clauses of the Allotments Act have not worked well, and because they have not worked well, we are justified, I maintain, in regarding the measure as a complete failure. No doubt many allotments have been given by arrangement, but I believe I am right in saying that not one has been provided under the compulsory clauses of the Act. Therefore, if compulsion is the essence of the measure, I think we may say it has been a failure. I hold that another advantage we should derive from a District Councils Bill would be uniformity of voting. I hope nothing will prevent the Government from fulfilling their pledges and from carrying this measure of local government to complete the scheme of 1888.

(10.50.) MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I and my Colleagues connected with the Metropolis delayed speaking on this proposal until the other part of the discussion had come to an end, because we thought it for the convenience of the House that the two parts of the Amendment should, to a certain extent, be treated separately. The proposal as it stands before us deals not only with the constitution of District and Parochial Councils in Great Britain, but speaks to carrying further in London and elsewhere the organisation and powers of local government. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board introduced his measure in the year 1888 he dealt with the questions which had been touched on during the First Reading of that measure in a remarkably liberal spirit, and though the Bill he produced was, to some extent, less liberal than he had foreshadowed in that speech, there has been more or less a drawing back on the part of the Government from the attitude which he then took up. We had a scheme of District Councils in that speech and in the Bill, and in the following year, after that scheme had been withdrawn, we had a mention in the Queen's Speech that such a measure would be introduced. In the present year it has dropped out of the Queen's Speech. It is not only on this general matter, but on the matter more particularly of London that we had hoped that something more definite would have been done ere now. London has two particular claims to attention; in the first place, because it is so far behind the rest of the country in its local organisation that it has been left out of measures which have been brought in and carried through on the understanding that it should be omitted. London has suffered in the matter of local government from both sides of the House since the time when, in 1835, the Metropolis was thrown overboard by Lord John Russell, in order to carry through the Municipal Government Bill of that day; yet London, although a very large subject, offers peculiar facilities for any Government to deal with, because it presents a homogeneous problem. Another point is that Members on this side of the House, and the House generally, have shown themselves very willing to lend every assistance to the present Government in their endeavour to deal with a scheme for London government. I have to complain that, excepting the President of the Local government Board, and the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, Conservative Members generally have scarcely had a good word to say for the County Council of London. ["No!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] I am glad to hear a contradiction from that

quarter. This Amendment now before the House looks in two directions; that is to say, towards the completion of local government in the Metropolis and the creation of District Councils. We London Members have brought in several Bills dealing with the difficulties connected with the government of London, but we have not ventured to bring in a Bill dealing with the formation of District Councils in London, partly because we had the foreshadowed expectation that the President of the Local Government Board was to do it himself, and partly because we feel that any measure of the kind must emanate from the Government. In respect to District Councils in London let me state certain main lines upon which I think I may say most of us in this quarter of the House are fairly well agreed. The number of individuals composing District Councils ought, in my opinion, to be less than the number, for the most part, of the present vestries. It is ridiculous to go to a poor quarter in London, where there may be 120,000 people, and expect to get 120 men who are able and willing to devote the time that ought to be devoted to the government of the locality. Again, I am perfectly clear that the property qualification which at present exists for vestries ought to be removed, inasmuch as at present a lodger in the east end of London, for instance, may be the Parliamentary Representative of his district, and yet cannot sit on the local vestry. It is nonsense to say that lodgers are uninterested in the question of rates. They are more interested, if possible, than the occupiers. In the next place, the areas over which the District Councils in London should have jurisdiction ought to be co-terminous with the Parliamentary divisions. I do not say they ought to be the same size as Parliamentary divisions, but that there should be no cutting in and out of the boundaries. At present there are parishes each belonging to some portion of the system of local government, but distributed amongst several Parliamentary constituents. Not only is that bad from an Administrative point of view, but it is particularly bad from the point of view that was touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. One of the difficulties and dangers of the Metropolis is that while you have the great collocation of 5,000,000 of people you have not got so many men per 1,000 in the Metropolis as you have in a great self-governing town who are capable of taking the burden of government on their shoulders. There is an extraordinarily small number of people in London who have had any opportunity whatever of learning how to manage local affairs. Hon. Members who have had to do with local government know that when a committee is formed for a charitable or any other purpose in a self-governing town there are found one or two persons fairly indicated by their position in the town to take the chair or to take the lead in the committee. We find that when a committee is brought together in London for similar purposes, there is an extraordinary absence of natural leaders, an absence which largely arises not only from the want of district government but from the non-coterminous character of the Government districts for different purposes. Another point I wish to urge upon the attention of the President of the Local Government Board is, that the District Councils ought to have real powers and real responsibilities; they ought to keep in close touch with the County Councils; but you cannot get people to take the interest they ought to take in affairs unless they have real powers and responsibilities. Take the question of the housing of the poor, and notice in how many instances Local Bodies have grossly neglected the duties imposed upon them by Act of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman will see in that matter alone what a large amount of jobbery exists in a large number of Local Bodies. In the case of charities, too, the right hon. Gentleman will find much need for the creation of better bodies, rendered more efficient by the adoption of some such general principles as I have endeavoured to indicate. The County Council may be compared to the top of a building with an insufficient structure below to support it, as long as the District Councils are not set up, and you will not provide in London either the proper men to go to the County Council, and you will not provide proper men locally to be Parliamentary Representatives in London, unless you create true and real local life, which can only be done by

reformed district government in London. I do not speak from a Party point of view. There is nothing more advantageous than that there should be a wide distribution of political efficiency, no matter on which side it is. There are other lines on which the right hon. Gentleman might have proceeded. There is the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the Poor Law Question. When I introduced the matter the President of the Local Government Board said the time was not far distant when the Metropolitan Asylums Board would be (or very possibly) absorbed in the County Councils. I do not know that it is altogether desirable that it should be absorbed in the County Councils. I am not at all clear that it is in the end desirable there should be one, and only one, central government in London; but however that may be, it is quite clear the Metropolitan Asylums Board is non-representative, or very nearly so. It is choke full of many of the faults we found in the Metropolitan Board of Works, and its existence affords a great opportunity for the exercise of the right hon. Gentleman's skill in carrying further the organisation of the powers of local government in the Metropolis. A Bill is to be introduced on his own side of the House for adjusting School Board dues. That Bill proceeds on the general lines I have endeavoured to indicate. At any rate, it provides for co-terminous areas if nothing else. Then, the consolidation of the Sanitary Acts is a matter which I welcome. But the consolidation of the Sanitary Acts is not enough. We require to have more power in respect to the houses of the poor in this Metropolis. I proceed now to the question of the powers of the London Council. The present Council is founded more or less upon the lines of a Council of an ordinary county. I do not say entirely, but the Government have treated London more as if it were a county in the ordinary sense than as if it were a great borough. London is much more one whole county than any county one could name. But whatever view the right hon. Gentleman may take of that, we want the London Council to have more powers. For instance, it is very necessary we should have control of the police. The police force of London is dearer per rateable value, per inhabitant, and per inhabited house—the three principal tests which you can apply—than the force elsewhere. But not only in that respect is the Metropolitan force dearer than any other. There is a 9d. rate allowed to the Police Authorities for expenses. I pointed out last year that that 9d. rate was in danger of being exceeded, and I got but cold comfort when I read the reply of the Home Secretary to my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowlands), "that it was not perfectly clear that the police expenses would be kept within the 9d. rate." There is a great question in London, and that is, where we are going to get money for local government proper. I hope to have an opportunity shortly of showing upon what the rates may be properly placed, and more particularly the rates for the cost of permanent improvements. It is quite clear that whenever you can put into the hands of towns the possession of any of the great monopolies which involve no competition, you may in that respect aid the receipts of the town. I believe there are something like 160 towns in England which have the control of their own gas and water supplies. London, however, has no such control, and we think the time has come when the Government ought to enable the County Council to take over under proper conditions, and if they desire to do so, these supplies. The history of the matter in this House is not altogether creditable to the Government. When, during the discussion of the Local Government Bill of 1888, we wished to propose, not that power should be given to the new Council to take over the water supply, but that the Council should be able to inquire into the water supply, and to spend money for that purpose, we were prevented by the ruling of the Chairman of Committees from making that proposal. The County Council had not the right to spend a single penny in investigating even the possibility of an improved water supply. Not only did the right hon. Gentleman and the Government prohibit this power being given, but a Bill was introduced last year that had a very peculiar history. The Bill was the County Council Borrowing Bill, and in it was a clause giving to the Council power to expend money on the

investigation of the water supply. That Bill was withdrawn by the Government and re-introduced under circumstances in which we had practically no opportunity whatever of criticising its provisions. The Government have, therefore, stood in the way of the County Council doing anything they could to investigate the condition of the supply of water to the Metropolis. The funds which might come into the hands of the County Council from the possession of such monopolies are great. If we follow the analogy of other towns we have reason to expect the proceeds would very considerably relieve the rates, and in that respect, therefore, we feel we have a right to claim some further concession of powers to the County Council. I am astonished that the Government have not been goaded on to do something on these points by the 47 Tory Members who sit for London. We Liberal Members are left like voices crying in the wilderness, endeavouring to urge on a Minister who, I believe myself, is very willing, but who would move along much more efficaciously if a single Tory Member would raise his hands and give him a push. But there is scarcely an occasion when the Tory Members for London have anything but a hard word to say for the London County Council, which I firmly believe is setting itself to do the best it can with the powers in its hands for the benefit of the London people. London is a town with common interests, but at present it is still a vast congeries of persons without cohesion, the natural prey to jobbery, and the happy hunting-ground for personal ambition. If, on the other hand, we can only complete the central government of London on something like the lines I have endeavoured to lay down, we have the potentiality, I believe, of one of the finest examples of Corporate life which this country or any country can produce.

(11.23.) MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): Country Members are in some respects in a more advantageous position in dealing with this question than the Representatives of London, because the Local Government Bill of 1888, as originally introduced, dealt with District Councils. The country Members know what the proposals of the Government are in that respect, and are able to criticise them, whereas we London Members are almost entirely in the dark as to the lines on which the Government propose to establish analogous institutions in the Metropolis. Indeed, the position of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board is somewhat peculiar. In past years the right hon. Gentleman has stood forward as the pronounced advocate of the vestries; and in 1884, when the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) was before this House, the present President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) told us that, by means of the vestries, London had been converted from a badly-lighted and badly-drained city into the healthiest city in the world. The right hon. Gentleman, I believe, relied for that statement upon the death-rate in the Metropolis. But I should like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the general death-rate of the Metropolis is a most fallible criterion of the health of the Metropolis, owing to the particular circumstances of the Metropolis. On the other hand, the infantile mortality is the true test of the health of any society; and if the right hon. Gentleman will compare the infantile mortality in London with that in other towns, he will find that the results are results which I think may very well appal those who are interested in this great city. I was much interested recently in reading a paper based on the observations of a distinguished medical man who lays down a proposition which may seem to be extravagant, but for which he gives a considerable basis of fact, namely, that the English race can no more perpetuate itself in London than in Calcutta, and that if it were not for the constant introduction into the Metropolis of new blood from Westmoreland dales and Yorkshire wolds the population of London would die out altogether. The last speaker referred to the public spirit and the hearty co-operation shown by all classes in working the

machinery of the County Councils in the country. That is not altogether so in London. There is a considerable degree of loyalty and co-operation in working the great Metropolitan County Council, but to this general co-operation and loyalty there is a most remarkable exception. The Conservative Members for London never miss an opportunity of reviling the County Council. Possibly they may have entertained the idea that they would be able to work the machine they had created—if this has been their idea it has been, I confess, most lamentably disappointed—or it may have been that the result of those contests we had in the early part of last year is regarded by them as a kind of writing on the wall which presages their own doom at the next election. As recently as Friday last so distinguished a Member of this House as the Solicitor General said that the London County Council appeared to have been brought into existence for the purpose of showing how foolish a public body might be. I would respectfully ask the hon. and learned Solicitor General whether it is quite consonant with either his personal or his official position to join with the Conservative small fry in this spiteful denunciation of a great popular representative body. There is one respect in which local control in London has been left deficient. I refer to the absence of control of the police. I would press on the right hon. Gentleman the urgency of this question. I have never joined in any general attack on the rank and file of the Metropolitan Police. Properly directed, I believe the Metropolitan Police are as fine, and, I will add, as honest a body of men as any in the country. But it is undoubtedly true that the administration of Sir Charles Warren demoralised the Metropolitan Police in their relations with the public to an extent which, I am afraid, many years of the present official *régime* will not suffice to blot out. But my immediate point is this: Every one must have seen with pain recently in the newspapers on many occasions the evidence of police constables treated as untrustworthy, and on many occasions they have incurred the express censure of metropolitan magistrates. One case I may refer to as an example, a case in which four men had been, as it turned out, unjustly convicted at the Middlesex Sessions, and when a person who h been concerned in the matter was tri for purjury at the Central Crimin Court a fortnight ago both the learn counsel who represented the Pub Prosecutor and the Recorder of London condemned the conduct of the police in the strongest possible terms. I am aware that such scandals may equally occur in boroughs having their own police control; but there is this distinction, that immediately a Committee would go to the root of the matter, and the ratepayers would have the satisfaction of knowing that the inquiry was being conducted by their own Representatives elected for this among other municipal duties. I think, therefore, that the position of the Metropolitan Police is a matter that demands, and urgently demands, the transfer of the control to a representative body. One other matter I desire to refer to. We have been promised in the Speech from the Throne a Bill relating to sanitary matters in the Metropolis. That is so far good, but the Government seem to have overlooked the machinery by which the sanitary laws are to be put into operation. There are two Sanitary Authorities in the Metropolis—the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the vestries. But three-fourths of the members of the Metropolitan Asylums Board are not directly elected, and the remaining fourth is not elected at all; and nearly every Member of the House will agree that the London vestries have grossly failed in the administration of the sanitary laws. The Government may have on paper the completest system in the world, but it will be practically a dead letter until the machinery of local government is amended. I hope the representations made to-night will induce the Government to produce their Bill for extending local government in the Metropolis, and give the House an opportunity of criticising it during the present Session.

(11.35.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I think the importance of the London interests involved in this question justifies the speeches made from this side of the House, and I can only express regret that our Colleagues on the other side do not think it necessary to back us up in the endeavour to get

the system of local government in the Metropolis completed. Those of us who take an interest in the local government of London are fully aware of its present chaotic state. London has suffered as no other part of the kingdom has suffered. For over 50 years it has been debarred from that amount of municipal life which is given to a great many towns under the Municipal Corporations Act. True, the Government have given us an instalment of municipal life by the London clauses of the Local Government Bill, but we have not yet got anything like the same power in London to control local affairs that is enjoyed by any of the large municipalities throughout the country. We were thrown over by the Government in 1835 and allowed to get into the most terrible state of misgovernment a large town could be in. It was necessary for Government to do something in 1855, and their action brought into existence the Metropolitan Board of Works, whose existence, many of us are pleased to say, has ceased, its place long occupied by the London County Council. We also had the London vestries brought into existence. At the present time there are 38 minor authorities, either vestries or District Boards, carrying on the local government of London, with authority over areas of very disproportionate dimensions, and with varying qualifications for members of each vestry. In one of two adjacent parishes, for instance, the qualification is £40, while in the other it is £25. This is a very high qualification, compared with the qualifications for members of Boards of Guardians; while the latter have far larger spending powers, yet the qualification is only £30. If there is any justification for the property qualification, assuredly that qualification should be higher for the Board of Guardians than the vestry. But we know when the Government do bring in their Bill dealing with District Councils, they will follow the plan adopted in their larger measure, and property qualification will "go by the board." I feel so confident that the right hon. Gentleman will do this that for the last three years I have not troubled the House with a little Bill of my own to abolish vestry qualifications. These vestries are not the bodies to carry on the local government of London. I might go to some extent into the question of expenditure; but I will only mention an instance where a large vestry, covering a large area, has adjoining it three smaller vestries, and these last, though combined they do not equal the area of the larger vestry, yet have each a similar staff of officials. We want a consolidation of the smaller areas, and I would recommend the right hon. Gentleman also to turn his attention to the extra-Parochial Boards which have a jurisdiction of their own. All these should be included in larger areas under the control of District Councils. I rather differ from my hon. Friend (Mr. Stuart), and I think it will be much better for us to make the County Council strong enough to act as the Central Authority, with delegation of authority to the District Councils. That view I judge the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) to hold from the language he used in the discussion on the Local Government Bill. There should be the same facilities in regard to membership of the new bodies as now exist with respect to the County Councils, and the franchise should be extended to lodgers. These last are an important section of the community, and often pay high rents, and, indirectly, rates, but they are excluded from the rights of citizenship simply because they happen to live in a part of a house where the landlord also lives. The rooms in model dwellings erected for artisans have separate assessments, and the head of each family is considered a householder, with a vote for the County Council, the School Board, and the Board of Guardians. Then there is the great question of markets and

market rights. This should be settled once for all, and the authority vested in the County Council. Is it just that power in a matter of this kind should remain with a small body whose jurisdiction extends over a small area of a mile on the banks of the Thames with a non-residential population? When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby brought in his Bill in 1884 he dealt gently with the City and gave the City enormous powers. The City successfully opposed that Bill, and I think some of the friends of the City must regret that action now, for certainly the present Government does not show a disposition to place the City in that unique position the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby would have accorded it. I, as a cockney, am proud of the historic traditions of the City, and I do not forget how, in the dark periods of our history, it has been within the City that our liberties have found protection, but the City puts itself out of Court when it claims to have its little area severed from the rest of London. I join heartily in the protest against the position we were placed in last year when Clause 8 was withdrawn from the London County Council Money Bill. I hope that this year the Government will include this clause, giving the Council power to inquire into the water supply of the Metropolis. What an undignified position that the London Council should have to come to the House and ask to be allowed to spend as the representatives of 5,000,000 of people £5,000 in the year to see what the London ratepayers are paying for one of the first necessities of life! In this matter London stands apart from other municipalities in the country, which have power to come to Parliament to promote or oppose Bills. One other question there is I desire to mention; and that is, the control of hackney carriages and their duty. I do not mean the Excise Duty, but the duty levied under the powers of the Metropolitan Carriage Act, under which the control of hackney carriages is fixed. We have a poor struggling man in London compelled to pay £2, where in other towns 5s. is sufficient. I do not think you ought to make a source of revenue from these men to meet some extravagances in the administration at Scotland Yard.

Mr. J. Rowlands

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

COMPANIES (MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION) BILL (No. 114.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for Second Reading read.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): This Bill, which contains only one clause, has been prepared in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of a Committee which sat last year, under the presidency of Lord Herschell, the hon. and learned Member for Stockton being also a Member of the Committee. The object of the measure is to enable companies, with the leave of the High Court, to alter their Memoranda of Association. I hope the House will allow the Second Reading to be taken now, as the Bill simply carries out the recommendation of the Committee.

DR. TANNER: I object.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

THEATRES (LONDON) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend and extend the Law relating to Theatres, Music Halls, and Places of Public Entertainment or Resort in the administrative county of London; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Earl Compton, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Lawson, and Captain Verney.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 159.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 21st February, 1890.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.

QUESTION.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, in view of the notice of Motion of the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India, I desire to ask him whether he will lay upon the Table of this House any of the communications which have been received from the present or late Viceroy in relation to proposals for altering the constitution of the Councils in India?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): My Lords, in reference to the Bill which I hope to introduce to your Lordships to-night, which is practically upon a very unimportant matter, I do not know that there is any communication that can be laid before Parliament, which can assist your Lordships in any way. With regard to any other matters, in regard to the communications which have passed, they seem to me to be of a confidential character and that they ought not to be laid at the present time before Parliament.

IRISH LAND TITLES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: In rising to call attention to the subject of record of title of land in Ireland; and to ask the Lord Privy Seal whether—(1.) It is intended to re-introduce the Bills for the local registration of title and the registration of assurances in Ireland, which were laid before Parliament by the Government last Session. (2.) Whether, if the Bills are re-introduced, the Government will consent so far to extend the former measure as to include within its provisions titles to the estates of vendors which have been made in the Courts of the Land Commission since 1881. (3.) Whether Her Majesty's Government will give facilities for passing a measure for the better making of title to land in Ireland. (4.) Whether the Government is prepared to press on the completion of the 25-inch ordinance survey of Ireland, said: My Lords, before I draw your attention to the subject of record of title in Ireland, I wish, in the first place, to say a very few words as to the reason why, I, a person who has not had the advantage of a legal training, have undertaken to deal with a rather complicated and difficult legal subject. Possibly some of your Lordships may be aware that about three years ago an association of persons connected with the ownership of land, and which is called the Landlords' Convention, was formed in Ireland to watch and to deal with the numerous questions which affect Irish land. That Convention consists of representatives from all the different counties of Ireland, and it has an executive committee, which is partly elective and partly co-optive. Upon our Executive Committee we have not the good fortune to have any noble Lord who is learned in the law, or who, as far as I know, has had any legal training; and, therefore, the committee have been, perforce, obliged to entrust to a person who is not learned in the law the task of bringing before your Lordships this important subject at this early period of the Session. My Lords, there are two systems established by law in Ireland dealing with record of title or registration of title. The first is the old system, which is known as the system of registry of deeds. That system was instituted as far back as the reign of Queen Anne, in the year 1708, and by it every deed connected with land (with the exception of some deeds of a minor character, such as leases for terms of years and other things which I do not think arise now) take priority not according to the date of execution, but according to the date of registration, and consequently a system of registration is, in point of fact, although not in point of law, compulsory as regards all deeds of that sort; and even a will dealing with land may, if the owner of the land likes, be registered. This system necessitates, when you want to make title to land, a series of very troublesome and expensive searches in the Registry Office. For instance, by way of illustration: Supposing an estate passes to me under a marriage settlement, and I want to sell that estate, first of all a

search must be made by the purchaser in reference to the original deed of settlement at all events, and possibly he may have to go further back. Then he must search for all dealings with the land by way of mortgages, charges or anything of that sort down to the present time. So that to make a title upon sale even of an acre of land in Ireland you may at the present time have to search for perhaps 15 or 20 deeds, or even more. I need not go more particularly into the registration of deeds at the present moment, but I will pass to what I may call the more modern system which was established in connection with the Landed Estates Court about 25 years ago. In 1865 an Act was passed called the Record of Title Act, and under that Act it was open to any person who obtained a conveyance from the Landed Estates Court, and which, of course, gave him an indefeasible title to the land, to record that title in an office which was opened in connection with the Court. This record was entered in a book they called a "Folio," and a space was left for entering below or alongside of it all subsequent dealings with the recorded land. A "Declaration of title" might be obtained by any person who chose to bring in his title and get it approved by the Court, and then that Declaration of title might be entered in the Record of Title Office, and would of course be treated in the same way as Landed Estate Court titles. This proceeding was quite optional on the part of owners of land, whether they were purchasers or otherwise. A provision was made for recording titles in that way according to law. But, unfortunately, this system of registration of title has been very little made use of, and I will tell your Lordships the reason why. The first thing we are always told is that solicitors did not like it, and I suppose they did not; but the solicitors no doubt had their reasons, and one of the reasons, I am told, was the absence of an Insurance fund against fraud, such as is provided for by the Lord Chancellor in the Land Transfer Bill, and they thought their clients would not be safe in using this record in the Landed Estates Court. Another reason was that persons who were not purchasers would be very slow in going to the trouble and heavy expense involved in getting a title put upon this record; and a third reason may have been the very heavy scale of fees charged for recording titles under the Act. Under that scale of fees, which were *ad valorem*, in the case of a person whose estate would be worth, say £200,000, which would represent an income of, perhaps, £9,000 or £10,000 a year, a Stamp Duty of £300, if not more, would have to be paid. Whatever the reason is, this Court has been made very little use of. At the end of last Session the Government laid before the other House of Parliament two Bills. One of them I need not touch upon at all, as I have nothing to do with it at this moment; but the other I will refer to in connection with this matter. It was entitled the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Bill. This Bill was, I suppose, merely laid upon the Table in the other House for the purpose of showing what they propose to do this year, and, as your Lordships are aware, one of the questions which I desire to ask of my noble Friend is whether the Government intend to re-introduce that Bill this Session. Reverting for a moment to the Record of Title Act, 1865, besides those provisions which I have already mentioned, there was to be an index; there were to be provisions for giving land certificates and certificates of charge, also provisions for the transfer and transmission of recorded estates under settlement, for recording judgments on estates and other necessary provisions for dealing with recorded land. Lastly, there was a schedule in which were given forms of transfer, forms of charge, forms of transfer of charge, and forms of powers of attorney in reference to transfers of charge. That Act which has unfortunately not been very much made use of for the reasons I have given, was a very good Act indeed, and if it could be amended, or if this Bill, which is probably to be undertaken, can improve the state of things which that Bill established, I think it would be of very great benefit to the owners of land in Ireland. Now, my Lords, the Bill that I am asking about was intended, according to the Memorandum affixed to it, to simplify the means of registration. I have not got the Bill here, so that I cannot refer to it more particularly; but it was called the Local Registration of Tithes Bill, and it was intended to provide a simple, inexpensive, and easily accessible means of registration for all occupiers of land who,

under the Ashbourne Acts, were to be brought under its provisions with regard to the registration of deeds. One of the main objects was to deal with those tenant-purchasers whoare now purchasing their farms or who have agreed to do so, I believe, in about 12,000 instances. The Memorondum pointed out that unless something of this sort were done, great confusion must inevitably arise. The old expensive sort of conveyance which they now get would oblige them to register, and the old system of registration of deeds which I have described would be quite unsuitable and a great deal too expensive for the purpose. It was, therefore, necessary that a simpler and better form should be adopted. Then, my Lords, the second object of this Bill is stated to be to substitute for the Record of Title Act, 1865, an improved system of registration for those who may prefer registration of title to the registration of assurances, which means, in point of fact, the old form of registration of deeds. As far as I can understand this Bill, it is intended to merge the Record of Title Office in the Registry of Deeds. I am now upon rather difficult ground, because I confess, when I come to look at the Bill, I find a good deal of difficulty in understanding it. I think it is rather an obscure Bill, and I do not think it is very well arranged. At the same time, it may have been intended to merely transfer the record of title with all its advantages into the new system of registration of deeds, to allow of declarations of title being given by the Landed Estates Court, or by some other Court which possibly might be substituted for it, and to permit of the Record of Title being carried out under a new name. However, my Lords, I think that is not very clear from the Bill itself. As one reads the clauses of the Bill they seem to me to deal almost exclusively with the tenant-purchasers under the Ashbourne Act. However, I may be wrong in what I have said with regard to it. It is for the purpose of obtaining information with regard to it that I have put my question, and I hope I shall get a satisfactory answer from my noble Friend. This Bill for registration of title is intended to apply, not only in Dublin, but it is also intended to have a local application. It is already provided by the Land Purchase Act that when a tenant purchases his farm, the Land Purchase Commissioners are to draw up a certificate of title and to transmit it to the Clerk of the Peace for the county in which the farm is situated. But there is no machinery for carrying the matter further. This Bill provides for a head office in Dublin, and that a branch office shall be opened in every county town, and the Clerk of the Peace is to act in the capacity of Sub-Registrar in connection with the head office in Dublin. What I am anxious for is that, as far as may be possible, those persons who have sold land to the tenants through the Land Commission Court, should be in a position to also go on with their estates with a clear root of title and be brought under the same provisions. I would even go so far as to say it would be no hardship upon them, because they would have already gone to the expense of making a title; and if the Government would only consent to moderate the scale of fees, which I think from what I see of the Bill they really intend to do, I do not think that any hardship could ensue to any one, and I think great advantage would accrue to owners of landed property in Ireland. With regard to the Guarantee Fund, a new Court is proposed to be established, as proposed by the Lord Chancellor in his Land Transfer Bill, which is a very great improvement. It is also provided that the *ad valorem* fees shall not be higher than is necessary for the purpose of providing for the expenses of the Court. That, I think, is fair enough, but I wish the Government could see their way to abolishing the *ad valorem* fees and fixing the scale at a more reasonable rate. I quite agree that an estate of £1,000 a year should pay less than one of £2,000, but I think that in the case of really large estates the *ad valorem* fees are quite out of proportion to the necessities of the case, and that a sum, of say £50, or £100, might be fixed as a maximum. That, I believe, would encourage and assist the new work very much. My Lords, I have now dealt with the first two questions which I have to put to my noble Friend. The first is whether the Bills are to be re-introduced, and the second is whether, if the Bills are to be re-introduced, Government will consent to so extend the provisions of the measure as to include the estates of vendors who

have been through the Courts of the Land Commission since 1881. And now I come to the third question, which is whether Her Majesty's Government will give facilities for passing a measure for the better making of title to land in Ireland. The last Return I can find which shows the number of estates in Ireland under the old system, and the number of occupiers, is 20 or 21 years old; but I think it may be taken that, except for the sales under the Land Act of 1881, and under the Ashbourne Act, that number has not been much altered. The number of landlords was returned at that time as under 20,000, the number of occupiers was returned at 660,000 in round numbers. We know now that the number of owners under the recent legislation has increased by about 12,000, and it is increasing every day. It seems to me there is no good reason why, if you are to have 12,000 persons put upon the record, the old owners should not come under the same system, too. I need hardly say that the making of title is a very troublesome, slow, and expensive business. It has been estimated that since the establishment of the Landed Estates Court in 1849, and the Courts of the Land Commission, those Courts have never been able to deal with more than £2,500,000 worth of property in one year, owing mainly to the great delay in making searches in the office. Those estates are not recorded as estates, but the various deeds affecting them are entered chronologically through a vast number of books; and if two or three persons are having searches made against their estates which happen to be entered in the same book, of course only one person can see the book at a time, and the others must wait. Supposing we had in Ireland a form of compulsory purchase of land such as has been advocated in some quarters, whereby, under a single clause in the Act of Parliament, by a stroke of the pen simply, the legal estate in the land would be transferred from the present owners, and the purchase money paid into Court until the persons concerned could make title to it, let me show your Lordships what in that case would occur. It is supposed that the present rental of Ireland is about £9,000,000 a year. Even at 20 years' purchase that would exceed £150,000,000 capital value. At the rate of £2,500,000 worth of property passing through the Courts in making title, it would take at least 60 years before £150,000,000 could be dealt with. The only way of dealing with this matter would be to establish some system which, of course, must be paid for in some manner, whereby a staff of examiners could be appointed, and some arbitrary limit should be placed to the extent to which searches should go back. I do not expect that the Government, either in the present Session or in the Bill to which I have referred, will go to such a large expense as that. We do not expect that so large a subject will be dealt with all at once, I can only say that we shall be thankful for small mercies, and be satisfied to go by steps. But while asking the Government to modify the Bill of last year so as to deal effectually with this great question, I would also ask them to say whether, if we should be able ourselves to introduce a Bill later on in the Session, they will give it favourable consideration, of course judging it by its merits. My Lords, there is only one other question on my Paper about which I need say a word, and that is, whether the Government will take steps to press on the completion of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey of Ireland. That survey has made very little way yet. When we make inquiries at the Ordnance Office we are told, with a smile, that in the course of 25 years or so it may be completed. If we were told that in five or six years it might be done, that might be not unreasonable; but to put it off for another generation is, I think, very unreasonable indeed. I should be glad, therefore, if the Government would take that matter into consideration, and if they would start an independent survey in each of the four provinces of Ireland with the view of pushing it through in a few years. I think we are entitled to ask for the consideration of Parliament, both as regards survey and registration of title, because they are really at the very root of everything that may be done with regard to improving matters as connected with land in Ireland. I am not now talking of political matters, but of some system which will enable incumbrances to be more easily discharged, and matters of that sort. Last year I brought in a Bill, which I do intend to re-introduce, with regard to th-

The Earl of Belmore

redemption of charges, but the matter may, probably, in some other form, come before Parliament. We ground our claim upon a very simple thing. We say that by the legislation of the last nine years, beginning in 1881, you have entirely revolutionised the conditions of property in Ireland. Of course the object of the legislation has been to benefit tenants; but I think I may admit that Government, and particularly the Government of that day, wished to do so without doing injury to the landowners. I remember a speech made by the noble and learned Lord who was then on the Woolsack) the Earl of Selborne), which clearly showed that the wish of the Government was to benefit the tenant without injuring the landowners. I have since looked at the remarkable words he used, and if your Lordships will allow me I will read them—

"The more prosperous a tenant is the better will be his relations with his landlord, and the better is the landlord's interest secured; and unless you show that you directly take from the landlord something which is his, and give it to the tenant, then I say the more advantages you can confer upon the tenant the more benefits you also confer upon the landlord."

Has this idea been realised? We know quite well that it has been entirely the reverse; we know that it is almost impossible to sell land except to tenants, or except in rare instances to borrow money upon it, and we say this state of things has been brought about by legislation the result of which was not foreseen, and on this ground we have a claim in justice to ask that Parliament shall take such steps as they can—I will not say to put things entirely right; I admit that cannot be done; but to make things easier, and to try and restore the market value of land. I will not occupy your Lordships' time any further, and I must ask you to forgive me for the imperfect manner in which I have endeavoured to bring before you this difficult and complicated subject.

*LORD MONTEAGLE: My Lords, before the noble Earl replies, I may perhaps be allowed to make a few remarks in support of the appeal which has been made to the House by the noble Lord who has just sat down. I suppose we may fairly expect that the answer of this Government will not be unfavourable to the questions which have been put. I need not occupy your Lordships' time in presenting any lengthy arguments to the House, but I may perhaps be permitted, as there are not many present representing the opinions I hold on this side of the House, to offer one or two remarks. My Lords, this happily is not a Party question, and I am sure that if the noble occupant of the Front Opposition Bench addresses himself to it he will not treat it in that light. It is certainly not exclusively a landlords' question, either, though, of course, the landlords are largely interested in it, and I am glad that the noble Earl has treated it as a higher question than as one affecting merely class interests. But I would venture to remark that even from the narrow point of view of the landlords' interests I believe that the promotion of this good object, the registration of title in Ireland would be one of the most effective means, in the long run, of promoting the transfer of land from landlord to tenant, and certainly one of the least objectionable. The leader of the Opposition on the opening night of this Session remarked in regard to the passing of the Bill dealing with the subject of purchase of land in Ireland, that he hoped the Government would give it due consideration, and that it would be carried out, though with due caution. I think the noble Earl will agree that any means by which you can improve the status of the tenant must fulfil the latter condition, and that it will be in the interests of all classes in Ireland, and will promote the public good. My Lords, I believe the experience of what has occurred in reference to this subject in Australia, as the noble Lord who has put this question is no doubt well aware, has shown that by compelling persons who are coming forward as purchasers, or who are seeking to occupy the position of landowners, to register at the very threshold, you will establish the advantage of that system so clearly that voluntary registration will be thereby very much promoted, and whether Her Majesty's Government assent to the second question of the noble Earl—whether they will consent to compel the registration of their titles by vendors who have sold portions of their estates, or not, I believe those vendors will soon see the advantages of registration, and that whether they are compelled to register or not, they will

follow suit. I do not dwell upon the advantage to the State as creditor under the Ashbourne Act. It is obvious to everybody that the ready realisation of land must be of advantage to the creditor, and it will also be found, I think, to be an advantage to the present owner himself, as well as an advantage to society generally. In conclusion, there are only one or two points which I would venture to press upon Her Majesty's Government in dealing with this matter. I am glad to see that they desire to deal with it in its local aspect. Though it is, of course, a matter of great concern to the landlords, it is chiefly as a matter affecting the peasant ownerships that have been created so rapidly under Lord Ashbourne's Act in Ireland that it is of importance, and for that purpose, however well registration on a large scale in a central position might answer for the larger estates, for the purpose of promoting registration in the case of smaller estates it is obviously important that the registration should be local. I venture also to express a hope that the compulsion which is put upon the purchasing tenants will be made as effective as possible. This is a vital matter to the whole Bill; the entire success of your system will depend upon whether you succeed in compelling the tenant in the first instance to register, and if any option is left to the tenant as to whether he may consider it advisable in his own interest to do this, I should fear the whole thing might break down. It should be made absolutely compulsory upon the tenant in the first instance, and having once done that, I believe that voluntary registration would follow in other cases. Then I hope the Government will secure that the conveyance of land will under the new system take place by registration and not by deed. If you once allow deeds to be employed there will be great danger of the system breaking down; because you must remember that in future you will not be dealing with solicitors in large practice in Dublin, but that you will be dealing with a large class of local solicitors all over the country, who would not perhaps possess the same high education or high standard in all matters, who might not have the same regard for the public interest, and who might seek to defeat the object of your Bill by keeping deeds in existence. There is only one other matter to which I wish to allude, and that is with regard to the fourth question of the noble Earl as to the completion of the Ordnance Survey. I hope that in every possible way the Government will make use of maps for the purpose of registration instead of recitals defining boundaries in words. It is in itself obviously a great simplification to have a map which any one can see at a glance instead of having to read through a long description, and then to refer to some map, or even to go upon the ground. I believe that the completion of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey, which is essential for utilization of maps, is, from this point of view, extremely important. My Lords, I hope I have not delayed the House too long upon this matter. I beg earnestly to support the appeal of the noble Earl.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I have listened with attention and interest to the remarks which have been made by my noble Friends, who are so well qualified by their knowledge of all matters referring to Ireland to speak on this question, but I hope I may be forgiven if I venture to enter a respectful yet very earnest protest against the course which the noble Earl has taken on this occasion. He asks me whether it is the intention of the Government to re-introduce certain Bills upon a certain subject during the present Session, and then he proceeds to ask whether, if those Bills were introduced, we should make in them special provisions of the character which he intimated in his speech. I must venture to submit that if, particularly upon a question of this sort, we are to discuss Bills which have not yet been brought into Parliament, we shall be, if not wasting time, at all events not promoting the best interests of legislation. In answer to my noble Friend's question, I may say it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to re-introduce the two measures, one for the local registration of title and the other for the registration of assurances in Ireland. They will be drawn mainly upon the lines of the Bills to which my noble Friend has alluded, but I am not competent at the present moment to give the exact details of those Bills. With regard also to the special points of which my noble Friend has spoken, I do not myself feel able to pledge the

Government at this period of the Session. Upon the third question, whether Her Majesty's Government will give facilities for passing a measure for the better making of title to land in Ireland, I may say it was the desire of the Irish Government that the two measures to which allusion has been made should have the effect to a great extent of facilitating the making of title to which my noble Friend refers; but as regards giving facilities for any such Bill, it is impossible that I can say what the Government may do until they have had the opportunity of seeing the Bills to which my noble Friend alludes. I do not know whether he meant to indicate an intention of bringing in a Bill himself, but I am quite sure if he does so, when Her Majesty's Government have an opportunity of considering it they will, unless there are strong reasons against it, give him every facility for its introduction and discussion. Then, with regard to the last question, whether the Government are prepared to press on the completion of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey of Ireland, I may say that the Government have already caused special provisions to be made in the Estimates of 1890 and 1891 to expe dite its completion. I can only hope that that being the case the delay will not be so long as that anticipated by my noble Friend in his speech. I am sorry that I cannot give more detailed answers to my noble Friend's questions, but I hope he will accept the assurance of the Government that they fully realise the inportance of the questions to which he has alluded, and that they do intend to legislate upon them during this Session.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: My Lords, on the whole I am very well satisfied with the answer which has been accorded to me by my noble Friend, and particularly as regards the last question. Of course I do not expect him to tell me that Government assents to a Bill which they have not seen, and I am not able to say whether I shall be able to bring in such a Bill this year or not. I can only say that at any rate it does not exist at present. With regard to the second question, I thought I had guarded myself against discussing the provisions of any particular Bill. We want to know whether the provisions of the Bill of last year are to be extended, but it appears that the Government has not yet made up its mind about the matter. At any rate I am much obliged to my noble Friend for the answer he has given me.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL.—(No. 6.).

Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.—(No. 28.)

FIRST READING.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: I rise to call attention to the provisions of the Act regulating the numbers and functions of the several Councils in India, and to present a Bill. My Lords, it is not my intention to detain your Lordships at any length with any statement as to the Bill which I must ask leave to introduce to-night, but I think it is only due to your Lordships to state very briefly the objects of, and the reasons for, the measure which I shall ask your Lordships to give to a first reading. Your Lordships are aware that under the provisions of the Indian Council Act of 1861, when the Council of India and the Governor General meet for the purpose of making laws and regulations, in addition to the ordinary number of members of the Council who are assembled or constituted as the Executive Council, other members are nominated by the Governor General in order to assist him and his Council when they meet for the purpose of making laws and regulations; but their powers are very limited, and no business, as the statute says, can be transacted at any such meeting other than the consideration and enactment of measures introduced into the Council for the purpose of enactment. It follows from this that when the Budget of the year is brought forward, and requires fresh legislation, it is then competent to the members of the Legislative Council to discuss the whole financial position of the Government and their entire proposals. But on the other hand if no financial legislation is required, no discussion can take place, and no member of the Legislative Council can say a word upon the subject. It follows also, secondly, that no member of the Legislative Council can ask questions of the government of India—there is no right of interpellating the Government of India as to any of their acts or as to anything that might be of

importance in the government of that country. I had considerable discussion with the present Viceroy before he left for India, upon this subject, and I have had an opportunity of ascertaining his views from statements he has made. On the 29th March, 1889, he made a speech to his Legislative Council in the following words—I am not going to read to your Lordships the whole of the speech, but he explains there so very clearly the mischief which I want to remedy that I trust your Lordships will allow me to read a few short extracts from that speech. What he said was this :—

"It has I believe been usually held that the terms of the Act by which our proceedings are governed, preclude an examination of the Budget, except when the financial arrangements for the year involves legislation in Council; the result has been that the Legislative Council has or has not been able to discuss the Budget according as it was or was not connected with some change in the laws of the country, and it has thus come to pass, that during the last 25 years the Budget has been discussed in Council for 12 years, while for the remaining years no such discussion has been allowed to take place. This seems to me, I must say, an altogether incongruous and inconvenient arrangement, and I am glad to express publicly my opinion, that the opportunities accorded the Legislative Council for passing under review the financial situation of the country, should occur with regularity, and should not depend, as at present, upon what is after all a mere accident—I mean the necessity of financial legislation in any particular year."

I think, my Lords, that explains as clearly as anything possibly can be explained, what I mentioned in my few opening sentences, and if I may venture to say so, with those observations made by the Viceroy in March of last year, I most thoroughly and entirely agree. He then goes on to say :—

"I may, perhaps, take this opportunity of of mentioning that this subject appears to be closely connected with another—I mean the propriety of giving to the members of the Legislative Council of the Government of India, under proper safeguards, the right of addressing questions to Government upon matters of public interest. I make this announcement, however, subject to two important qualifications. It will, in the first place, be necessary to ascertain clearly whether the law as it now stands permits the course which we should like to adopt, and if it does not, how it should be amended. In the next place it will be necessary effectually to limit the right of interpellation in such a manner as to preclude absolutely all questions which could not be put without injury to the public interest. This is a point of the utmost importance, and will require the most careful examination."

Viscount Cross

My Lords, in all those observations of the Viceroy I most heartily and entirely concur. As the Viceroy states there, I had first to enquire whether it was possible, under the existing law, to carry out such arrangements as would be necessary in order to give effect to what the Viceroy evidently wished to be carried out ; but after very serious consideration and careful examination, I entirely satisfied myself that fresh legislation was required, and that it would be impossible, under the existing law to make the alterations which the Viceroy wanted in accordance with those proposals. No doubt some legislation might have taken place as far as one of them was concerned, and it had even been proposed in India that although no alteration was necessary for the Budget of the year, yet that the Minister should carry in a measure which was practically a sham in order to give an opportunity for discussion, but it was found that that would have been against the provisions of the Act. Accordingly a Bill was prepared under my instructions, and it was quite ready to be introduced and carried last year, and it was only owing to the extreme pressure of business in the House of Commons that the Bill was not introduced and passed into law. I have therefore taken the earliest opportunity during the preseut Session of asking your Lordships to give the Bill a First Reading, as I do to-night. But, my Lords, as the functions of the Legislative Council were to be somewhat enlarged, it has been thought necessary and wise (and the Viceroy was of the same opinion) to give powers to the Governor General to nominate larger numbers of additional Councillors to the Legislative Council than by the present law he is able to do, and to widen the circle of persons who would be ready to assist him when the Council met to debate upon the important matters which should be brought before them. My Lords, I have hitherto confined my observations to the Council of the Governor General, purely for the sake of simplicity, but the same objects to be gained, and the same reasons for attaining them, apply exactly in the same way in principle if not in degree to the Provincial Councils. Therefore in the Bill last year

there were provisions inserted for adding to the number of Councillors and to give them the power of interpellation which I have already alluded to. The Bill was not confined to the Supreme Council of India but extended also to the Councils which exist in other parts of the country. My Lords, there are other provisions in the Bill which I am now about to present to you, but I do not think I need trouble your Lordships with any explanation as regards them. They are simply intended for the purpose of clearing up doubts about certain sections of the existing Act, and I think they will be quite clear to your Lordships as to their scope and intention when you see them in print. I do not think I should be justified in taking up more of your Lordships' time in asking for leave to introduce this Bill. I thought it would be unwise to introduce it without some explanation, as otherwise it might have gone out to India and have been misunderstood.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I do not think the noble Viscount has been quite just to his measure when in reply to my noble Friend, Lord Herschell, he described it as a very unimportant matter.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: I am not aware of having said so.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I heard the noble Viscount make that statement I am sure, and I shall be within the recollection of the House. I do not think the Bill is unimportant. On the contrary, I think it is of great importance and of wide scope. Any measure which touches the functions of the Governor General and his Council and the other Councils of India must, of necessity, be of importance, especially at a time when public attention, both in India and in this country, is particularly directed to this subject; and the noble Viscount will find, I think, that before this measure can be passed through Parliament it is calculated to raise a variety of other questions connected with the constitution of these Councils. My Lords, I do not propose now to enter upon a discussion of the details of a Bill which I have not seen; but I beg to express my entire concurrence with the proposal of the noble Viscount for permitting the Budget to be discussed, whether financial legislation is proposed or not. That is an arrangement which there has been a very great desire in India to see carried out, a desire expressed by all classes; and I am extremely glad to find that the time has come when that desire is likely to be gratified. I will at present reserve my opinion with regard to the right of interpellation. A great deal, of course, will depend upon the mode in which it is regulated by the Bill. It is a very important question, and involves a change of considerable magnitude, and therefore it will require serious consideration on the part of Parliament. If I might venture to express my opinion at present, my own view is favourable to the change; but I should not like to give a definite opinion upon the matter until I see the mode in which the noble Lord proposes to carry it out. With regard to the increase of the number of nominated Members, I confess, subject of course to my not having seen the Bill, that I entertain very considerable doubts. However, I will not discuss that matter now, but will reserve, if your Lordships will allow me, any opinion I may have upon it until the Bill is in print, and we have had time to examine and study it. But, my Lords, I do think it is very important, indeed, that when changes of this kind are about to be made—for they are important changes—in the constitution of the Indian Councils, we should have the advantage of knowing the views of the Government of India upon them. The noble Viscount has given us extracts from a speech made by the Viceroy of India in his Council, and I hope the noble Viscount will be kind enough to lay a copy of that speech upon the Table of the House. There can be no objection to that; it is public property, and it will save your Lordships the trouble of searching it out in a book which is not, perhaps, easily accessible to most of your Lordships. But, my Lords, I do venture to repeat the appeal which was made by my noble and learned Friend (Lord Herschell), and to ask that if there have been any official or public communication (of course I am not in the least referring to private communications, and I do not ask for them) between the Government of India and the Government at home in regard to the constitution of the Indian Councils, Parliament should have the advantage of having those Papers laid before it,

when this Bill comes to be discussed. My Lords, with regard to the increase of the number of members of the Council, I understood the noble Viscount to say that the present Viceroy of India was in favour of that change, but it was merely a general statement of Lord Lansdowne's opinion. If Lord Lansdowne has given that opinion in any official form, either in a speech, in the way in which he has given his opinion on the other points, or in any other manner, then I say it is only just to the Viceroy and to the Government of India—and I speak feelingly on the subject, having been myself connected with that Government—and to Parliament, that the views entertained by either Lord Lansdowne or by Lord Dufferin should be placed before us, and that we should have the opportunity of knowing how far those views agree with the proposals of the noble Viscount, and how far they fall short of or go beyond them, before we are asked to legislate upon so important a question as this.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I wish to express my entire concurrence with what has been said by my noble Friend who has just sat down, both in the opinions he has expressed with regard to the two questions which my noble Friend opposite has informed your Lordships are to be dealt with in this Bill, and also with regard to the desirability of your Lordships' House being placed in possession of the opinions both of the Governor General in Council, and of my noble Friend Lord Dufferin, who formerly held that office, and his Council, if any, upon the subject. My Lords, I think it is most desirable that the Parliament of this country should be in possession of the full and complete views of the Government of India before legislating upon a question of such great importance as this question is, namely, the constitution of the Legislative Bodies in India. Now, with regard to precedent on this matter, I think that is very clear. I recollect in the year 1861, when the late Lord Halifax introduced the last measure respecting the constitution of the Legislative Councils in India, there were very complete communications between the Secretary of State for India in England and the Governor General and Council in India, and that the Papers containing the opinion of Lord Canning were laid before Parliament before that Bill was passed, and indeed the measure was proposed to Parliament mainly on the ground of the opinion of Lord Canning in the matter. I am not in any way assuming, or intending to assume, that my noble Friend opposite is not on this occasion carrying out the views of Lord Lansdowne, because I think he has satisfied your Lordships, with regard to those two provisions, that the views of Lord Lansdowne have been practically carried out; but I think it would have been better if Parliament had been in possession of full information and of the authoritative opinion of the Government of India on the subject. I entirely agree with the noble Lord in regard to the alteration of the law respecting discussion upon the Budgets in India. I believe the fact that when no legislation has to be introduced it is impossible, consistently with the Act of 1861, to have a discussion on the Budget in the Legislative Council of the Viceroy, is a mere accident, and could hardly have been intended by those who framed the Act of 1861. The main point of that Act, and the intention of the Legislature, as was apparent from a despatch sent to India at that time, was that the Legislative Council in India should not be in the nature of an Assembly to discuss any question which might be brought up by any Member of the Assembly; that it should not exercise the same functions as Parliament exercises in this country; but that the Legislative Body should be confined to considering the measures of legislation brought before it, and should not devote itself to other matters. That, my Lords, was the policy which commended itself to Parliament in consequence of a distinct evil which had existed at the time of the Mutiny by the Legislative Council under the then law having taken upon itself, somewhat, the function of a Representative Assembly, and discussed matters apart from questions of legislation. That was a distinct evil which had taken place, and it was remedied by the Act of 1861. I should like to add to what has fallen from my two noble Friends the expression of my opinion, as far as I am competent to give one, that the operation of the

Act of 1861 has been very successful. My Lords, I believe that the legislation of our great dependency of India would bear favourable comparison with the legislation of any other country in the world, both as regards the nature of the enactments and as regards the care with which those enactments were considered before they were introduced into the Legislative Council, and also as regards the great care which the successive Governments in India have paid to taking every means of obtaining the opinion of the natives of India with respect to legislation before legislative measures have been passed. Therefore, my Lords, as regards the actual result of the Act of 1861, which is now to be amended, I say it has been most successful. I do not for a moment say that it may not be necessary after the lapse of so many years to adapt that legislation more to existing circumstances, but so far, I say, it has been most successful. In conclusion, I will only say, my Lords, that the measure which has been introduced by my noble Friend will receive from me, I can assure him, the most favourable consideration, and I believe, as he has stated to your Lordships, that it will make a most useful alteration in the law.

A Bill to amend the Indian Councils Act, 1861 — Was presented by the Viscount Cross; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next.

CROWN OFFICE BILL.—(No. 20.)
SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I beg to move the second reading of this Bill, in pursuance of the pledge which I gave the other night. It would not be necessary in truth to introduce this Bill merely for the purpose of abolishing the office of Secretary of Presentations, or for the transfer of the office of Secretary of Presentations to some one else. That, of course, could be done by a direction to one of my Secretaries; but the new arrangement which has been made renders this necessary in regard to providing for the duties of that office. There were a number of formal acts which were required to be done specially by the Secretary of Presentations—such as the making out of Patents, recording documents, and the like; and it has been thought better to transfer them to the Clerk of the Crown. He will therefore now have those duties to discharge which have hitherto been performed by the Secretary of Presentations, whose office is to be abolished.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 21st February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS TO LETTER CARRIERS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the postal authorities, while openly permitting letter carriers to solicit and receive Christmas presents, forbid and punish parcel postmen for the same practice; and whether many cases of punishment or dismissal of parcel postmen have occurred recently?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The custom of letter carriers receiving Christmas boxes is a very old one, and so far as they are concerned the Department has recognised the difficulties that would attend any interference with it. But it has appeared both practicable and advisable to prevent the extension of the custom to new classes, and with this view the solicitation of Christmas boxes by Post Office servants other than letter carriers is prohibited on pain of dismissal. Four parcel postmen out of a total number of 532 have been recently punished or dismissed for violation of the rule.

IRELAND—CRIMES ACT STATISTICS.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what was the number of persons proceeded against under "The Criminal Law and

Procedure (Ireland)Act, 1887," from 30th November, 1888, to 31st January, 1890; how many of these were convicted, the number of appeals lodged, and the number of sentences confirmed, reduced, and quashed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The proceedings under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, from November 30, 1888, to January 31, 1890, were as follows:—Total number of persons proceeded against, 979; number convicted, 699; number discharged, 280. Appeals.—Total number lodged, 226; sentences affirmed, 114; sentences reduced, 53; sentences reversed, 16; cases pending, 43.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many of the National teachers of Ireland, who were summoned to the July examinations of 1889 as candidates for promotion, attended and passed that examination, but were not promoted, and what published Rule of the Commissioners of Irish National Education enables them to withhold from a teacher the promotion to which his answering at the July examination entitles him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioners of National Education report that at the examinations in July, 1889, 505 teachers attended and passed the examination for promotion. All of these obtained promotion except two, from one of whom promotion has been withheld because the recent Reports of the Inspector upon his school were unfavourable. In the case of the other the question of his promotion has been deferred pending the receipt of the next Results Report upon his school. Thorough efficiency as a school-keeper has always been regarded by the Commissioners as an essential requirement in the promotion of a national teacher.

THE OCCUPATION OF GILGIT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government will lay upon the Table the Indian Foreign Office Memorandum, dated 6th May, 1888, referring to the occupation of Gilgit, and which Memorandum was referred to by the Viceroy of India in his observations at the Council for making laws and regulations, held at Simla, in September last?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): In the question of the hon. Member he asks for the production of a confidential Memorandum to the Government of India, on the ground that it was mentioned by the Viceroy of India in the Council held at Simla in September last. The speech of the Viceroy referred to in the question was made in support of a Bill to prevent the disclosure of official documents. The Memorandum asked for was referred to by the Viceroy as "a recent case in which a particularly scandalous disclosure of official information has taken place." Such a reference does not entitle the hon. Member, as he seems to think, to the production of the document, to which, on public grounds, the Secretary of State cannot consent.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, as a matter of fact, the document has not been published and circulated throughout the whole of India?

*SIR J. GORST: That is exactly what I said. A document purporting to be the Memorandum in question has been published, in consequence of some gross breach of official secresy, in the newspapers in India. But that is quite another thing from the Government of India publishing the authentic text of the Memorandum as an official document.

ORIENTAL PLATE.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with respect to Clause 4 of "The Revenue Act, 1884," which enacts that certain Oriental plate shall be exempted from assay in the United Kingdom, whether the construction put upon the clause by the officers of Her Majesty's Customs is that, if intended for exposure for sale, such wares must be hall-marked, and therefore assayed; whether it is the practice on the part of the officers of Her Majesty's Customs to require an affidavit on the part of importers that such wares are for private use, and not for purpose of sale; whether, if for purpose of sale, such wares are detained by the officers of Customs and sent to the Goldsmiths' Hall, or other assay office,

where, if found to be below standard, they are required to be re-exported or to be smashed; and whether he will direct that, subject to the payment of the proper duties of Customs, articles of Foreign plate which, in the opinion of the Commissioners of Customs, may be properly described as hand-chased, inlaid, bronzed, or filigree work of Oriental pattern, shall be admitted for purposes of sale free from the obligation of assay and hall-marking?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the hon. Member is under some misapprehension as to the facts of the case, because I must answer the first, second, and third paragraphs of his question in the negative. It is not necessary to issue additional instructions to the Commissioners of Customs, because they have already the power to do what is requisite, and I am informed that they exercise that power. In order, however, to remove any cause of grievance on the part of our Indian fellow-subjects, I may assure the hon. Member that if any case is brought before me it shall receive my full consideration.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will inquire whether a number of casquets were not detained recently until I myself, who was the importer, was able to make a declaration?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have no doubt that the casquets were detained as the hon. Member says. I will, however, make a specific inquiry as to the matter which he has brought under my notice.

IRELAND—EVICTION SUMMONSES UNDER THE LAND ACT.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that 30 more eviction summonses under the 7th section of the Land Act, 1887, have been served upon the tenants of Lord Clanricarde, in the district of Woodford, as also a considerable number on the tenantry at Portumna; and whether the forces of the Crown will be given for the purpose of carrying out these evictions in this district, where so many evictions have already taken place?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There are, I understand, 30 such summonses down for hearing at Woodford Petty Sessions, and 32 adjourned summonses down for hearing at Portumna Petty Sessions. The forces of the Crown will not be given for the purpose of carrying out these evictions. Should, however, the Sheriff require and ask for protection in carrying out the law, of course that protection, subject to the exigencies of the Public Service, will not be withheld.

THE IRISH POLICE AND ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen a letter in the Cork papers of the 17th instant from the Rev. Father O'Keefe, P.P., of Meelin, County Cork, complaining of the conduct of the local police in constantly following his curate, Father Kennedy; if he has seen a statement in the papers, that on the particular occasion complained of in the letter the constables followed Father Kennedy to the house of a sick woman named Mrs. M'Carthy, lying at the point of death, and to whom the priest went in the discharge of his religious ministrations, and, whilst so engaged, one of the constables, with rifle in hand, appeared at the window of the sick woman's room, and pressed his face against the glass, to the great distress of the woman, and that all the while the priest was engaged on the duties of his ministration the dying woman was alarmed by the constables pacing around the house; and whether he will inquire into the truth of their complaints against the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that Father Kennedy has been actively engaged in endeavouring to revive the local branch of the National League, which has been suppressed in that district as an unlawful Association. He, on the day in question, had been accompanied to his own house by a number of the members of the suppressed branch. The police then warned him against holding an unlawful meeting, and continued present to prevent it. Later in the day he proceeded to Mr. M'Carthy's house, accompanied by the secretary of the suppressed branch. The police followed him. As soon as the sergeant perceived that no unlawful assembly was intended,

he remained some distance away from the house. The police were not aware that anyone was sick.

SHANNON DRAINAGE.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if, bearing in mind replies given in this House during last Session, that no injury had been done, or was likely to be done, to the Shannon Fisheries by the drainage works executed by the Board of Works at Killaloe and elsewhere, he will direct that the Minutes of the Evidence taken by the Fishery Commissioners last summer, relative to the contemplated Shannon Drainage question, together with the Inspector's Report thereon, be laid upon the Table of this House, in order that Members may understand the apprehension, before contemplated legislation, as to imminent danger to the Shannon Fisheries alleged that will occur, by the Limerick Board of Fishery Conservators, if the Board of Works designs are persisted in; and if in future, having regard to the right involved, he will direct, in lieu of an official reply to their communications, that full information be supplied on said subjects to the Limerick Fishery Board, their interests being materially affected?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As stated by me yesterday, in reply to a question put by the hon. Member for Limerick, West, copies of the evidence and of the Reports of the Inspectors of Fisheries and of the Board of Works in the matter referred to will, when the printing is completed, be furnished to the Limerick Board of Conservators—probably within the next few days. This, I hope, will answer all practical purposes.

TYPHOID FEVER IN THE ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that, amongst the soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the Hussars now stationed in the Royal Barracks, Dublin, there have been four cases of typhoid fever last week, and that an officer of the same regiment has been ill since last Saturday from the same disease; can he explain how it happens that our Troops are located in barracks notoriously unhealthy, and why in the Dublin hospitals there is no sick ward for Military officers; and will he take into consideration the propriety of defraying the expenses incidental to the illness of officers who, being struck down in the discharge of their duties and being unable to travel to their homes, are obliged to go to hospital, there being no proper accommodation for illness in barracks?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am sorry to say that during the present month there have been three cases of typhoid fever among the men of the Hussars quartered in the Royal Barracks, Dublin, but no officer of the regiment has been reported as ill from the same disease. There is no ward for officers in the Dublin Military Hospitals, for the reasons stated by me in this House on the 25th of June last—namely, that officers are only entitled to treatment in military hospitals when suffering from wounds or from illness contracted in the field. Under these circumstances, I am not prepared to make any general rule for the payment of an officer's expenses while in civil hospital, although I should always be ready to consider any special case of hardship.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will not consider the expediency of abandoning these pestilential barracks altogether; and whether the number of troops quartered in Ireland is not larger than there is any necessity for?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I quite agree that the number of troops stationed in Ireland is larger than the necessities of the case require. I should prefer to make any further statement about the Royal Barracks, Dublin, when I am called upon to speak about barracks generally.

THE MUNSTER COAL FIELD.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, immediately after the passing of "The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889," a memorial of the owners, lessees, mining population, and inhabitants generally of the "Munster Coal Field," extending over an area of 20 square miles, and second in extent of

coal-bearing strata to that of the "Leinster Coal Field," was duly presented to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, setting forth :—

"That the Coal Field has hitherto been worked by the Mining Company of Ireland, but which is now in process of being wound up and the mines abandoned, and the mining population, unaccustomed to agricultural pursuits, cast adrift upon the poor rates. That the main cause of this failure and the winding up of this Company is the want of a line of railway from the base of the primary mountains of Sliebardagh, to which a sub-tramway could be constructed upon the bed of a water tunnel penetrating to the level of the base of the coal basin, which would thus serve the double purpose of transit of the mineral and of unwatering the mine. Such has been hitherto effected by machinery on the surface, enhancing the cost of production, especially from the lower depths of the coal strata, to the extent that at length this large and valuable Munster Coal Field appears doomed to be permanently abandoned and left undeveloped for the future, and the mining population, a race distinctive from the agricultural inhabitants, dispersed irretrievably ;"

and praying further that it should be declared desirable that a light railway should be constructed between the given places, in order to develop and maintain such coal and other industries ; that nevertheless the memorialists have not hitherto obtained the benefit of the Act ; and whether the Government, in view of the foregoing circumstances, will take steps to have special assistance afforded to the district in question within the meaning of the Act ?

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that immediately after the passing of "The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889," a memorial, signed by 2,220 persons, representing the owners, lessees, occupiers, and mining population of the "Leinster Coal Field," extending over an area of 40 square miles of coal-bearing strata, and containing a larger quantity of workable coal than contained in all the rest of Ireland put together, was duly presented to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, setting forth in detail the above-mentioned facts, and showing that, mainly owing to the want of railway communication, this mining industry is steadily declining, stocks of coal at the collieries keep increasing, the colliery proprietors have been obliged to reduce the number of working days of the miners, and the want of sufficient employment is very severely felt, as set forth in the Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Mines ; that the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland has specially referred to this district as one that should have been heretofore provided with railway connection, being 15 miles distant from any railway station ; and praying that it should be declared desirable that a light railway should be constructed to connect the given places, for the development of such coal and other industries ; that the memorialists further requested to be heard by Counsel, or otherwise, in order to establish their contention that such industries were (as they were advised) within the true meaning and sound legal construction of the Act, rather than other light railway lines projected to connect given places, not to develop special industries, no matter how otherwise desirable, but to promote intercommunication between remote localities and market centres ; that, nevertheless, *ex parte* Orders in Council have been made in regard to such latter lines of railway, and the memorialists have been hitherto denied the benefit of the Act ; and whether, in view of the foregoing, the Government will take steps to have the case of these memorialists duly heard and determined, and, if necessary, to have further funds applied for in Parliament, in order to carry out the beneficial policy of the Light Railways (Ireland) Act ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Memorials to the effect stated have been received. The cases referred to were carefully considered with upwards of 60 other proposed lines of railway, having in view, firstly, the special objects as defined in the second section of the Act ; and, secondly, the sum of money (£600,000) which is available for the purpose. It was decided that the schemes now scheduled under the Act were the most deserving. It would not be practicable at present to hold out any prospect of special assistance under the provisions of the Act to either of the districts referred to in the hon. Member's questions.

AN ASSIZE CASE AT KILKENNY.

MR. MARUM : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the following case :—A certain prisoner was convicted at a recent Assizes

at Kilkenny of the larceny of a certain £5 (Bank of Ireland) note, which he had passed to a respectable merchant, one Mr. Hackett, of that city in the course of business, who, through his assistance, procured change therefor in single £1 notes; likewise in the course of business, from another respectable merchant, Mr. Kerwick. The constabulary called upon the latter, who submitted his cash-box to them, out of which the prosecutrix selected and identified the stolen note; and subsequently, after the conviction, the going Judge of Assize made an order to have the £5 note given to the prosecutrix; and whether, in view of the facility so promptly afforded in the administration of justice in this case, and the injurious effect in future of losses accruing in similar cases, and especially having regard to the decision in R. *v.* Stanton, 7 C. and P. 431, whereby it would appear that the law in the case is doubtful, the Government will recoup Mr. Kervick for his loss?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that it is the case that a man was convicted for the theft of two £5 bank-notes, one of which was traced by the police as having been paid by the prisoner to Mr. Hackett, who obtained change for it from Mr. Kerwick. The Judge did order that the stolen note should be returned to the owner, who prosecuted. Mr. Kerwick's case is admittedly a hard one; but I am advised that there are no funds at the disposal of the Government out of which he could be recouped.

POSTAL DELIVERIES.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he can explain why letters from Ireland are not delivered in Southport, Lancashire, Newcastle, Staffordshire, and other English towns on Sunday mornings, while letters from other parts of the kingdom are duly delivered on Sundays in those places; whether complaints have reached his Department on this subject; and whether arrangements will be made to secure equal facilities for the delivery of mails from all parts of the kingdom?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that there is no train at present running by which Saturday night's letters from Ireland could be brought into either of the towns named in time for Sunday morning's delivery. So far as I am aware, no complaints respecting the communication have reached the Department; but the matter shall be kept in view, in order that advantage may be taken of any opportunity that may offer of improving the service.

ARRESTS AT NEWBRIDGE.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the following statement in the *Daily News* of 20th February:—

"Twenty-nine more workmen were arrested to-day in Clongorey for building houses for the shelter of evicted tenants. The arrests were effected by a force of 100 policemen, and the prisoners were brought handcuffed to Newbridge, and were detained in the Bridewell until 6 o'clock, when they were discharged under bail to appear at Newbridge Petty Sessions to-morrow week. The district has been greatly excited by these arrests;"

whether it is a fact that on a previous day 14 other tradesmen and labourers engaged in similar work were, with Mr. Everett, their foreman, arrested and brought to Newbridge police barrack; whether these men at the time of their arrest were working on land from which tenants had been previously evicted, or on land still in occupation of tenants; why were they handcuffed, or did they show any disposition to evade arrest; and on what ground or by whose authority were the forces of the Crown so employed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have asked for information, but I have not yet succeeded in obtaining it.

MR. CAREW: I will repeat the question on Monday.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): What was the charge against these men, and what authority had the police for arresting them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will cause inquiry to be made.

THE LATE RICHARD PIGOTT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what amount of money belonging to the late Richard Pigott was sent over, or brought over, to this country after his suicide in Spain;

and what has become of that money; and whether certain notes, which had been in the possession of Richard Pigott after he had given evidence before the late Special Commission, were traced by the police to Mr. Soames, or to some other person connected with the *Times* in the proceedings before the Special Commission?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that the only money found on Pigott after his death and brought to this country consisted of a very small sum in silver and copper. I presume that the second inquiry refers to a remittance received by Pigott's housekeeper on the 23rd of February, 1889, and presumably posted by him on the 22nd. It contained a £10 note, which it was ascertained had been paid to Pigott by Mr. Houston in September, 1888, and a £10 note and a £5 note which Mr. Soames had drawn from the bank, one in August and the other in September, 1888.

MAJOR LE CARON.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Reports of Le Caron to Mr. Anderson, which were paid for with public moneys, and which were lent to Le Caron, are now in safe official keeping; and whether Le Caron has received any further money from the Government since he gave his evidence before the late Special Commission?

*MR. C. GRAHAM: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I should like to ask whether Le Caron was employed for the first time by the present Government; or whether he was passed over to them as a legacy by their predecessors?

MR. MATTHEWS: All the material facts connected with Le Caron were stated in his evidence before the Special Commission, to which I will refer the hon. Member. In reply to the question on the Paper, I have to say that I am informed that the documents which were placed at the disposal of Le Caron for the purpose of enabling him to give his evidence have all been returned to Mr. Anderson. The answer to the second question is in the negative.

MR. LABOUCHERE: May I ask whether, considering that Mr. Anderson surrendered the letters to Le Caron without permission from the Home Office, the right hon. Gentleman thinks that the documents are in safe official keeping with him?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think I am in a position to show conclusively that there was no breach of confidence.

MR. COBB: Did I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say last Session that Mr. Anderson had kept no list of the documents; and, if so, how could he know that Le Caron had given them all back?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no recollection of Mr. Anderson making any such statement.

THE SALFORD GAS FRAUDS.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the opportunities for further corruption afforded thereby, he proposes to cancel or alter a prison rule under which a person who is charged with bribing a corporation official, who has been convicted of embezzling public monies, is allowed to have access to the person so charging him without the intervention of a third person; and, whether, as a matter of fact, the Prison Board have forbidden Mr. Ellis Lever to have further access to the prisoner except in the presence of a third person?

MR. MATTHEWS: When Mr. Rhodes and his client, Mr. Lever, saw the prisoner it was in the presence and hearing of a warder, permission having been obtained on the grounds I stated yesterday. The Prison Commissioners have since refused to allow a second interview of any kind, unless a statement made to them by the Town Clerk of Salford can be refuted—namely, that the prisoner could not possibly in any sense be a witness for the defendant, and that a further interview would be greatly opposed to the interests of justice. I am now considering with the Prison Commissioners what general practice shall be adopted in future with regard to visits by solicitors and others.

THE POST OFFICE AT MINGSHALL NEW VILLAGE.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General when he will replace the post office at Mingshall New Village, Wolverhampton, which has now for two

months been without even a clearance box, causing great inconvenience to a large population?

*Mr. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I find that the person selected to conduct the post office at Mingshall has just declined the situation. It will be necessary, therefore, to select another person, and I have given instructions for this to be done, and the office to be re-opened with the least possible delay.

ALLEGED PERJURY IN THE COUNTY COURTS.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Honour, Judge Seymour, stated publicly in the County Court at Hexham, on the 7th inst.:—

"That he had heard since the 1st of October last more deliberate perjury in the County Court than during a lifelong career in Civil and Criminal Courts in Assize in London;"

whether Judge Chalmers, of Birmingham Court, also recently declared publicly his conviction that the atmosphere of the court was steeped in perjury, and that he went

"Home occasionally absolutely in despair as to whether he had been doing justice or injustice, owing to "the terrible amount of hard absolute lying that occurs in that court:"

and whether he will introduce some measure to check the perjury that is thus officially stated to be prevalent in England?

The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): I have no information as to what was said by Judge Seymour; but I am informed by Judge Chalmers that he did make a statement in the sense of the words quoted, and that he was alluding especially to petty cases in his urban County Court. In the more important cases above £20 he stated that there is a marked decrease of perjury, and in his country districts there is a distinctly higher respect for truth. I am not prepared to introduce legislation on the subject. The law provides already an adequate punishment for perjury, ranging from imprisonment up to seven years' penal servitude.

LORD WOLSELEY AND THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the publication in the current number of *Harper's Magazine* of the article on "The Standing Army of Great Britain," by Lord Wolseley, constitutes an infraction of the last sentence of paragraph 11, section vi., of the Queen's Regulations, which runs as follows:—

"Officers and soldiers are prohibited from publishing or communicating to the Press without special authority, either directly or indirectly, information relative to the numbers, movements, or operations of the Troops, or details regarding fortifications, armaments, or experiments made in connection with military matters. They are not to attempt to prejudice questions under investigation by the publication, anonymously or otherwise, of their opinions."

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: I am inclined to think that the article in question does constitute an infraction of the Queen's Regulations; but, independently of that consideration, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that members of the Headquarters Staff are bound specially to abstain from discussing in public questions connected with the War Department. I have been in communication with Lord Wolseley on the subject, and he informs me that the article in question is more than a year old. I am quite sure that it was far from his intention to violate any rule on the subject, and that such a case is not likely to recur.

STATE-AIDED SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that teachers in every State-aided school in Scotland keep a roll made up daily, and summed up weekly, showing the total weekly average attendance, and the weekly average attendance of infants, and of children in each of the six standards, and in Ex. VI. in their school; and that the number of fee-paying schools in Scotland, in which fees may be charged under paragraph 7 of the Minute of the Scotch Education Department of August 26th, is only 44, and belong to a much lesser number of School Boards; whether there is any good reason why the teacher in each of these 44 fee-paying Schools should not be able to give by

return of post the particulars as to attendances in their schools, set forth in the Motion for a Return as to Fee-Paying Schools (Scotland), which appears on the Notice Paper of to-day; and whether the Government will consent to this Return?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): As I informed the hon. Member yesterday, certain items of information requested in the Return for which he proposes to move are not in possession of the Department, and the rules as to registration do not require that the Registers should be so kept as to enable School Managers to give the attendances according to standards, the children being classified in the Registers according to sex and age. Such information could not be given without very considerable trouble to the staff of the schools. But as we are anxious to give to the hon. Member all the information in our power, we shall without delay communicate with the authorities of the schools, with the view of ascertaining whether this information can be given; and, if so, we shall be prepared to give the Return in the form he desires.

IRISH BUTTER.

MR. SHEEHAN (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the correspondence and articles which appeared recently in the Irish Press, alleging that the values of Irish butter are materially reduced owing to the depreciation of the standard of the brands affixed to the butters inspected in Cork Butter Market, which is regulated by the provisions of a recent Act of Parliament; and whether any Government Department in Ireland has the power to hold an inquiry into the matter and to enforce any necessary reforms?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will make inquiry if the hon. Member will put down the question again.

IRISH JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Ireland tenants who have had judicial rents fixed, and who hold under statutory terms, have no votes in the formation of Drainage Boards, though tenants holding for terms of 40 years possess the right to vote; and whether, in view of the general indisposition of landlords, whose tenants have had fair rents fixed, to assume any pecuniary burdens in respect of land improvements, and the fact that a judicial tenant's interest is practically perpetual, the Government will assent to a Bill so amending the definition of "proprietors" under the Drainage Acts as to give to statutory tenants the same rights under these Acts as tenants who hold under leases of which 40 years are unexpired?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the hon. Gentleman is in error in supposing that tenants holding for terms of 40 years possess the right to vote on Drainage Boards. The qualification is an unexpired term of 40 years. At present the burden consequent upon the execution of drainage works falls in the first instance upon the landlords. It would not be fair to give to the tenants the right of imposing this burden. If this difficulty were got over, I see no objection in principle to giving tenants the right to vote on Drainage Boards.

MR. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman give his assent to a Bill for the transference of the burdens from the landlords to the tenants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot promise until I have seen the Bill.

CATHOLIC CONSTABLES IN IRELAND.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the fact that, on the 29th June and 15th August last, two holidays in the Catholic Church, the Catholic constables under the orders of Sergeant Clare (station sergeant at Kevin Street in the Dublin Metropolitan Police) were prevented from hearing mass, being at an early hour taken to the Phœnix Park and drilled there?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I answered this question yesterday, but I will repeat what I said. It is not the fact that Catholic constables were prevented from hearing mass by being taken at an early hour to the Phœnix Park.

MR. M. HEALY: The answer of the right hon. Gentleman is that it was not so. My informant says that it was, and in face of this conflict of testimony

will the right hon. Gentleman afford facilities for a Departmental inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that mass was celebrated as early as 6.30 a.m. at a Catholic chapel within a few minutes' walk of the barracks, so that there was ample time for Catholic constables to have attended if they had been so disposed.

MR. M. HEALY: Did the men receive information that if they did not attend mass at 6.30 a.m. in the morning they could not attend at all?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware.

THE IRISH LAND ACTS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the case that the Government have recently been collecting statistics as to the number of tenants in Ireland excluded from the operation of the Land Acts, as holding under lettings wholly or mainly for the purpose of pasture; whether, if so, the information collected will be published; and whether the Government are now willing to relax the law excluding this large and important body of Irish tenants from the right to have their rents revised by the Land Courts?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have been collecting information relating to agricultural holdings, but not for the purpose stated.

CORK LONG LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a recent resolution of the Cork Long Leaseholders Association, pointing out the grievances under which tenants excluded by the length of their leases from the benefits of the Land Act of 1887 labour; whether he can give any information to the House as to the probable number of such leaseholders in Ireland; and whether, in view of a general scheme of land purchase, the Government will now consent to admit such tenants to the right of having their rents fixed by the Land Courts?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received resolutions from this Association and others, but I have no information as to the number of leaseholders in the country, nor do I think it possible to collect it. There is no relation between the scheme of land purchase and the fixing of judicial rents.

MR. J. M'ENERY.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if it be a fact that Mr. John M'Enery, editor of the *Limerick Leader*, was arrested in the City of Limerick yesterday, on a charge of simply publishing a report of speeches delivered at a meeting of the local branch of the National League, on 3rd February last, of that city, without editorial comment; and if, in view of recent decisions of the County Court Judge of Waterford on such publications, such a prosecution is legal, and ought to be persisted in?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): This question relates to a prosecution which is now pending, and it would, therefore, be obviously improper for me to say more on the subject than that, assuming the facts to be correctly stated in the question, this case will afford an additional opportunity of ascertaining whether the view of the law attributed to Judge Waters is in accordance with the law as authoritatively laid down by the Exchequer Division in Ireland.

STRIKES IN LONDON—CONDUCT OF POLICE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the alleged interference by the police with "pickets" during the recent dock strike and the gas stokers strike; and whether, in so doing, they were acting under orders, or on their individual responsibility?

MR. MATTHEWS: My attention has not been called to any particular alleged interference by the police with pickets during the recent dock strike or gas strike. If the hon. Member will put a question on the Paper specifying date and place I will make any further inquiry that he may desire.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES—CONFERENCE AT MELBOURNE.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the

Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it will be practicable to procure and present to this House Papers and Correspondence affording an account of the Conference held in Melbourne for the purpose of inaugurating closer union among the Australian Colonies?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): During the preliminary negotiations which have taken place in Melbourne no points have arisen requiring a reference to Her Majesty's Government, and there is as yet no correspondence to present; but it is expected that a Report of the proceedings will arrive in March, when it will be laid on the Table of the House.

IMMIGRATION OF FOREIGN PAUPERS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, with a view to reducing the immigration of Foreign paupers and their competition with the wage-earners of Great Britain and Ireland, Her Majesty's Government will take measures to provide for a record of the names, sexes, ages, occupations, Nationalities, and destination of all alien steerage and deck passengers arriving at ports of the United Kingdom and not in possession of through tickets to other countries, under the provisions of the still running Alien Act, as recommended by the Select Committtee upon the Immigration of Foreigners in 1888 and 1889; and if, also, British Consuls at European seaports will be instructed to direct special attention to the collection of information on the subject of the emigration of destitute persons to the United Kingdom?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it not the fact that the evidence reported on by the Select Committee referred to shows that there are scarcely any foreign immigrants who are in receipt of pauper aid?

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: In consequence of the intervention of the hon. Member opposite, I must ask my right hon. Friend if his attention has been drawn to paragraphs 3, 4, 6, and 7 of the general conclusions of the Committee, which state shortly—(1) that the better class of foreign immigrants only arrive in transit to other countries (chiefly America), but the poorest and worst class remain here; (2) that the distribution of these poor aliens, both as regards localities and trades, is such that the pressure occasioned is out of proportion to their numbers; (3) that they work for less wages and longer hours than British workmen, and are very dirty and uncleanly in their habits?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I quite agree with the hon. Member for Northampton that in this connection the word "pauper" is a misnomer, because a pauper is a person who is in receipt of Poor Law relief, and I believe that many of these persons cannot be so described. On the other hand, as they are of a very poor class and work for very low wages, their competition may drive our own people to obtain Poor Law relief. Therefore, I think that both the hon. Member for Northampton and my hon. Friend behind me are in the right. With regard to the question on the Paper, the Government feel the great importance of the whole subject, and we are making the necessary inquiries and arrangements to carry out, as far as possible, the recommendations of the Select Committee as to a statistical record, including a statistical record such as is described in the hon. Member's question. There are some difficulties in the matter; but the best use will be made of the existing materials and powers, so that the Government and the public may be informed on the subject. With regard to the last part of the hon. Member's question, the British Consuls at the principal European seaports in proximity to this country have been directed by the Foreign Office to collect information as to the emigration of destitute aliens to the United Kingdom, which information will be published in due course.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Have the Government the smallest intention of enforcing the provisions of the Alien Act as they stand?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: As far as it is necessary to obtain the information recommended to be obtained by the Select Committee.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the provisions of the Alien Act require every person, without reference to his means, to lodge with the officer his name and a certificate of his coming into the country, to state

when he is going to leave it, and to get the certificate before leaving?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not mean to imply that the provisions of the Act will be universally enforced; but, of course, it is obvious that this kind of immigration takes place practically only at certain ports, and the powers of the Alien Act, as far as they are necessary and as far as they can be put in force without great public inconvenience, will be put in force.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S. E., Rugby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government propose to take any step as to the Report of the Special Commission, after the decision of the House has been taken upon the Resolution of which he has given notice?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I can only tell the hon. Member that the question has neither been raised nor considered by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, has the Treasury asked for, and been furnished with, a list of the witnesses, or of any of the witnesses, before the late Special Commission; and, if so, with what object; and whether, before any Vote for the expenses of these witnesses is asked for, he will give an assurance that Members will be furnished with a list of the witnesses in regard to whom moneys are to be paid?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): No application has been made to the Treasury for the payment of the expenses of the witnesses. The Treasury has no information on the subject.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps the First Lord of the Treasury will answer the second part of the question?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I can hardly undertake to give an assurance that Members will be furnished with a list of witnesses in regard to matters on which we have no information directly or indirectly.

MR. LABOUCHERE: What I want to know is this. Does the right hon. Gentleman, or do the Government, contemplate paying for any witnesses who came before the Special Commission?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We certainly do not contemplate making any expenditure, or asking the House to incur any expenditure, when we have not been asked to do so.

*MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the officials of the Library have no information as to the Report of the evidence given before the Special Commission to which he referred yesterday, and which the right hon. Gentleman described as being different from that given in the daily newspapers, and can the right hon. Gentleman state in what manner access to that Report can be obtained?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I was led yesterday into a mis-statement in saying that the evidence taken before the Royal Commission was in the Library. I was under that impression when the right hon. Gentleman opposite requested that it should be furnished. I regret that I was led into a mis-statement. The evidence I referred to is the evidence which has been printed by order of the Royal Commission, consisting of 11 volumes. There is no other evidence or Report. That evidence will be placed in the Library with as little delay as possible, and I regret that it has not already been placed there. I am asked a question as to furnishing the evidence to Members who desire to have it; every exertion will be made by the Stationery Office to place it within the reach of hon. Members as soon as it can be furnished.

*MR. WALLACE: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend that his Motion with regard to the Special Commission shall be postponed until the evidence has been a reasonable time in the Library, or has been furnished to Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I anticipated that some questions would be asked by hon. Gentlemen opposite on this subject, and I intended to say that, as I find it probable that the discussion on the Address will not be entirely concluded this evening, the Government will not ask the House to consider the Resolution of which I gave notice on Monday. And further, communications have been made to me that it would be inconvenient, under the circumstances of the case, to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway that

the debate should be entered upon at an early day next week. The circumstances of the case are, in my humble judgment, urgent; and therefore I propose to come to some understanding in the course of the evening as to the day on which the debate will be taken, and to make a statement on the subject before the adjournment of the House to-night. I should hope that it will be possible to take the Supplementary Estimates in the course of next week, and in that event I should have to give notice of a request to the House to give facilities for that purpose; and if the day were a convenient one for the consideration of the Motion of which I have given notice I should probably fix it for Monday, the 3rd of March. But I desire to make that arrangement so as to meet as far as possible the convenience of Members in all parts of the House.

MR. M. HEALY: Is the House to conclude that the Chief Secretary will introduce his Bill before the debate on the Report of the Commission?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That must depend on the course of public business. I have stated that it is absolutely necessary that we should have a certain amount of Supply before the end of the financial year; and I should not be justified in allowing next week to pass without taking some Supply, if we are not able to take the whole.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Will the speech of the Attorney General be included in the volumes?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am informed that it is included in the volumes.

THE BLIND, DEAF, AND DUMB.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation having for its object the amelioration of the condition of the blind and deaf and dumb; and whether such legislation will be in general agreement with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, as embodied in their Report just issued?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government do hope to be able to introduce legislation having for its object the amelioration of the condition of the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, and, speaking generally, the proposed legislation will follow the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: Am I to understand from the reply of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government are not in a position to undertake legislation at once?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot add to the answer I have already given. I hope it may be possible to introduce a Bill during the present Session.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the measure relating to Friendly Societies, mentioned in the Queen's Speech, will relate solely to societies and companies to which Section 30 of "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," is applicable?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Bill relating to Friendly Societies has only recently been drafted, and it is impossible for me to give any pledge as to what form it may take before it is introduced. It will follow generally the line of the Report of the Committee of last year.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MR. G. O. MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether an opportunity will be afforded for discussing the Western Australia Constitution Bill before it is read a second time or referred to a Select Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will endeavour to give the right hon. Gentleman the opportunity he desires; but at present it is impossible to say when the Bill will be taken.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the Under Secretary for the Colonies aware that there is now in London a deputation of colonists from Western Australia for the purpose of giving evidence on the Bill; and whether arrangements can be made so as not to detain them in this country longer than is necessary?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I am aware of the fact, and it is a reason why the Bill should pass a Second Reading as soon as possible.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS (RENT-CHARGES).

Return ordered —

"Of Rent-Charges subject to Charitable Trusts in the counties of Warwick and Worcester, returned as paid in the Reports of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1819-37, and not now paid (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 309, of Session 1889."—(*Sir Walter Foster.*)

MOTION.

GLEBE LANDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mowbray, Bill to amend the Law relating to the occupation of Glebe Lands in England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Childers, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Channing.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 160.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [20th February] [see page 774], proposed to Question [see page 128].

Question again proposed "That those words be there inserted."

Debate resumed.

(4.15.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I do not intend to detain the House by repeating the remarks which I was making last evening when the debate was adjourned. I have only one or two remarks to add to what I have already said. It will be in the recollection of the House that last evening I mentioned the fact that the Home Secretary finds it necessary to devote his time and take under his control the management of hackney carriages in London. Whenever a grievance is felt, instead of the Local Authorities being able to look into it, it is necessary for a correspondence to be entered into with the Home Office; and if any alteration of the law is desired we have to request the Home Secretary to receive a deputation, which necessarily takes up much valuable time, which would be much more profitably devoted to matters of Imperial importance. This illustrates the absurd way in which local matters in London are conducted. If the control of the hackney carriages were given to the Local Authority in London, one advantage which I am confident would result from it is, that the cost of the licences would be reduced, and be brought more into proportion with what it is in some of the large provincial towns, where, under local control, the cost was much less. In London the cost of a licence is £2, whereas in the large provincial towns it ranges from 5s. downwards. Consequently, the man in London with only one vehicle and a couple of horses is placed at a great disadvantage. There is also the great question of the control of the police, in which the Metropolis takes great interest. At present there is an amount of tension existing between the police in London and the people which it is most desirable, for every reason, to put an end to as speedily as possible, and that can only be done by intrusting the Local Authority with the control of the force. As an illustration of how we suffer in London from this circumstance, let me refer the House to the strike known as the Silvertown strike, which occurred just at the end of the year. There was a collision between some of the strikers and the police; the facts were communicated to the Home Secretary, and he was asked for an inquiry so that the whole question might be thoroughly thrashed out; but an inquiry was refused, and the men still think—I do not say whether they are right or wrong—that the police exceeded their duty. In a provincial town the matter would have been thoroughly sifted by the Watch Committee in the course of a few hours. If it were found that the police had not exceeded their duty, they would have received the renewed confidence of the people; and, on the other hand, if it were found that they had exceeded their duty, they would have been called to account. Then, again, there is the great subject of the housing of the working classes, in reference to which I am glad to see that the Government have introduced a Bill. It is a large and complicated question, and one that requires to be speedily dealt with before the problem becomes so great as to make it almost impossible for any authority to grapple with it. The same remarks apply to the question of the consolidation of the sanitary laws, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman when he introduces the Bill

on that subject will, at the same time, give us some consolidation of the authorities who have the management of those laws, and remedy the state of chaos which exists at present. In conclusion, I would urge the Government to give us the necessary adjunct to their Bill of 1888 by establishing the proposed system of District Councils, and so perfect the machine of local government in the Metropolis that we may be able to deal effectively with those great social questions which so deeply affect the welfare of the people.

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I think it is important that it should not be supposed that the desire to substitute District Councils for vestries in the Metropolis is altogether confined to one side of the House. We Conservatives are in favour of this change. But I do not think that the most eager Representative of London would contend that the creation of District Councils is of such urgent importance as the extension of land purchase in Ireland or the question of tithes throughout Great Britain. Nor can I believe that any hon. Member opposite thinks that the creation of such Councils, taking a London view of the matter, is of such importance to the people of London as the consolidation of the sanitary laws, or as a measure dealing with the housing of the working classes in the Metropolis. I would urge upon the Government, when they deal with the latter question, to give the most careful attention to the problem of re-housing the very poor, who are displaced under Acts of Parliament, or through the development of estates in Central London. Our object should be to prevent a geographical separation between the rich and the poor, and to ensure that even in rich districts the poor shall be able to find convenient and suitable homes. I deny the statement that the Conservative Members of the Metropolis are in the habit of abusing the County Council, and I think that the worst enemy of that body is the man who seeks to give to it a particular political colour and complexion. The way in which the elections for the County Council were fought by hon. Gentlemen opposite has certainly tended to deprive that body of the confidence it ought to enjoy throughout London. In too many cases the majority of the Council has sought to use it for the purpose of promoting the principles of that narrow and acid Radicalism of which the hon. Member for Shoreditch is a typical representative rather than of furthering the good administrative work it ought to do, independent of parties, for the benefit of the people of the Metropolis. A complaint has been made that Conservative Members have not spurred the Government on to legislation in these questions. If they have not done so, it is because they do not believe the Government require it. They have already given London a great central administrative body, and are quite able to judge of the necessity of reforming the local subordinate bodies. We are, therefore, quite content to trust to the good intentions of the Government in this matter; but hon. Gentlemen opposite may rest satisfied that if the Government show any indisposition to do what is necessary for the welfare of the people of London, the metropolitan Members on the Ministerial side of the House will be as anxious as other hon. Members to urge them forward.

*(4.30.) MR. CAUSTON (Southwark): I congratulate the House on at last having heard the voice of a London Conservative Member. The hon. Member who last spoke seems to think that the Government require no stirring up. I was going to condole with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in the fact that his professed desire for progress in London reforms is not supported by hon. Gentlemen behind him, for out of 47 Tory Members for London the hon. Member for Chelsea is the only one who has ventured to address the House, notwithstanding that four out of the small body of 12 Liberal Members have found it necessary to urge on the Government to action. London wants—and sooner or later will have—extended powers for its County Council; it also requires District Councils. The hon. Member said just now that the question of District Councils was not an urgent one. I dissent from that. I say, on the contrary, that it is most urgent. I hope that we shall have District Councils for each Parliamentary Division. It may be difficult and heavy work to carry out such a reform, but it will have to be faced, and Ministers

must realise that it must be thorough and complete, and that no tinkering or repairing of the present system will be satisfactory. If we have District Councils for each Parliamentary Division great benefit will result. It will simplify our system of registration; the list of voters can be arranged to do for County Council, School Board, and Parliamentary elections. The change, too, would infuse more life and energy into local work; an efficient system of Home Rule in the different localities would encourage men of business capacity and position to come forward to assist in the work of the District Councils. With regard to such matters as the housing of the poor, we know how inefficiently that work is now looked after by the vestries. This and other matters of equal importance renders it necessary that we should have these District Councils as soon as possible. Then, again, with regard to the extended powers of the County Council, we want to have at least all the powers which any of the large municipalities in the Kingdom have. If there is one thing on which the City of London prides itself—and justly so—it is its police force. I venture to say there is no better body of police in the world. If the City of London is competent to control its police, surely the elected representatives of the rest of London are equally capable. We also desire powers in regard to the supply of gas and water and electric lighting, which we believe will be most beneficial. It will be more economical, and will get over many difficulties which now exist, especially with regard to water supply, if these matters are placed in the hands of an elected body. If the Government will bring in a Bill to give the County Council control over open spaces it might be passed almost without discussion on this side of the House, and the bad blood which exists in connection with public meetings in these places would be avoided. We want to prevent such disturbances as those which occurred in Trafalgar Square. I hope that the Government will soon bring in their Bill with regard to the housing of the poor, so that Londoners may have an opportunity of considering it, in the same way that they have been able to do the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Hoxton and other London Liberal Members. With regard to District Councils, they have been promised and are expected, and this state of uncertainty is doing a great deal of harm in London, making the present Local Bodies rather careless in the way in which they discharge their duties. If, therefore, the Government do not really intend passing a measure on this question they ought to say so, in order that other steps might be taken to improve the present unsatisfactory state of matters. Again, I say that London is very anxious to have District Councils.

*(4.38.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I should like to say one word of protest against the speech just delivered. It is rather a strong order to say that because we do not speak on them we have no interest in matters affecting London. It is because we are inundated with everlasting speeches from a small handful of Radical Members that we cannot get on with the real business of the Session, and pass the measures which Parliament has assembled to deal with. Two measures in the Queen's Speech affecting the public health of the Metropolis and the dwellings of the working classes are more important than any number of speeches such as we have heard from the other side, and I rise to protest against the course taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I should also like to point out with reference to the keen desire of hon. Gentlemen that the County Council should get possession of gas and water and other undertakings that 10 years ago these very Gentlemen prevented the Water Companies from being bought up at a sum immensely less than they are now prepared to pay for them. In 1880, when a measure for this purpose was brought in, it was opposed tooth and nail by the Radical Party, and on that Bill the Government were thrown out, and if now we buy up the Water Companies we shall have to pay millions more than we need then have paid. I venture to hope that hon. Members will cease speaking and let us get to the business of the Session, so that some practical good may be done for London.

(4.40.) MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I entirely agree with the sensible and practical speech we heard yesterday from my hon. Friend the Member for the Horsham Division of Sussex. I hold

with him that these discussions are not only useless, but also mischievous, and I think the debate should be cut short and the Government allowed to proceed with the measures they have announced an intention to introduce. But I wish to say one word of—if I may use the expression—respectful remonstrance to the Government. I hope that they will not unduly strain the allegiance of their Conservative supporters. We are not all Tory democrats, and some of us feel apprehension, if not dismay, at the announcements which have been made from the Government Bench. For instance, I was not agreeably surprised when I heard the First Lord of the Treasury announce, and other right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench corroborate the statement, that it is intended to deal with the question of District Councils. I am aware that legislation respecting it is inevitable; but, in my opinion, at present it is decidedly premature. Hon. Members opposite have told us that the agricultural labourers are yearning and pining to take a share in the management of their own affairs. Now I have lived among labourers all my life, and I say that the evidence points in an exactly contrary direction. They are satisfied with the legislation brought in creating the County Councils, and wish now to be let alone, so that the Councils may have a fair opportunity of getting into good working order. I only wish to point out to the Government that they ought not to bring forward legislation which they know is opposed to the often-repeated conscientious convictions of Members of their own party.

*(4.43.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax only did himself and his Amendment justice when he spoke of it as of a comprehensive character. For my own part, I do not think that I ever heard an Amendment proposed which better deserved that description. The measures specified by the right hon. Gentleman would, if dealt with, be found quite adequate for a whole Session, and, indeed, would form no meagre programme for a whole Parliament. I was very much struck with what has often occurred to me on hearing speeches from hon. Gentlemen opposite, both in the House and the country. It is their extreme interest in and desire to press forward when they are in Opposition measures which they entirely neglect when they are in power. There is nothing, I think, more remarkable than the sudden importance and urgency assumed by questions which, when hon. Members opposite have the power to deal with them, they altogether neglect; and, really, to hear right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite speak on such subjects as local government and allotments, it would almost seem as if they are the party which has persistently dealt with those questions, and the supporters of Her Majesty's Government are the party who have always stood in the way. As a matter of fact, it is notorious in the House and the country at large that for the great reform of local government or the legislation on allotments, the Conservative Party, and the Conservative Party alone, are to be thanked. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had the opportunity for a very long series of years of dealing with every one of those burning questions which are now advanced by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, but somehow or other he went out of office without having dealt with any one of them.

An hon. MEMBER: Because you opposed them.

*MR. RITCHIE: Because we opposed them! I think I shall be able to show that though many promises were made in the Queen's Speech during the term the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was in office, the performance was very meagre, many of the Bills promised not even being introduced. I have no fault to find with the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman accompanied his Amendment. He contented himself with drawing attention to the absence of measures without going into details; but that example has not been followed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have discussed the several questions in very minute detail. The hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division is very anxious that the Government should introduce some simple Bill on local government. The Government are very anxious to introduce a simple Bill on various matters connected with local government. But what is the invariable practice when such Bills are introduced?

Hon. Members endeavour to attach to Bills of that kind Amendments of every conceivable character, and debate them at very considerable length. The introduction of a simple Bill by no means implies that it would be simply dealt with by the House. What simplicity means in the minds of hon. Members may be gathered from some of the suggestions made in the course of this discussion. The hon. Member for the Rugby Division, for instance, wanted the Government to introduce a Parish Councils Bill. Let us see what is his idea of a simple Bill.

MR. COBB: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I did not say it would be a simple Bill.

*MR. RITCHIE: I did not accuse the hon. Member of saying anything simple at all. It was the hon. Member for Ilkeston who invited us to introduce a Bill which he said might be a simple one, but I desire to see if it is possible to deal with the suggestions of hon. Members in such a Bill. The measure suggested is a Parish Councils Bill; but, according to the hon. Member for Rugby, the Bill should deal with Charitable Trusts, Poor Law, School Boards, the liquor trade, and churchyards. No doubt if hon. Gentlemen opposite were allowed to have their way, they would deal with these questions very simply, but in all probability they would not find the supporters of the Government assenting parties to the proposals of hon. Gentlemen. With regard to London, the Government are aware their legislation is not complete; and when the opportunity arises, the Government are as anxious as hon. Gentlemen opposite to proceed with that legislation; but according to hon. Gentlemen opposite, they will have to deal in a London Bill with lodgers, charities, Poor Law, Asylums Boards, gas, water, Extra Parochial Authorities, hackney carriages, and police. No doubt the Government have had offers of assistance from hon. Gentlemen opposite if they will attempt to deal with these matters, and one hon. Gentleman has appealed to hon. Members on the Government side to give the Government the necessary amount of "steam." It is not "steam" the Government want, but time. With regard to boundaries, the hon. Member for Halifax asks why the Reports and schemes provided for in the Local Government Act have not been obtained from the County Councils. Those provisions were introduced into the Act of 1888 with a view to the formation of District Councils, and in order to provide for the difficulties which would then arise from overlapping boundaries. Until District Councils are set up, no difficulty of that kind can arise. The revision of boundaries involves large questions of adjustment of property and compensation. It is far better to wait rather than to run the risk of having a second rectification, which might be necessary after the District Councils are established. It is very difficult to deal with these matters unless under the impetus of a strong and urgent necessity, and at present no such necessity exists. With regard to the question of the division of rates, to which the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire referred, the Government do not admit at all that that is a subject which finds favour only on the other side of the House. The Government entirely agree there should be a division between the owners and the occupiers, provided there is proper and adequate representation of the owners. They are anxious to deal with the subject when time and opportunity can be found; and when the Committee dealt with that subject they dealt with it in connection with the proposal that there should be an adequate representation of the owners. We are anxious to deal with that when we can, and to deal with it in a way which will promote the adequate representation of owners. I pass on to say a few words in connection with the criticisms on the general question. I do not propose to follow them into details in reference to the various matters which have been discussed. I do not think it is right to occupy the time of the House on such an occasion as this by going minutely into details. But, Sir, there have been some severe criticisms on the conduct of the Rural Sanitary Authorities which have proceeded from the hon. Gentleman opposite. He denounced all the Sanitary Authorities because he said they were inefficient. We admit that Boards of Guardians do not always do what they ought to do in matters relating to the public health, but the hon. Gentleman knows as well as we do that we sometimes have as much trouble with the

Municipal Authorities in boroughs in regard to the public health as we have with the Sanitary Authorities in counties. With reference to the conduct of the Sanitary Authorities on the question of allotments, it has been said that we have acknowledged that the Bill has been a failure. We do not recognise anything of the kind whatever. To say that the Allotments Act has been a failure, or that the Sanitary Authorities, as a rule, are unfit to carry it out is, I think, a great exaggeration. I do not wish to go into the question now; it can be more properly discussed on another occasion; but I say that there are few Acts of Parliament which have come more fully into operation than the Allotments Act. Now, Sir, I have alluded to the comprehensiveness of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals, which include District Councils in England, Parochial Councils, parochial schools, secondary District Councils, organisation of the powers of local government in Ireland, and also the question of the sale of intoxicating liquors.

*MR. STANSFELD: The right hon. Gentleman will allow me to interrupt him for a moment. I thought I very clearly stated that I did not wish it to be imagined that any Government, however strong and however full the time at its disposal might be, would undertake to deal with the whole programme. What I regretted was, that not one of the subjects had been referred to.

*MR. RITCHIE: But the right hon. Gentleman thought it was essential that he should include the very vast and important measures to which I have referred in his Amendment, so that he might obtain the support of all those Members who desired to see one or other of the measures proceeded with. The first part of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman expressed regret that we have not been enabled to complete the system of local government we have set up. The Government are entirely in accord with him; we are extremely anxious to proceed on similar lines to those on which we have already proceeded, and we have derived immense satisfaction and encouragement from the manner in which the measures we have passed are being worked at the present time throughout the country. It is a matter of great gratification that on all hands it is being acknowledged that the country gentlemen have come forward to perform duties which we had hoped that they would come forward to perform in a public-spirited and patriotic manner. I have no hesitation in again repeating the pledge which has been given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, that, if we can obtain the time which is necessary, we shall only be too pleased to produce, even in this Session, measures dealing with the question of District Councils. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that the time at our disposal is extremely limited, and, although I am quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman himself has no intention whatever of limiting our time, yet he will see that the mere fact of a Resolution of the comprehensive character of that which he has brought forward has unquestionably taken away from us some of the possibilities of dealing with the question which he is so desirous should be dealt with. Although, as I have said, the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman is not intended for anything of that kind, and does not have a very serious effect, yet he will readily understand that the multiplication of Amendments on the Address does very gravely hamper the power of the House to deal with subjects of importance, and takes away from the disposal of the House weeks at the beginning of the Session when all of us are most anxious to get forward to the work. I remember perfectly well last Session the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian giving to us some very good and very sound advice with reference to proposals which should be advanced in the Queen's Speech. He rather found fault with us last year for putting forward such a large programme, and he warned us that the result would be an inevitable and large sacrifice of innocents at the end of the Session. Well, Sir, I was not surprised at the right hon. Gentleman giving us that warning, because his experience must have shown him how very dangerous it is to overload the Queen's Speech with proposals to the House of Commons. Now, I have taken the trouble to go through the Queen's Speeches from 1881 to 1885. I find that a measure for London government was promised in the Queen's Speeches of 1882 and 1883, and in neither of these years was it intro-

duced. It was introduced in 1884, and abandoned. A measure of local government was promised in the Queen's Speeches of 1882 and 1884, but never was even introduced. So it was with reference to Welsh education; a measure for Welsh education was promised in 1882, 1883, and 1884, but never proceeded with, and so it is with the vast number of other measures which were proposed in various Queen's Speeches. Now, we prefer the right hon. Gentleman's precept to his example, and when we were settling the questions to be put forward in the Queen's Speech, which we felt with a fair amount of assistance from the House of Commons we should be able to deal with, it did not at all imply that we might not introduce other measures if the House afforded time and assistance without which, of course, it would be impossible to proceed. And it may be possible even now, in this Session of Parliament, to deal with District Councils either for the country or for London. Measures are prepared on both subjects, and nothing would give us greater pleasure than to receive the assistance of the House in passing them, but it is our duty to deal with the questions which we have to consider, in the order of their relative importance. We have given local government in one year to England, and in another year to Scotland, and we consider we are bound to endeavour to carry out some of our pledges this Session in reference to Ireland. We regard these as important questions with which we are bound to deal, and we have placed them in the Queen's Speech in the order of their importance. Looking to the immense interests of the Metropolis, and to the interests of the working classes, we shall introduce measures not only for the consolidation and amendment of the law with reference to the sanitation of the Metropolis, but also a measure with regard to the housing of the working classes. With the other measures of a social character which are now in the Queen's Speech, no one, I think, will find fault. I venture to think that hon. Members, as a whole, will agree that there is hardly anything in the Queen's Speech that they would desire to omit. Now, Sir, the hon. Member for Aberdeen drew our attention to some pledges that were made last year in connection with the Allotments Question in Scotland. I repeat the pledges in precisely the same words as we then gave the House. The hon. Gentleman referred to a promise which we gave to deal with the question of allotments in Scotland this year. I am afraid it is impossible to go beyond the promise then made, though I can assure the hon. Gentleman we are very desirous of legislating for Scotland according to the wishes of the people of Scotland so far as we consider them just and right. I find that the promise given by the Lord Advocate hardly compares with the account of it given by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman says the Lord Advocate has failed in his promise in connection with some Harbour Authorities of Scotland. The hon. Gentleman will see from the pages of *Hansard* that the pledge given by my right hon. Friend is not quite in the terms he thought it was. I conclude, as I began, by saying we do not at all put ourselves in opposition to hon. Gentlemen opposite in reference to the desirability of completing the work we have begun. We are anxious to go on with it; but I appeal to them, looking at all the circumstances, whether it is possible to deal with so many large and complicated subjects as those which we are invited to consider. While keeping our promise to hon. Gentlemen opposite, we shall enlarge our programme as we deal with the questions as to which we have measures prepared, and as to which we are extremely anxious to complete our work. Without time it is impossible for us to do what hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen ask.

*(5.15.) MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is only one part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech on which I wish to make an observation. But before doing so, I must say that I was very much disappointed at the somewhat Party tone which he contrived to infuse into his observations. Especially he accused hon. Members behind me of having attacked the Government in regard to omissions in the Queen's Speech, and of endeavouring to make some Party capital for themselves out of those omissions. He exempted my right hon. Friend near me, and of all the people in the world exempted the London Members, although the London Members were particularly found fault with by his own friends behind him. The right hon.

Gentleman proceeded to say, you must remember that it is the Conservative Party, and the Conservative Party only, who have given the country this great benefit of local government legislation. I was greatly disappointed to hear that from the right hon. Gentleman, because I do not hesitate to say that these measures of local government on which he prides himself so justly would not have been carried except by the active and self-denying and loyal support of Members on this side of the House.

*MR. RITCHIE: No, no.

*MR. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has always admitted it.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have not said one word to detract in any way from what I have previously uttered as to the assistance we received from him and right hon. Gentlemen opposite in passing the proposals of the Government. My remarks were addressed to the question of the introduction of those measures.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Quite so; my answer to that would be that when we were in power we must hesitate about introducing such measures because we knew they would be opposed by right hon. Gentlemen. That has been our experience, whereas he is perfectly aware that the further he goes in this matter the more strenuous will be the support on this side of the House. I will pass from that and go to my point which I said I rose to speak to, and that is the question of Scotch allotments. I thought the right hon. Gentleman did not do full justice to the actual state of the case on this subject; it was not a mere casual term, not a random word or two in the course of the debate. I do not wish in the least to pin the right hon. Gentleman to anything which he said in that way, but the state of matters was this: There was a considerable feeling among the Scotch Members in favour of a provision not only for allotments, but for ground for building, especially in the case of the fishery populations. My hon. Friend the Member for Leith put on the Paper an Instruction to the Committee which was withdrawn as being somewhat out of order, and then he put clauses on the Paper. These were also objected to, and thereupon the Government themselves put on the Paper certain clauses with a view to giving to Scotland something like the same legislation in regard to allotments which had been given to England. But the Government discovered that that has not nearly all that Scotland wished: and that if they were to proceed with these clauses there would be a great loss of time, that possibly the Bill might not pass in its full shape, or might be lost altogether from want of time, and therefore the Government voluntarily proposed that these clauses should be put off to this Session in order to save the time, and to save the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said—I have the words here, and nothing could be stronger or more explicit than the promise he gave. He said the Government would endeavour to frame a measure which would be satisfactory to Scotch opinions generally, and said—

> "We shall, of course, keep our promise, and if we can see our way to introducing such a measure next Session, we shall be extremely glad to do so. We hope we may be able to introduce that measure and carry it next Session."

Of course, there is a phrase which begins with "if," but it merely represents such contingencies as are often covered by the initial letters d.v. It was only in a contingency which we cannot contemplate that they would not see their way to such a measure. I am perfectly certain the right hon. Gentleman wishes to keep any engagements he made. We have always in these matters acted in good faith, and in perfect confidence that not only any engagements would be fulfilled, but that there is a desire to do what Scotch Members wish to see done, and therefore I cannot but express the hope even now that the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues will reconsider the matter. I can assure him that, although we are not prepared to swallow wholesale any measure on account of the pressure of time, still I am perfectly certain that if there was a measure of a satisfactory kind introduced, there would be no waste of time, and no unnecessary discussion by Scotch Members.

The House divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 254.—(Div. List, No. 6.)

Main Question again proposed.

*(5.40.) MR. A. ACLAND (York, West Riding, Rotherham): I beg to

move as an Amendment to the Address, paragraph 16, at the end to add—

"And we humbly express to your Majesty the regret of this House that as free education in elementary schools has been granted in Scotland no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to legislative proposals for giving similar advantages to the rest of the United Kingdom."

I think it will be admitted that there was a good deal both of surprise and regret not only in the House, but also in various parts of the country that this subject has not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech. Circumstances certainly led people to expect that it would be mentioned, and that Scotland having already obtained free education—and we are always behind Scotland in the educational race—the subject might be dealt with in this country. In his speech at Nottingham the Prime Minister said he had felt strongly on the subject of giving to England what had been given to Scotland, and he added that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had the money, no doubt he would do it. Well, Sir, we certainly heard with regret what the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) said on the subject after the Address had been moved. I was speaking to a very strong supporter of Her Majesty's Government the other day, and he said it was a great misfortune that the subject was not to be dealt with this Session, because this year we know we have a surplus, and next year there may be none. When the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said the subject had only been under discussion for a few months, he could hardly have thought of what he said. We are bound to remember the history of this question. Twenty years ago it was taken up in Manchester and Birmingham and in many other places, and when the late Mr. Forster passed his Bill in 1870 there were many who wished that education should then be made free. Three years later the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) wrote one of the best essays yet written on the subject, in which he paid a well-deserved tribute to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and the hon. Member for Bordesley (Mr. Collings) as the earnest advocates of free education. In 1885 the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Chamberlain) did yeoman's service in bringing the question before the working classes by speeches delivered all over Great Britain. He used, no doubt, some very strong expressions. In one speech he said he would not rest until the abominable and cruel tax of school fees was abolished, and in another he said he would cut off his right arm rather than vote for a candidate who would not pledge himself on this question; and the Rev. Mr. Diggle, the present Chairman of the London School Board, remarked that if the right hon. Member had acted on his own advice he would have been without his right arm since May, 1886. Although the phraseology of the right hon. Gentleman may have been somewhat mellowed, at any rate his earnestness on this subject has not in the least degree abated, for only a year ago he declared his conviction that "free schools were bound to come," and said the only question was by whom should they come, and who should have the credit of instituting them. When he said this there was a cry of "Chamberlain," followed by cheers. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman said at about the same time—"If we, the Unionist Party, agree upon it, there is nothing to prevent this great reform being carried out." He spoke those words before that rather interesting night last Session on which the subject was fully decided for Scotland. The analysis of the Division on that occasion made the "if" rather a big "if"—an "if" with a capital "I" to it. There were 245 in the majority, and 52 stalwart Conservatives in the minority. Of the 245 Members who supported the Government there were only between 80 and 90 Conservatives. Most of the large majority on the Division was made up of the Liberals who constituted the majority on the Opposition side of the House, and who numbered 130 out of the 245. It is quite clear that there were 150 Conservatives who did not vote at all, and of these the stalwarts would probably be able to capture a dozen or so, which would be quite enough to prevent the Government carrying any Bill whatever on the subject without our aid. We must not forget that the Conservative Government in 1885 sent Mr. Matthew Arnold abroad to make inquiries on this subject. In the course of his Report Mr. Arnold said—

"But we must remember, on the other hand, that there are some questions which it is peculiarly undesirable to make matters of continued public discussion; questions particularly lending themselves to the mischievous declamation and arts of demagogues, and that the question of gratuitous popular schooling is one of them. I am inclined to think, therefore, that sooner than let free popular schooling become a burning political question in a country like ours a wise statesman would do well to adopt and organise it."

I suppose we shall be told that what was given to Scotland was not free education at all. A most remarkable speech was delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) on the 11th of July last. A sort of panic had evidently set in on the other side of the House, and the right hon. Gentleman was put up to set matters right. Several strong educationalists had pledged themselves against this principle. The hon. Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir R. Temple) a prominent member of the School Board, said—

"When this wedge which has been inserted on behalf of Scotland comes to be applied to England we intend to resist it. Let us register our protest now."

and the brother of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Member for Leeds (Mr. G. W Balfour) stated that—

"The Lord Advocate had pointed out that it was not free education, but in his opinion it came to the same thing,"

And the common sense of the Committee so interpreted it. The hon. Member went on to cite the well known story of the learned gentleman, who said that Homer's works were not written by Homer, but by another gentleman of the same name. Now, in answer to these rising difficulties, the Chief Secretary for Ireland got up and said—

"It is true we are giving £220,000 towards lessening or abolishing school fees. I maintain that the concession is not giving free education. We acknowledge no right on the part of parents to get their children educated for nothing. I absolutely deny that in any sense we have committed ourselves to the principle of free education. The whole debate has turned on a total misconception of the policy of the Government. . . . It was absolutely necessary that some members of the Government should correct that false impression."

Well, it would be very much as if the right hon. Gentleman were to give a suit of clothes to some needy man who was going off to work in some other part of the country, and before he went away called him in and said—

"It is true, my friend, I have given you a coat and vest, a pair of trowsers, boots and stockings, a hat, and excellent underclothing, but I have not given you a necktie or a clean shirt, but then I know the locality to which you are going will supply that need. Now let me entreat you, if ever you are tempted to say that I fitted you out with a new suit, bear in mind that that is the greatest misconception you could ever have."

I am rather inclined to think that although the man would accept the right hon. Gentleman's metaphysical discourse, he would, when he got out of the place, feel himself round and say, "I rather think I have got that new suit on after all." The next argument may be that there is going to be no surplus this year. I think, however, we know enough on that subject to meet the argument without further discussion. Then we come to the more practical arguments. The first is, that this thing has been given to Scotland, and that it must—and the sooner the better—now be given to the rest of Great Britain and Ireland. One of the arguments which has been most strongly urged again and again on behalf of free education, is, that it would improve the attendance of children, and largely assist the work of the teachers. As to the question of attendance, I admit that I think sometimes too much stress has been laid on it. In England many parents are unwilling to send their children to school, and whatever is done about free education, we shall have to carry on the work of compulsion just the same. As the matter stands in our great town schools, it is the regular fee payers who are the regular attenders, and it is very often the free children who are most irregular. But I quite admit that—as is happening in Scotland at the present time—we shall have a great many more children brought into those excellent infant schools, which are one of the few points in connection with our educational work of which we should be heartily proud. As to helping the teachers, I am sure that we should all feel that the national teachers of England are a body who deserve our cordial sympathy and hearty admiration, and anything and everything which can help them in their kind feeling towards the children, and in their pity for the poorer

ones, many of whom are insufficiently fed and clothed — anything that can brighten the work of the teachers is a thing which we should gladly do. Then we come to the argument that has been urged by the Prime Minister himself, namely, that if we appeal to the great mass of the people to perform a duty—which some of them now perform against their will—for the common good, we shall cure a great deal of friction, and certainly lessen a great deal of discontent by enabling this compulsory duty to be performed without cost. We have admitted that in various ways already, but although I think that a strong argument, I think a stronger one is that we have got ourselves into a position which raises invidious distinctions between those who get remission of fees and those who have too much self-respect to go to ask for remission of fees, and that having got ourselves into this position—and in some schools as many as 25 or 30 per cent. of the children are getting remission, whilst the children of many respectable people deserve it, but are not getting it — it behoves us to use our best efforts to remove these invidious distinctions and throw the boon open to all without the least loss of self-respect, and in a way that will make them feel that the State is really doing something good for them which they may accept with pride and pleasure. I do not want to drag up cases, *ad misericordiam*, but we know that in a country like this, where there are so many poor, and so many just above the brink of poverty, there are thousands and thousands of parents who will not demean themselves by going before the School Board Attendance Committee, still less by even finding their way before the Board of Guardians, and to whom the boon of remission would be of enormous value, without in any way lessening their self-respect or feeling of independence. I do not know if any hon. Members have read the interesting Return, furnished by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, as to the expenditure of working men—and I am sure we must all be glad to see that Mr. Giffen and Mr. Burnett are turning out such valuable work from the Department. This Return deals with the expenditure of a working man from his earliest years of wage-earning through his married life to the period of his becoming the father of wage-earning children. Here is an instance of the expenditure of the working man: "Schooling, books and papers, £1 1s. 3d." "Interest on things in pledge, £1 6s. 0d."—and this man has in addition to pay £2 10s. 0d. into a Friendly Society. He does all he can to keep himself respectable, and not waste money, and yet you see these items side by side. One cannot help feeling that if he had not been obliged to pay this item in respect of schooling he might not have been compelled to pay the item for interest on things in pledge. A school inspector informed me the other day of a case which had just come under his notice. A widow with five children, who had 8s. a week to live upon, sent three children to school, the average fee being 2d. a week each, and often went without a meal so that she might be able to pay for their schooling, in which she took a pride and a pleasure. The other day the Chancellor of the Exchequer warned us against cases of this kind, and gave us what he called a receipt for demagogues. I am bound to say that in the same speech the right hon. Gentleman put forward more than once the case of a poor struggling clerk with £500 a year. It would be an excellent thing for the poor struggling clerk to get more still. But it is impossible to raise the feeling of pity for a man who is living respectably on £500 a year as it is for the people in the cases I have named, to whom this boon would be a most valuable one. Let us then get rid of these distinctions, get rid of the almost inevitable fraudulent statements which sometimes have to be made before Boards of Guardians or before School Attendance Committees. People feel they have to make out a case before these bodies, and very often they are tempted to misrepresent the facts. Let us remove all such temptations in matters of this sort, and it will be a great advantage from a moral as well as a pecuniary point of view. But we may be told that by granting this boon we shall be doing that which will tend to pauperise the people. To that argument I attach no value whatever. It is the present system that has a tendency to pauperise parents by compelling them to appear before Boards of Guardians, by letting them come near

the workhouse at all. Those of us who have sat on Boards of Guardians and seen the people come to the workhouse must have been ashamed that we have a law which brings people there on behalf of such a noble thing like education, and which perhaps accustoms them to come there again for another purpose. Is free education pauperising in other countries? Is it pauperising on the Continent, though wages are lower there than in England? Is it pauperising in America, in Canada, or in many parts of Australia? I know it is not completely carried through in all parts of Australia, but when we think of the startling sums of money which the Australians sent the other day to help the dock strikers it does not look as if these men were much pauperised. Many of us have been to public schools or the University; have been partakers of the benefit of endowments of public money. I do not know, but at least I hope we have not been pauperised by it. The College of All Souls, Oxford, which entertained a very distinguished statesman the other day, has sent a good many men to this House, who have had assisted education. There was once a school in Salford which, in the days when fees were less often remitted than now, put up a placard on its doors on which appeared. "Entrance for assisted children at the back." I am sure many of us who have been to public schools and universities would not care to be labelled "Assisted legislators," and told we must come in by a back door. Let us get rid of this talk of assisted education. Now, while we grant this boon we must at the same time use it as a means and a lever for improving the system of education all round. While we make this gift to the parents we must ask the parents to recognise and appreciate its advantages by helping to lift the level of education throughout the country, and by seeing that their children are benefited by it. There is, for instance, the question of the age at which children leave school. There are over the district covered by a population of 8,000,000 in the country, children who are not compelled to stay at school after passing the Fourth Standard, and we are told in the Blue Book that children ought to pass the Fourth Standard at 10 years of age. Here, then, a large portion of the working classes may be reasonably asked, in consideration of the boon of free education, to let their children remain at school a year or a year and a half longer, not only for the good of the child, but for the general good, for I have no confidence whatever in the existing and, I fear, growing competition of child labour. We may also be able to do much to improve our evening schools, and, indeed, to embark on many of those reforms which some of us have been waiting for for a very long time. Generally, then, it appears to me that by a free system of education we shall get a more cheerful attendance at the schools, relieve the teachers, and be able to put on compulsion without irritation. We shall grant an immense relief to the large numbers of the working classes, and at the same time in no way diminish their self-respect, and we shall, if we are wise, make the system a means of lifting the general level of the whole of our national education. Now, as to the plans by which this is to be done. It is assumed that the grant must come from the National Exchequer. I have no doubt that a large portion of it will have so to come, but when we suggest that part of it may come from the rates, the difficulty which some hon. Members opposite feel comes in because they know, or at least they say so, that if rates are granted, even in a moderate degree, to help our schools, it would involve some measure of popular control. As to the way in which it is to be granted, it has been suggested more than once that the schools should receive the exact amount of fees they now charge. A short examination shows how utterly futile and impossible that is. It is utterly impossible to so endow the large schools in the wealthy districts, which charge high fees, which are almost *quasi*-middle-class schools, and I am glad of it. What would you do in the poor schools where the managers only get a penny fee, and in many cases not even that? Their difficulties are the greatest, and yet you would give them the least. The only practical and satisfactory method is that adopted in Scotland. You must strike an average, and give to each school an average fee. I approach now the question of the conditions upon which such a boon can be granted. It has been forcing itself on the minds of many people that during

the 20 years that have elapsed since 1870 our system of national education has been gradually undergoing a great variety of changes, and that you cannot pour out more millions for national education without considering the position, and perhaps, if necessary, making a certain amount of re-arrangement. On this subject I may as well quote some of the strong opponents of free education. Mr. Diggle, the present chairman of the London School Board, speaking in Cardiff, said :—

"It is obvious that if the contribution from the State is increased from 46 per cent. to 76 per cent. that increase of contribution must be accompanied by such an increase of control as to render them practically State schools ; if, on the other hand, the ratepayer is substituted for the parent I think that it is equally obvious that the ratepayer would obtain a more direct representation upon the management of the schools than the parent now enjoys. In either case the schools would cease to retain the independent character which now marks their management, and which has hitherto influenced their progress, and little except the existence of voluntary contributions would exist to distinguish them from schools under School Boards. That little would soon disappear under the circumstances which I have detailed, and practically the era of universal School Boards would be ushered in."

I think Mr. Diggle is quite right in saying that both the rates and taxes bring in the same question—popular control. A great many people think you can pour out taxes, and popular control is out of the question ; but in the matter of local government the Government have handed over large sums to representative bodies, and every one is satisfied because the money is in the hands of men locally responsible to the ratepayers. Before going into the difficulties of the religious question I want to point out that as we go on increasing representative management, with County Councils, the District Councils of the future, and the Parochial Councils of the future, so it is quite inevitable it must come into the minds of the people why they are not to have a reasonable measure of control over this important subject of popular education. Before I descend to what I consider some of the more lamentable things said on this subject, I want to pause a moment in the atmosphere of intermediate education, and show what people say there when their minds are not warped by what may be called the traditional difficulties which surround elementary education. Let me quote a few words from the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commissioners of 1868, which was signed by the Bishop of London, the present Bishop of Rochester, and the late Dean Hook, among others. The Commissioners report—

"If in any substantial degree it (the Local Board) represents the people, it carries a force with it which it is impossible to secure in any other way . . . . No skill in organisation, no careful adaptation of the means in hand to the best ends can do so much for education as the earnest co-operation of the people. The American schools appear to have no great excellence of method, nor a very well selected system of studies, nor very thorough inspection, nor very skilful gradation of the schools in relation to each other. But the schools are in the hands of the people, and from this fact they derive a force which seems to make up for all their deficiencies. The Scotch schools owe their success in a great measure to the same cause . . . . But the real force whereby the work is to be done must come from the people, and every arrangement which fosters the interests of the people in the schools, which teaches the people to look on the schools as their own, which encourages them to take a share in the management will do at least as much service as the wisest advice of the most skilful administration."

The Government passed, and we are very glad they did, an Intermediate Education Act for Wales. We congratulate the Vice-President upon the course he took in pushing forward the measure, but when we come to consider the religious difficulty in relation to these secondary schools in Wales —a poor country where nearly all the children we shall get into the secondary schools will be 6th and 7th standard children, the very children about the great bulk of whom the religious difficulties arises—when this subject was discussed at the Church Congress, again you hear the voice of common sense. The Dean of St. Asaph, an earnest Welshman, and a very strong Churchman, said :—

"The 'religious difficulty' was a mere ghost of a dead past. He saw nothing in the Act to prevent Church boys being taught Church doctrine by a Church teacher, and Nonconformist boys being taught religion by a Nonconformist teacher, outside school hours."

The Dean of Llandaff said :—

"I cannot agree with those who think that it is wicked to have day schools in which religious instructions shall form no part of the programme. I conceive it to be derogatory to two of the most vital parts of our human constitution, and certainly of our English constitution ,

to hold language of that sort. Where is the parent and where is the Church? If you treat the day-school as the be-all and the end-all of the instruction of the child, you are leaving out of sight those two most important elements in the education of the individual. The parent, the home, and then the school or chapel, or whatever it be, surely must be trusted, and can be trusted, with at least some portion of the religious education of the child."

We shall be told no doubt that the religious difficulty comes in with the religious instruction given in the Board schools. Well, there are only seven School Boards in England that do not give Scriptural instruction, and hon. Members know perfectly that the Scriptural instruction given in many of the Board Schools is admirable—is quite as good as that given in many voluntary schools and much better than that given in some of them. Lord Selborne said, with very good sense, when he was in this House, that you cannot expect to make children of 12 or 13 into controversial divines. If you give them thorough teaching in Bible history you will do all you need to do when you have the Church and the home behind. It is a very lamentable thing to find men like the Bishop of Salisbury, whom all of us who know him respect for his learning and earnestness, finding himself compelled to say, as he did the other day, that as long as he was Bishop of Salisbury he would do all he could to prevent Board schools being introduced into that city. Then Canon Gregory, one of the majority of the Royal Commission, speaking at Cardiff the other day, said—

"In Board school districts, in which either no religious teaching was imparted or where only nominal attention to the subject was given, they must expect at no distant day an amount of opposition and avowed infidelity greatly in excess of what they had hitherto experienced, and it would be strange indeed if such infidelity were not the precursor of a fearful amount of vice and violation of law and order."

I really do not know whether hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side believe that School Board education is going to lead to all this vice. The rev. Canon was speaking in Wales, and I have no doubt he had in his eye the tithe question when he referred to the violation of law and order. I can only say, for my own part, I think it is lamentable that such language should be used, and I am quite sure there are many on the opposite side who think it lamentable too, and who know that this kind of talk is often irritating and most injurious. The reason why the question of popular control must continually be brought up is that the voluntary schools have largely changed their position. When Mr. Forster brought in his Bill voluntary donors were contributing nearly a third of the whole expense, but while the fees paid by the parents have been continually going up the voluntary contributions have been of late steadily going down, and all the time the Government grant has been going up by leaps and bounds. We must remember what the position of the voluntary manager really is. Of the schools which the Royal Commission dealt with no less than 10 per cent. were receiving no voluntary subscriptions at all. Is it seriously maintained that a school in this position, and which may have been built 40 or 50 years ago, is to remain under the control of perhaps a single manager for the rest of time? Is it not a rational thing that we should say, when we are spending large sums of money on such a school, that we are entitled to ask for popular control? In the towns some of the difficulties surrounding this question may be solved by making special provision for Roman Catholics and others, but is it not reasonable in the country districts to say, as the Wesleyans and other Nonconformists have said long ago, that we ought to have within reach a school which is subject to popular control? We put forward this contention on educational grounds, and on social grounds as well. We do so on educational grounds because we cannot get the inspector to condemn these schools when he sees people struggling along, as they are struggling in many places and trying hard to keep them in existence. One of them, Mr. Johnstone, in his published report speaks of "the struggling village school" and says—

"The Inspector must either refuse the grant and perhaps crush the school or he must recommend the grant for work which he knows falls infinitely short of the standard laid down for him in the code. He chooses probably the more merciful part, and from that hour he perpetuates bad teaching by rewarding imperfect effort."

We ought, by having representative district school authorities, for I do not

believe in small parish School Boards, to enable the Inspector to feel that he could fall back upon reasonable support from the inhabitants of the district. That was the line which the Bishop of London, to his credit, took on the Royal Commission. He moved an Amendment declaring that the Government grant ought to be met by something like an equal grant from the voluntary managers. Then Mr. Rathbone proposed that at least a fixed proportion should be contributed by voluntary managers, and this, like the Bishop's proposal, was thrown out. Our contention is also based on social grounds. Country villages are lamentably devoid of anything in the form of self-government, and we say that this question of the school is in the United States, in Australia, and in Scotland one of the most stimulating that village people could be entrusted with. The people of the villages are pouring into the towns, and what sort of training are they getting? A young man of 19 or 20 comes into the towns with no idea that he has any right as a citizen to take part in public affairs. We want to do everything we can to interest the people not only in the schools, but in a great many other things. But the schools exist, and, as the head-master of Rugby said the other day, if the clergy and managers would only show that they had a little more confidence in the people, all those who deserved it might retain their seats on the popular Bodies, and they would be much more in sympathy with the people. I know all this will be misinterpreted, and I shall be told I am making a tilt against the clergy and against all the earnest men who have done so much for education. I am doing nothing of the kind. I recognise what they have done. I recognise that they came forward at a time when effort was most needed and did what they could for education out of their own pockets. But I say we are living in a time when we must give people more control over their own affairs, including education. If this is done, we shall, by slow degrees, be able, like Scotland and Switzerland, to follow up a good primary education with a system of secondary education. I will end by quoting a letter from a young Swiss friend of mine. He says—

"As to how far free education goes, I can give you my own experience. After passing like everybody else through the six classes of the primary school, I frequented for six and a half years the gymnasium at Winterthen, without paying a single half-penny for instruction beyond what my father, whose income at that time was about £100, paid in the way of rates and taxes, and he would have had to pay exactly the same amount had I not frequented it. Of course there was the outlay on books, writing and drawing materials, &c., but this would certainly be less than £12 for the whole six and a half years, at the end of which I passed on to the University of Zurich. . . . . Foremost in all Switzerland we have the Canton of Bâle (City). In pursuance of the Federal Constitution of 1874, primary education became free in Bâle in 1875, in 1879 secondary education was made free, and in 1881 the system was extended to the grammar schools. At the same time materials were supplied free to the pupils of the lower and upper boys' schools and of the upper girls' schools. Finally, on the 11th of June, 1880, a Resolution was passed by the Council, according to which the State also takes upon itself the expense of supplying all the printed books to the whole of its schools, lower and upper, boys and girls, the University alone excepted; so that in the Canton of Bâle the child of the poorest man can not only frequent the common public school, but also the excellent middle and upper schools that lead up to the university without having to bring to school anything but what the child of the wealthiest has to bring as well, that is, the willingness and the firm intention to become by means of these beneficent institutions a useful member of the community both for his or her own sake as well as for the well-being of the whole State."

We in England, with all our wealth—and we are the wealthiest country in the world—might well take a humble seat at the feet of little Switzerland on this question of education. We have looked again and again to this Government for methods that will help forward the social welfare of the working classes. They have done nothing for temperance; we fear they will do little for the villages; and now we have this question of education. Here is an opportunity which I hope the Government will take advantage of. You may solve this question in a narrow spirit, narrow educationally and narrow socially, or in a broad and liberal spirit which will give our working people the best we can give. I hope you will take the wider course, and will choose a policy which will give relief to the working classes without injuring their self respect, and which will lead to the institution of a national and progressive system of education, based on the common good sense and common good will of all classes. This you can

do if you like without fear, without distrust, and without injustice.

Amendment proposed,

After paragraph 16, to insert the words, "And we humbly express to Your Majesty the regret of this House that, as free education in elementary schools has been granted in Scotland, no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to legislative proposals for giving similar advantages to the rest of the United Kingdom"—*(Mr. Arthur Acland.)*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(6.38.) MR. S. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I think the Government can hardly complain of my hon. Friend for bringing forward this Amendment. They must admit that those of us who are in favour of free education are smarting under a legitimate disappointment. We certainly understood from the Prime Minister not long ago that the question of assisted schools or free schools was simply a question of money, but the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) has since told us that it is not a question of money, but a question of time. This year there is money, but no time, and next Session we shall be told that there is time, but no money. We know quite well, however, that it is not really a question of time or a question of money which has delayed the settlement of this great reform. The fact is that the noble Lord at the head of the Government forgot to consult the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne) before he sent up his kite, and the result was that the kite came down again very quickly. Last year the Scottish Free Schools proposal led to an incipient rebellion among the supporters of the Government, and I suppose Ministers were afraid that if they tried to introduce the system into England, there would be a general revolt. We are glad to know, however, that many of those who are interested in Church of England and other voluntary schools—the Archbishop of Canterbury at the head—are far-sighted enough to be ready to accept some system of free schools. It is a deplorable fact, generally speaking, that hon. Members who represent the voluntary system in this House are Tories of the Tories, and are most retrogressive on educational questions. In my belief they are playing a fatal game. Last year they were able to destroy the Code introduced by the right hon. Gentleman, and this year they have been successful in postponing the question of free schools. But passing from that, it is at all events satisfactory to find that neither the Prime Minister nor the First Lord of the Treasury in any way meet the question as a question of principle. The first Lord of the Treasury said it was a question of money, and the Prime Minister said it was only a question of time. Progress has certainly been made when we find the leaders of the Government prepared to discuss the question apart from its principle, and only as to how the details may best be carried out. We also find that there has been a considerable step forward with regard to the free school question on this side. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) endeavoured to raise the matter in the unauthorised programme in 1885, but at that time he was in the position of one crying in the wilderness; whereas those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who required it on this side of the House had since found salvation on this as on another subject. I do not know that it is necessary to enter at any length on the arguments which may be advanced in favour of the principle of free schools, because the principle is practically admitted. The nation had come to the conclusion—Lord Salisbury practically admitted it — that if the State forced parents to send their children to school, the State ought not to place any obstacle in the way of the attendance of these children. I think my hon. Friend made rather too little of the irregularity of attendance arising from the existence of the fee. Considerable experience on the London School Board, and especially on the Bye Laws Committee, has proved to me that there is no greater obstacle to regularity of attendance, or to attendance at all—in London at all events—than the existence of the fee which is charged. An hon. Member interjected the remark that the children whose fees are now remitted by no means attended regularly. I think he forgot that the children whose fees are remitted at present belong to the class from which the most irregular children come, and, there-

fore, whether you remit their fees or do not, it does not really affect the question of the average child and the general attendance at school. We are often told that if you abolish the fee you take away the parent's interest in the attendance of his child. But it is forgotten that the parent has, and always will have, a very strong incentive to see that his child attends school regularly whether the fee exists or not, inasmuch as his child has to pass a certain standard before he is free to leave school and earn wages. I do not think hon. Members opposite will deny that the present system of collecting fees is most costly and vexatious—costly and vexatious to the managers, to the teachers, and to the parents themselves. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has more than once pointed out that it is the most uneconomical way of raising school revenue that could possibly be conceived. Again, the fees are not uniform, and are therefore unfair. Two men may live in the same town, earn the same wages, have the same number of children, and secured for them identically the same instruction. The one whose children attend a particular school may have to pay, say, 4d. per week, while his neighbour, whose children attend another school, will have to pay 1s. per week, the education given being exactly the same. The State, therefore, for the supply of the same article, charges a different amount in different districts. My hon. Friend said something in reference to the question of the abolition of fees impairing the self-respect and independence of the parent. I deny that free education has the effect of impairing the self-respect and the independence of the parents, but I charge, on the other hand, that the present system of remission of fees, an essential matter so long as a fee is charged, is day by day impairing the independence of, and driving over the line of pauperism, thousands of parents. The present system of the remission of fees is the most unfair, the most iniquitous, and perhaps the most pauperising agency existing in the country. I have no doubt some hon. Members opposite will argue that it is grossly unfair that the parents whose children are attending our elementary schools should be relieved of all the charge. [Sir R. TEMPLE: Hear, hear.] Well, I entirely deny that he will be so relieved. And, first, we may say it is rather hard that this particular burden imposed on a parent by the State should be imposed at the moment of all others when he is least able to bear it—when, so to speak, all his children are in the cupboard. But I deny that a parent would be relieved of all cost of his children's education if fees were abolished. He would still continue to pay in two ways. He would pay as a member of the community through his rates and taxes throughout his life; and he would pay as an individual, and pay a very heavy charge by way of cost for his children's education, by the loss of earnings that the compulsory law entails upon him It is too much forgotten what an enormous tax our compulsory system has placed on parents. Before 1870 no parent need send his child to school at all, and as a matter of fact the percentage of parents who sent their children to school was very small compared with the number who are now compelled to send their children to school. There was, moreover, a smaller proportion of children of the age of 12 to 14, or even of 10 to 11, attending school then than now; and that means that for every child attending school up to 12 or 14 the parent is mulcted to the extent of the earnings the child might otherwise have earned. In 1869 the children on the register at our public elementary schools numbered 1,570,000; 37 per cent of those children were between 9 and 14, or, in other words, 580,000. In 1885 there were 4,412,000 children on the register, of whom 45 per cent. were between 9 and 14, or over 2,000,000. Thus nearly 1½ million more of children between the ages of 9 and 14 are now annually attending school than in 1870; representing a cost to the parents which can only be reckoned by several millions a year. To take the case of a parent who, under the former system, took his child away at 9 or 10 in order to work, and is now obliged to keep it at school till the age of 12 or 13, the loss to the parent will amount to something like £25 or £30. A sum that represented to a man earning, say, 25s. a week, as great a sacrifice as did the sending of his boy to Eton represent to a man of £4,000 or £5,000 a year.

We want to get parents so much interested in education that they will keep their children as long as possible at school, and the fee stands greatly in the way of that consummation. The arguments in favour of free schools are overwhelming, and the only question for the House of Commons to decide is, not should free education be carried out, but when and how it ought to be carried out. I by no means, however, want to follow the precedent set by the Act of last Session as regards Scotland. I do not desire to see the money coming from the rates, but from the taxes. The education rate is already very heavy, and there might be a fear that some of the ratepayers would grudge the additional expense that might attend the freeing of schools, and thus desire to starve them. Moreover, I think that the incidence of our present system of taxation, coming for the most part directly from property and intoxicants, is a much fairer burden than the incidence of the present system of rates. Secondly, I think that the whole of the fees ought to be abolished, if any are abolished. None of us want to copy the system in Scotland of freeing the lower and not the higher standards, than which I cannot conceive a more suicidal means of driving the children from school at the earliest possible age. The Scotch system, too, under which the School Board are allowed, while opening most of their schools free, to keep a few still charging fees, may be all very well in regard to Scotland, but will not do in England. I hope that when we institute a system of free schools we shall insist that all shall be free from top to bottom. I admit that the position of the voluntary schools forms the great difficulty in the way of the introduction of free schools. The present system of paying vast sums to irresponsible managers of sectarian schools has many evils in itself, and cannot be carried any further than it has been in the past. The principle I should be inclined to lay down is this—that in the case of every School Board school, or a school under local control, that school ought to be free; and, supplementary to this, that there ought to be a free school within the reach of every parent. There would not be much difficulty in carrying that out in the case of large towns, where School Board schools already exist, and in the case of the small rural districts it is high time it was enacted that where there is only one school that school ought to be not only a free school, but an undenominational school, as far, at all events, as the time of secular instruction is concerned. Then, I do not see why, if our Board Schools are free and there is a free school within reach of every child, there need be any action taken, at all events at present, to make the acceptance of the free school system compulsory in England, as it is in Scotland. I do not see why an option should not be given to the managers of voluntary schools; subject, of course, to the provision that if they accepted the grant, they must, at all events during the hours of secular instruction, come under some system of local control; but that if they choose to go on under the old system they can do so. It is often being asked why should we alter the principle on which the voluntary system has been carried on for so long? I think the answer is simple, namely, that in 1870 there were great difficulties in the way of carrying out a system of universal school boards. A compromise was therefore come to under which, where the voluntary school could show the receipt of substantial amount of revenue other than the grant, the principle of coupling public control with public expenditure should not apply. But everything has altered profoundly since then. In 1879 the fees and subscriptions together represented five-eighths of the whole revenue of the Church schools for instance. But in 1888 the proceeds from grant was equal to the other two sources of revenue. And if the fees were abolished, and further public grants substituted, the subscriptions would then represent but one quarter of the whole revenue, the other three quarters coming from public resources. I think that that would make such a material difference in the position of the voluntary schools that it is quite time we applied the principle of local control to those voluntary schools which accepted the grant. I have to apologise to the House for having detained it at such length. I trust that we may be able to arrive at some solution which, while it may not please all parties, may be carried through without raising all those sectarian difficulties which did so much harm in 1870, and that we may be able to give the great

boon of free education to the people at the earliest possible moment, and with the least possible friction on the one side or the other.

*(7.3.) SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): I desire, in the first place, to express my regret at finding myself opposed to the hon. Mover and Seconder —Gentlemen with whom I have so much sympathy in educational matters generally. Though I shall not attempt to follow their discursive speeches, yet as I have been pointedly alluded to by them I must at once reply. As regards Switzerland, I must say that, having recently returned from the upland parts of that country, I have failed to perceive its overwhelming superiority in the matter of education. Would the House be surprised to learn that the rural schools there are open only half the year? [Mr. MUNDELLA: In what part?] In the uplands, the higher valleys, and the mountainous regions. Surely it is much better to keep the schools open 10 months in the year, as we do in England. The hon. Mover has begged that the advantage which has been vouchsafed to Scotland should be extended to England. But many persons in England do not admit that it is an advantage at all. We consider that neither Scotland nor any other country can show anything at all equal to the English voluntary system, and maintain that our voluntary system is one of the grandest features ever witnessed in the history of the national life of any country, that it is among the chief glories of our institutions, and the crown and diadem of our social system. The hon. Mover has alluded to the surplus of the coming Budget. I earnestly hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will devote that surplus to the reduction of taxation, and not trouble the Education Department with it, that is, will not use it for making modifications in the voluntary system. Allusion has also been made to what recently fell from the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House, to the effect that this question is, at all events, to be relegated to the next Session. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that that statement afforded sincere satisfaction and relief to many of his most consistent supporters. Reference has also been made to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I desire to speak in terms of the utmost regard and respect for the right hon. Gentleman, who was one of the first, if not the very first, statesman on the Liberal side who, while advocating remission of fees, also recommended that compensation should be given to voluntary schools. I hope I have not misunderstood him. It has been said that the fees are a cruel tax; but in what does the cruelty consist? The parents make the payment of fees in fulfilment of the first duty which devolves upon all citizens —the duty to educate their children at their own cost so far as their means may permit, and not at the cost of the community. Let me ask the House to consider how much is already contributed from public sources. In the Metropolitan area seven-eighths of the whole cost are now contributed from the rates to the parents who are admittedly able to pay for the education of their children, and to those not able to pay the education is already free. Much has been said regarding compulsion, and it has been argued that as the State compels the parent to educate his children, the State ought to pay entirely. I do not desire to enter into municipal matters, with which I am not so intimately connected as I am with educational questions; but are there not many instances when the citizen, being compelled by law to do this, that, or the other for his own and his neighbours' benefit, is also compelled to pay for the same? Then, I ask, wherein consists the injustice in compelling a man to educate his children and then asking him to pay a small portion of the cost? The hon. Mover has analysed the Division of last Session on this subject. With regard to the vote which I and others on this side of the House reluctantly felt obliged to give against the Government last Session on the Motion in favour of the principle of free education, I can only say that we are still of the same opinion. We have made similar declarations to our constituents, and shall, I hope, act up to them. The hon. Seconder spoke of us as the "retrogressive party." I entirely repudiate that charge. Many of us occupy a large portion of our public life in promoting the work of elementary education, while the same cannot be said of some of our critics opposite. With regard to the statement that the attendance is affected by the payment of the fees, I desire to say that according to

our experience in London the attendance is favourably affected by the enforcement of fees and unfavourably affected by any laxity in that respect. The hon. Mover said that there is friction in the collection of fees; that an invidious distinction is drawn which made remission difficult; that remission would be considered a boon; that high fees of 2d. and upwards are charged; and that fraudulent statements are made by parents to get remission of fees. I desire to traverse absolutely each and all of those statements. Within the Metropolitan area the poorer children are not charged 2d. and upwards, but are only charged 1d. With respect to fraudulent statements being made by the parents for the purpose of obtaining remission of the fees as alleged, I entirely deny that that is the case, as regards the Metropolis at all events.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: What I said was that there is a temptation to parents to make fraudulent statements as to their incomes.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: I am alluding more particularly to what was said by the Mover of the Amendment.

*MR. A. ACLAND: I should like to say I put it in the same way as my hon. Friend. I said that there was a temptation to the parents to exaggerate and make out a better case for the remission than they otherwise would.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: I regret, then, that I caught more particularly the word "fraudulent" than I did the word "temptation." In London there is no difficulty of the kind suggested. Parents who require the remission of fees report the same to the teacher, who reports to the local manager, who reports to the Divisional Committee, gentlemen who live close at hand, and then the cases come before a Committee of the Board, over which I preside, every fortnight, and no difficulty ever occurs. Then it is said that there is inequality under the present system with regard to fees between the poorer and the wealthier classes. I admit, and I think it is so much the worse for the hon. Member's arguments, that well-to-do parents, and there are tens of thousands of such, are not permitted to obtain a first-class education for their children without paying their due share of its costs. It has been argued, both by the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment, that the remission of fees is now carried out in a manner that tends to pauperise the parents of the children. That statement is, no doubt, based upon the fact that in certain parts of the country the remission of fees is carried out through the Guardians. Where the Guardians pay the fees the children have to attend the Guardians' meeting for that purpose. But there is nothing of the kind in the Metropolitan area, and nothing could be more reasonable than the manner in which the remission of fees is managed here. As I have just explained, there is no reason why the good example of London in this respect should not be followed in other parts of the country, and it could be done by a stroke of the pen. This objection then amounts to nothing, for it can be easily and instantly removed. Then the Mover of the Amendment urged that if fees were remitted parents might reasonably be compelled to keep their children a year or two longer at school. If I wished to prejudice the public against the hon. Mover, I would repeat that argument to them. My experience is, that parents would prefer the continuance of the present fee system to keeping their children longer at school, with a corresponding loss of juvenile wages. The hon. Mover spoke of the change that has taken place in the voluntary system throughout the country, compared with what it was 10 years ago. Alas! that is nothing more or less than the result of the grinding competition of the Board schools. Even now the voluntary schools hold their own in spite of many disadvantages to which they are subject. The hon. Mover seems to clog the grant of compensation to voluntary schools with many unacceptable conditions of extraneous control, drew what he intended to be a moving picture of the exclusiveness of the voluntary system, and urged the advantages of a system of education dependent upon the people from whom it springs. Surely the voluntary system offers these very advantages, and is the very system that really does spring from the people. For it involves the principle of Englishmen doing everything for themselves from their own resources spontaneously and *ex proprio motu*, without the compulsion, the discipline, the dragooning, as it were, of a universal State system. There is one point upon

which I sympathise with the hon. Members opposite, and that is with regard to the Scriptural system of instruction in Board schools. It is a delicate subject to be dealt with in this House, but there is a distinction between Scriptural and religious instruction. While I claim for the Board schools credit for the way in which the Scriptural instruction is carried out, an instruction which is second to none in this Kingdom, I cannot pretend that they give that religious instruction of a higher kind which, doubtless, is given by ministers of religion in voluntary schools. I thank the House for having so kindly listened to my rejoinders to the hon. Mover and Seconder. Before I sit down, however, let me recapitulate the objections of my Parliamentary comrades and myself to the proposals set forth in the Amendment. We object to free education because it derogates from, and almost abnegates, that which is the first duty of every independent citizen, and that is to educate his children as far as he can according to his resources. The hon. Mover said that if we compelled parents to send their children to school at an age when they might earn money we should remit the fees. But only last Session the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton told us it was wrong that parents should benefit by the wages of the children of tender age. I subscribe to the principle so justly set forth. I hold that it is the duty of a parent not only to pay what he is able to pay towards the education of his children, but to bear all the burdens incidental thereto. Further, we maintain that there is no need among the comparatively well-to-do classes for this free education; and I believe that a majority of the people in my agricultural constituency and in the Metropolis—the two places I know best—do not desire it. We maintain, further, that the remission of fees would inflict a very heavy burden upon the Exchequer for the payment of compensation, for which payment no adequate reason has been assigned; and also that there would be a great loss in national resources, because the voluntary system all over the country would be withdrawn or materially damaged, and we think it would be a thousand pities that these fountains of benevolence, which have so long flowed in happy England, should be dried up. Then we say that the system would involve the Legislature in a perfect mass of complications in respect to the voluntary system, which, despite the efforts of its opponents, is still a living and vital power in this country. For all these reasons, we earnestly deprecate the proposals laid before the House this evening. I am, of course, bound, as a loyal supporter of the Government, to vote against any Amendment to the Address; but I vote on this occasion from something more than Party loyalty—I vote from a hearty dislike to the proposals, the principles of which I believe to be radically unsound. Several classes in my constituency view with apprehension the consequences that would accrue from the adoption of those principles. If we must lose the fees of the voluntary system, we must strive to obtain compensation from the general revenue, but not from the rates. We shall be thankful for the boon, or concession; and should the worst come to the worst we must hope for the good offices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), although we do not desire to put his goodness to the test by demanding any sacrifice from his justice and generosity. We would rather do without the compensation and maintain our existence, as at present, believing that it does conduce to the building up of that national character which has ever been the chief honour of the British nation.

*(7.35.) THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): My hon. Friend who has just sat down has addressed to this House, with his usual lucidity, a statement characterised by his customary ability. I am not prepared to follow all the arguments of my hon. Friend into the merits of the question, and still less am I disposed to follow the hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. Acland) through the long, though able, speech he has delivered in bringing his Amendment before the House. Many of the remarks of the hon. Gentleman were, doubtless, somewhat wide of the mark; and I may also say that he has a programme so varied that it would be impossible it could engage the attention of the House at a time like the present. I fully admit the great ability the hon. Gentleman brought to bear in the dis-

cussion of the various questions with which he dealt; but I hope he will acquit me of any intentional disrespect if I do not go into them on the present occasion, involving, as they do, so vast an amount of detail. The hon. Member has brought before us the question of local control, and also the questions of religious instruction and secondary education, all of which are matters which have not only occupied the serious attention of the House in the past, but which will, no doubt, occupy our attention in the not very distant future. I must confess to having been somewhat puzzled as to the purpose of the Amendment when first put before the House. A notice of Motion on the same subject was on the Order Book of the House at so late a date as Monday last, in the name of the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Buxton), with a view of bringing the matter in a concrete and precise form before the House on some early day; and I have observed the somewhat hurried way in which, during the last day or two, that notice has been withdrawn. I have very little doubt that before long we shall see a similar notice again on the Paper, and find that the hon. Gentleman has only momentarily stood aside to oblige his hon. Friend. I was at first puzzled to divine why it was, after that notice was placed on the Paper, this Amendment was put upon the Order Book; but I assumed it must have been in order to give hon. Members opposite an opportunity of enunciating anew their unswerving loyalty to the principle of free education. It is, however, just possible that the Mover of the Amendment has merely placed it on the Notice Paper for the purpose of eliciting from Her Majesty's Government a precise scheme or declaration of policy in regard to what the Prime Minister has termed "assisted education." All I can say at starting is, that if that be his object I think he will find that the net he has spread has been spread in vain, as far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned; that its meshes are so gross and obvious that even the most short-sighted bird would refuse to walk into the toils. Now, I admit at once the importance of this question, and also that its position has considerably altered during the past year or two; while, although the attitude of the Government and their supporters has undergone some change, we are nevertheless under the obligations in regard to the matter which have been imposed upon us by the Legislature of the past. I do not wish to be hypercritical; but it is marvellous how little the speech of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment had to do with that proposal. What is the Amendment of the hon. Member? He asks the House to declare

> "That, as free education in elementary schools has been granted in Scotland, no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to legislative proposals for giving similar advantages to the rest of the United Kingdom."

Well, Sir, I am at a loss for information with regard to the meaning of this Amendment; for, from the speech of the Mover, I was not sure whether he was asking the House simply to express regret that the question is not touched upon, or to extend the expression of regret to the fact that no particular legislative measure will be submitted on the subject. I must detain the House for a few moments while I urge how it is, and why it is, that Her Majesty's Government might be left open to the charge of approaching so important a question in a hap-hazard and incomplete way if they were to attempt to deal with it during the present Session. The Amendment asserts that because Her Majesty's Government have conceded free education in Scotland by the great measure passed in July last, they ought, in February of the present year to be prepared to bring a practical scheme of the same kind for this country. But I would point out that this question is full of difficulties and complexities in this country from which in Scotland it is practically free. I hope, however, the House will forgive me if I refuse to deal with the merits of the question. What I desire to deal with is the position in which we find ourselves when met with the question—Why is it that we are not prepared to deal with the subject during the present Session? There is a vast difference between the circumstances of the two countries, which make it comparatively easy to deal with the question in one country, and a difficult and complex matter in the other. In Scotland we have not been met at the outset by the great difficulty caused by the voluntary system. I will give the House a comparison as between the positions of

England and Scotland in regard to the voluntary system. The total number of schools in England and Wales is 19,200, and of these 14,600 are voluntary schools, or 76 per cent. of the whole of the schools in the country. In Scotland the number of schools is 3,100, and of these only 500 are voluntary schools, or only 16 per cent., as against 76 per cent. in England. Therefore, the difference in this respect is very real and self-evident. I would also remind the House that the method of dealing with this question in Scotland is totally different from any method that has been suggested of dealing with the question in England. As far as Scotland is concerned, she had the offer of free education made to her owing to the unanimous demand of her Representatives that a certain sum of money allocated to her should be applied to this particular purpose. I refer, of course, to the allocation of the Probate Duty. In a certain sense, therefore, Scotland is providing the fees herself; whereas in this country the demand is that the fees should be paid from one of two sources—either from the rates or from the Imperial Exchequer. Therefore, I say, we are met at the outset with a great and noticeable distinction. I should like here further to urge that in regard to the situation in which we find ourselves to-day, Her Majesty's Government has been unable to collect anything like the amount of information which ought to be possessed before such a question as this can be grappled with in a practical manner. The question has not, I think, ever been seriously discussed within the four walls of Parliament; and further, I say advisedly, having discussed the matter with all sections of the House, that if I were at this moment to collect together at haphazard any 20 Members, and put to them the question, how did they think this question ought to be dealt with —whether as a whole or only partially— I should find that they were divided by enormous differences of opinion. What, I ask, has happened during this very discussion? We have had an Amendment moved by an hon. Gentleman who has taken a prominent part in the Education Question. His Amendment has been seconded by another hon. Member, who has likewise made the subject of education a very special study—I allude to the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Buxton). We find, however, that the hon. Member who seconded the Amendment does not agree in all respects with his hon. Friend who moved it; so that these two Gentlemen, both of whom are experts on this subject, are unable to agree as to the terms of their own proposal. The hon. Member for Poplar is totally hostile to the fees being paid out of the rates, and thinks the money should come from the Imperial Exchequer. If the House will forgive me, I will point out that the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the Opposition alluded the other night, in terms of regret, to the fact that the question of free education was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. I will read the text of his remark on that point for the edification of the Mover of the Amendment, who seemed to think that this is a question to be disposed of by the wave of the magician's wand, or by a single stroke of the pen. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I do not mean to express more than a general opinion that this is undoubtedly a large financial question, and that it involves a great number of considerations over and above the mere extension of your liberality to a point somewhat beyond that which it has hitherto reached."

There is a haziness about this declaration which does not point to an immediate settlement of this question, and which does not bind the right hon. Gentleman very much. I must say that that declaration leaves an enormous margin for the imagination, and contains a very large quantity of reserve material, which might be used for any possible purpose. I venture to urge, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, that while they do not recede one iota from the position they have taken up on this question, as indicated by the speeches made by the Prime Minister or my right hon. Friend, I think I have pleaded successfully for further delay and consideration on the part of the Government before they come to Parliament and announce a definite scheme and policy on this important question. Well, Sir, another point has been raised to which it is necessary that I should allude, because it was definitely raised by the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment—I refer to the position of the great voluntary system of the country as it is affected by the proposal now under discussion. As far as I am concerned, looking back with

some knowledge of this subject, and as one who was present in the House during the many struggles of 1870, during the discussion of the measure introduced by the late Mr. Forster, I will take no part in the advocacy or administration of any scheme which, in my judgment, would hazard the position of the great voluntary system. As far as I am concerned it is a *sine quâ non* of any scheme, not only that it should be thoroughly safeguarded in all its details, but that it should bear, not only on the face of it, but in the working of it, ample security as regards the future of voluntary schools. I am told that the voluntary system is not in danger when this scheme is advocated of absolute freedom in the schools. I have no doubt that many hon. Members advocate this change as sincere educationists, and on the ground of simple justice to the parents; but there are other hon. Members who advocate the change because it would be destructive of the voluntary system of the country. The Mover of the Amendment gave notice last Session of a proposal which indicated a desire for the establishment of universal School Boards; and in the face of opinions like those the Government cannot be blamed if they view this question as one first and foremost with reference to the future of voluntary schools. My hon. Friend the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir R. Temple) referred to what this great system has done for our schools in the past. I am old enough to remember the splendid efforts which were made, not only by the Church of England and Roman Catholic Bodies, but by the great Wesleyan Bodies, on behalf of the voluntary system. Those Bodies came forward and filled up a gap many years ago, and those who remember what they had achieved in the past for education, and the great sacrifices of time and money borne by them, will be justified in asking the House to pause before adopting any hurried scheme for dealing with this great and complex question. Some hon. Gentlemen speak lightly enough with regard to the future of voluntary schools in this country and the extinction of the system; but there are reasons why we on this side of the House should defend that system. There is certainly one large part of this system which it is important the House should bear in mind, and that is the question of finance. I should like to give the House a few figures and a few facts as to what the voluntary system means, and what its abolition would mean from a financial point of view; and I do this in order to show that the Government must give the most careful consideration to any scheme which deals with the vast financial interests concerned. There are 14,600 voluntary schools in England out of a total of 19,200 (76 per cent.), as compared with 500 out of 3,100 in Scotland (16 per cent.). The total sum received in fees throughout England in the year 1887-8 was £1,862,303. Of this sum, £1,240,900 was received in voluntary schools, and £621,400 in Board schools, making a total of £1,862,300. During the same period £745,000 was derived from voluntary contributions; so that, roughly speaking, if free education were carried out to the injury and eventual destruction of voluntary schools, an additional sum of £2,600,000 would be required for annual maintenance alone. But this is not all. If I refer to the question of school buildings I can prove to the House the enormous cost the abolition of the voluntary system would entail. Since 1870, and up to 1882, building grants to the extent of £312,200 have been met by local contributions of £1,348,000, and beyond all this 4,806 voluntary schools were erected, enlarged, or improved without Government aid, at a cost to the promoters of at least £6,000,000. This great effort has been made to secure the liberty of religious teaching, dear to the promoters—Churchmen, Roman Catholics, and the Wesleyans alike—and if any scheme were to sweep away these schools they would have to be supplied at the cost of the rates. As far as I am concerned, I do not wish to look upon this question in any narrow or bigoted spirit. I am delighted to hear the statement from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar, that the managers of Board schools admit the fact that the people of this country are demanding sound religious education. I admit that a gradual change has been going on, and for the better, in the Board schools. The average cost of erecting voluntary schools has been about £5 7s. per scholar, and the number of scholars in average attendance at voluntary schools was, in

1887-8, 2,255,000. According to the loans issued by the Department up to April 1889, the estimated cost per child for the erection of Board schools, including the purchase of sites, was £12 10s. If voluntary schools were generally closed, some would, no doubt, be transferred to School Boards, but many more would not; so that the financial effects of any scheme affecting the stability of voluntary schools has to be considered, not only in relation to the cost of their maintenance, but in reference to the capital sum which would have to be raised on the security of the rates in order to supply their place. If all the school places in voluntary schools had at this moment to be supplied at the cost of the rates a capital sum of £28,000,000 would at least be required. Now, Sir, I have given these facts in no spirit of contention, but simply to support the argument that this subject ought not to be lightly undertaken by the Government. It must only be undertaken after grave deliberation, and after a careful examination of all the various questions with which it was connected. It would be of value to the Government not only that there should be an exhaustive debate in the House, but that they should obtain all the information they could from educational experts outside the walls of Parliament. I think I have made out a case for not proceeding with this question of assisted education during the present Session; and, considering all the difficulties of the problem, and the absolute necessity for gaining all the information possible, I may fairly ask the House to reject the Amendment, and to proceed with the important business announced in the Speech from the Throne.

*(8.0.) MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): I desire in this debate to say a word or two as to the peculiar position of the Principality of Wales. I can only regret that the voice of Wales does not find expression on this occasion through the mouth of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis), who not only is a remarkable example of the success attained by Wales in education, but who has the confidence of all his colleagues in his treatment of educational questions in the House of Commons. The case of Wales is peculiar, in the first place, because it can be shown that the need of Wales for free education is higher than that of England, and even higher than that of Scotland: and, in the next place, because it can be shown that Wales is even riper than England for a measure of this sort. In dealing with the need of Wales I do not wish to bear upon any claim that might be adduced from her physical peculiarities, though they deserve notice in this respect. The population of Wales, or of a great part of it, is much more sparse than that of any part of England. Anybody who has lived in Wales, and who knows the mountainous parts, must have observed that the construction and equipment of elementary schools there is a much more costly burden on the poor Welsh ratepayer or farmer than it is in any rural district in England, and, furthermore, the attendance of children at those scattered schools, and in an inclement climate, is a greater strain on the parent's means than is the case in England. But there is a much more important physical difficulty in Wales establishing its greater need—the bilingual difficulty. The whole of the elementary schools in Wales are English schools, and there are at the present time more people in Wales speaking the native language of the Principality than at any other period within the history of Wales. It is obvious, therefore, that the attendance of Welsh-speaking scholars at English schools involves a wholly distinctive effort on the part of both parents and children, and one that can only be maintained by the singular devotion of the community to the cause of education. Passing from this question of the greater need of Wales and referring to the condition of the ripeness of the Principality for free education, I would point out that it is admitted on all hands that Wales has a peculiar love of learning which extends from the very bottom to the top of the social ladder. This is not at all more conspicuous in one class of the community than in another, and that love of learning must in a country as poor as Wales find its common starting-point to a very large extent in elementary schools. Last Session Her Majesty's Government concurred in giving a great boon to Wales. In the giving of it hearty good-will was manifested on both sides of the House, and Wales will not soon forget the sympathy which was shown to her from the Government Benches in regard to the Intermediate

Education Act. But it is notorious that the success of that Act depends on the condition of the elementary schools of Wales, because the class that needs the Act is the class that receives the groundwork of education in the elementary schools. In this respect Wales is riper. But it is riper on other grounds than its love of learning and the character of its elementary schools. Wales is riper because it has obtained a much larger power of local self-government. It has been freed to create all its religious machinery, and in so doing it has gone far ahead of England in the art and practice of local self-government. Every one must feel that free education means a very much larger local control, and that control can be entrusted to Wales with the greatest confidence—even to the smallest community. I say Wales is riper for free education than England. I say more, and that the question is about to become a very burning question in Wales. There is a wide difference between Wales and England as to educational situation, and the Conscience Clause will furnish ample evidence of that. In England the Conscience Clause is for the protection of the minority; but in Wales it acts for the protection of the majority. The Nonconformists form an overwhelming majority of the class that attend the elementary schools in Wales. A large proportion of the voluntary schools are Church schools, and thus we know that the Church is controlling the education of an enormous body of Nonconformist children in Wales. The situation is surely very unwholesome and most undesirable, and I do not believe it can last long. For these reasons, I submit that the need of Wales for free education, subject to representative control, is stronger than that of either England or Scotland, and I can promise the House that there will be no firmer supporters of the coming measure of free education than the representatives of Wales.

*(8.40.) MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I am called upon to address the House under circumstances not altogether favourable to the statement of my views, but the character of the debate is such that I take such opportunity as presents itself. I am unable to vote for the Amendment, nor can I agree with the arguments by which it is supported. We were told last year that the proposal was not to give free elementary education to Scotland, and it is therefore impossible for me to vote for the Amendment on the ground set out therein, that we should extend free education to England because it has been granted to Scotland. I will first make reference to the speech of my hon. Friend who brought forward this Motion. He referred, in language which I regretted to hear from him, to the decay of subscriptions to voluntary schools. But he is wrong in his facts, and I think that, in justice to the friends of the voluntary system, it is right I should refer to the Report of the Education Commission to correct his mistake. In 1870 the amount of subscriptions to voluntary schools was £418,839, in 1884 the amount was £732,524, and in 1884 the figures were £745,000. I am quite aware there was a small decline in some of the intervening years, but that decrease has been fully made up, and we are now at a higher figure than in any preceding year. I sympathise with the hon. Member in his desire to improve elementary education, and I will gladly co-operate with him towards effecting that object; but I do not see in any degree how free education will be of any assistance towards that most desirable end. I do not myself believe that it will have any effect whatever on our having a central system of teaching, and it is not my opinion that we should have any increase of attendance by the adoption of that method. I desire to see an extension of the age at which children leave school; but of one thing I am certain, and that is that a movement in this direction must be of a gradual character. We cannot advance with any rapidity, and I must confess that when I have had an opportunity of addressing an audience on educational subjects, I have been greatly disappointed by the want of sympathy on the part of parents when I have dwelt on the advantage to children of an extension of the time at school. We must not go far in advance of public opinion, but gently moving on we must press public opinion before us, rather following than driving it. Our condition in regard to the age at which children leave school is more satisfactory than is generally supposed. According to the last statement the number of children on the register was upwards of 4,000,000,

and out of this number 1,400,000 were above the age of 10. I should like to see that number largely increased; but at the same time we cannot look at these figures without some feeling of satisfaction, realising the fact that a very considerable advance has been made. In this debate, as on previous occasions, it has been said that when you force a parent to educate his child you must make it easy for him to do so. But the State compels a parent to feed and clothe his child, to provide proper lodging and accommodation for the child, and therefore when the State says to the parent on the one hand you must educate your child, and on the other hand you must pay for that education, the State is only acting towards the parent in this particular precisely upon the same principle, and on the same lines, as are adopted in reference to clothing and food. In reference to what was said by my hon Friend who introduced this Motion respecting the stigma of pauperism, I deprecate as strongly as any man any association of the kind. I desire complete separation between Poor Law administration and popular education. But I do not believe that the connection is by any means so close as some hon. Members imagine. In one of our great towns—I think it is Liverpool—the parent appears before a Committee of the School Board at the Board Office, and the Committee having examined every case put before them, submits a list to the Guardians, which is accepted by the Guardians as a matter of course; there is no communication between the parent and the Guardians from the first stage of the proceedings to the last. The difficulty is more one of administration than of law; and for my own part I would have the separation between Poor Law relief and education absolute and complete—destroy connection between the one thing and the other. Then reference has been made to old endowments, and we have been told on high authority, both in the House of Commons and outside, that as there is no degradation in receiving education from an endowment, so also there is none in receiving education at the hands of the community. But I do not think the analogy perfect. Endowments were given in old times, and those who derive advantage from the bequest, are recipients of the benevolence of those who have passed away from this world. But education at the cost of the ratepayers without any charge in the shape of fee, means that a man derives a particular advantage from the physical toil and labour of his neighbours. There is a great difference between the two cases; the analogy entirely fails, and there is no support for it in the argument of compulsion. I do not desire to occupy time at length, and proceed to call attention to the inequality with which free education must necessarily work. You have in the country schools, varying very much in character, and differing greatly in the amount of fees. I believe it would be entirely impossible, and I think it has been admitted in this discussion that you cannot with accuracy and precision under a system of free education settle the compensation for loss of fees; you must strike an average. The result of awarding this average must be the loss of pecuniary resources to highly paid schools, and the effect will be that thus you will lower the higher character of elementary education. I have a circumstance to mention in support of this argument, which I confess somewhat struck me. There has been, as the House knows, a change made in the educational system in France. Some years ago the government of that country altered the system in vogue. I was somewhat surprised on a recent visit to find an official announcement or apology made to a local community that certain schools were inferior in character; the announcement was in effect—

"We grant you the schools are not so good as they used to be, we admit the education is inferior to that formerly given, but citizens must remember there is a common purse, and although individual schools may not be so effective other schools are more effective, and that which is your loss is gain to your neighbours and others."

Now, this is a circumstance of a remarkable character, and one which ought to be a warning to us when we approach the details of this question. I believe, from information which has reached me, that if you have what may be regarded as a fair average, some schools belonging to the Wesleyan Body would lose from £200 to £500 a year. Now, we know the sacrifices made by the Wesleyans in the cause of education, but I doubt if

they could bear this additional burden. Indeed I am quite sure that schools of this class would lose their high character or be entirely closed. I believe they would be entirely closed; for they are intended for members of the Wesleyan community, who desire for their children the best education of an elementary character, and when this is no longer offered the children will be withdrawn and the schools must be closed. The Vice President of the Council has alluded to the loss of fees, which he gave as £1,862,303 a year, and there would also be a sacrifice of £745,000 a year in voluntary contributions. I will not enlarge on this, because the right hon. Gentleman has made a full and complete statement from the financial point of view, and what he has said must have produced the conviction that the burden to be thrown upon the community would be of a very serious character. It is most doubtful whether the loss to education could be made good, whether the change would not entail a serious sacrifice to the cause of education. Much has been said of school attendance, and upon that matter we have some experience. Is the attendance in the United States, where there is free education, equal to the attendance in our schools? Now we have testimony of a most remarkable kind, which is buried in the Report of the Committee of Council, and has not received the attention it deserves. I refer to the Report upon the American Schools from Mr. Fitch. He says that the Reports of the American Commissioners of Education for 1887 shows the number of scholars on the roll in all the public schools to be 11,805,660, and the average daily attendance to be 7,571,416, or 64 per cent. In the Report of the English Committee of Council for last year, 4,635,184 children are included in the register of all elementary schools in England and Wales, with an average daily attendance of 3,527,381, or 76 per cent. Then when we come to consider the number of days of school attendance in the year, we find that our schools give 400 attendances in the year, but Mr. Fitch says in his Report that the American schools are opened less than half that number of times, so this difference entirely changes the proportion, and shows that the attendance in England is infinitely better than the attendance in the American schools. Then when we take the Reports from the Continent, I am not sure that in point of numbers the comparison is unfavourable to our attendance here. I have not had the opportunity of consulting the latest Returns from France recently, but if my recollection is at all correct school attendance there is far less satisfactory than it is in this country. I speak from recollections of the latest Returns issued within the last few days. We are told of educational progress on the Continent, and are asked to follow the example set by Continental States. No doubt in France and in Switzerland public schools are for the most part free, but if we examine the report of Mr. Matthew Arnold, to which reference has been made, and the Report of the Education Commissioners, we find that the system of free schools does not by any means universally obtain on the Continent. The Report says that in Holland there is a mixed system, some schools charging fees, others being free. In Wurtemberg, often quoted as a model State so far as education is concerned, the schools are rarely free; the fees varying from two shillings a year in the country to three and sixpence in the larger towns. These seem small fees; but the poverty of the people as compared with this country must be considered, and the principle remains the same, the schools are not free. In Saxony fees range from three-halfpence a week to one penny and three farthings a week in the country, and in towns from 12s. to 36s. a year according to the place and grade of the schools. In Dresden school fees are from 2½d. to 3¾d. a week. These figures show that, whether free education be good or bad, it is not universally adopted on the Continent even in those countries often cited to us as pioneers and models in matters of education. I might enlarge on the subject, as it affects the relations between parent and child. I believe myself that it is a good thing for family life that a child should know that his parent is making some sacrifice for his education. I believe it knits the family together, and induces that reverence on the part of the child towards the parent which every lover of good order and progress must desire. We have some

testimony as to the effect of free education from the present Bishop of Manchester. For many years this distinguished prelate was Bishop of Melbourne, Australia, and from his acquaintance with free education there, he alleges its disadvantages in most impressive terms. My hon. Friend made reference to Mr. Matthew Arnold; and I confess I was somewhat struck by his reticence. He read us an interesting page from Mr. Arnold's Report, and I followed his reading, but my hon. Friend omitted the concluding sentence. After Mr. Arnold says that on political grounds in opposition to educational grounds it might be desirable to adopt free education, he makes this statement—

"Only it will be impossible to organise it with the State limiting its concern, as it does now, to the popular school only; and this can be so palpably shown to be a matter of common justice that one need not despair of bringing even the popular judgment to recognise it."

Therefore the statement of Mr. Arnold, quoted by the hon. Member who opened this debate, amounts to this: that we should not estimate the expense of popular education only; but investigate the whole field well, and consider the burden of bringing upon ourselves the cost of all grades of education from the top of the ladder to the bottom. This is confirmed by what happened in the Swiss Canton of St. Gall in the course of last year, when higher or continuation schools were made entirely free. Up to that time there had been a small charge for those schools, but this was entirely abandoned, and you have free schools in Switzerland from the highest to the lowest. This confirms the contention that you cannot stop with elementary schools alone; if you have a system of free schools you must apply that freedom to the whole educational system. There is one more authority I desire to cite—it has not yet been quoted in the debate—the opinion of the Royal Commission—

"If, as we think, the provision of the due necessaries of education as well as the necessaries of life, is part of the responsibility incumbent upon a parent, it may well be believed that public contributions and private benevolence are already doing all that can safely be required in augmentation of the payments properly exacted from the parents. We are of opinion that the balance of advantage is in favour of maintaining the present system established by the Act of 1870, whereby parents who can afford it, contribute a substantial proportion of the cost of the education of their children in the form of school fees."

There we have the testimony of the Education Commission, and I believe I need not adduce further testimony than the weight of their authority in support of the views which I entertain. To one other point I desire to make reference—the religious question. There is great anxiety felt among the friends of religious education on this subject, and it is my privilege to have constant communication with them and to know their views. I am sure of this, that the sacrifices made by them, not during one generation only but through many generations, the self-denial as regards labour, the supply of funds without stint, the earnestness which they have shown in the cause of education should have won the gratitude of educationalists, who too often speak of these men as hindrances and obstacles in the way of education. We have now a system of voluntary schools and Board schools side by side, and of this I am thoroughly convinced, that it is the religious teaching in our denominational schools which makes in many cases School Board schools careful of this branch of education. If you, by destroying these voluntary schools, remove this competition, if you diminish or destroy this pressure, then I am afraid that in many cases the School Board schools of this country will fall into the same condition as that into which American schools have lapsed and will become exclusively secular schools. I am quite aware that we are informed that at Board schools in all cases there is some religious teaching; but we must carry our investigation one step further, and inquire a little more into detail. When we discover the character of the teaching we find it often is so meagre and so imperfect that we may well doubt whether it inculcates the slightest religious sentiment, cultivates a moral tone, or is of such a character as to make any permanent impression on the child's mind. I am grateful to the House for the opportunity of making these few imperfect and cursory remarks. I am quite aware they touch but a very small part of a very large question, but I am unwilling to occupy more time. I feel deeply on the subject as one who has worked long in the cause of popular education with an earnest desire that the

system should be most efficient for its purpose, and that it should not lose that religious character which is at once its brightest ornament and its greatest source of strength.

(9.10.) MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): With a few words I desire to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Rotherham. I entirely endorse the statement made by my hon. Friend as to the widespread and general disappointment in the country that no reference has been made to this subject in the Gracious Speech from the Throne. A general expectation undoubtedly existed in the public mind prior to the assembling of Parliament with respect to this important question, an expectation not confined to one Party, but shared alike by Conservatives and Liberals. The hope undoubtedly was based upon the action of the Government last Session, the concessions made on this subject to Scotland, and also on the very important references to the subject made by Lord Salisbury in his speech at Nottingham in November last. Many of us had hoped that when we were invited to hear the Queen's Speech we should find reference to this subject, especially as it is considered on both sides of the House that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will this year — I am happy to think so—be in the possession of such a surplus as will enable him to deal very satisfactorily with the matter. Naturally, if it is to be touched at all, it must be approached at a time when there is reasonable prospect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be in a position financially to make this great concession. I therefore endorse fully the statement made by my hon. Friend as to the universal disappointment felt in the country at the absence of all mention of this subject in the Queen's Speech. I wish also to enter my very solemn and emphatic protest against the notion that seems to have obtained credence, and has found expression in several speeches during this debate, that we who support the principle of free education and the establishment at once of universal School Boards are less careful of the religious tuition of our children than the gentlemen who support the voluntary principle. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, in his excellent and temperate speech this evening, argue that supporters of free education also seek the abolition of voluntary schools. I think that very few hon. Members who remembering the services rendered to education in this country by voluntary schools will be prepared to get up and say it is a desirable thing that these schools should be abolished. We all acknowledge the useful work which voluntary schools have accomplished, and are not prepared to ask for their abolition. All that is claimed at the moment is that, if you have free education, it should combine with it a certain amount, a reasonable amount of representative control, and I venture to say that is a very reasonable request put forward by the supporters of free education. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Evesham Division (Sir R. Temple) has spoken warmly in praise of the efficiency of voluntary schools, by which I suppose he means Church of England schools, and declared, if I understood him rightly, that there was nothing like them to be found in the whole of Scotland. Well, if we are to take the amount of Government grant that is earned by the schools of Scotland and compare it with the grants earned by Church of England Schools, if we take the amount per head as a test of efficiency and of the intelligence of the children that are taught in the schools, I think the hon. Baronet has not very much to congratulate himself upon, for I find that in 1888 the amount of Government grant earned per head of children taught in the Church of England schools was something like 16s. 6d., but in the Board Schools of Scotland the amount earned per head was 18s. 2d., or practically 10 per cent. more than the Church of England schools. It seems to me that our present system is one that operates most heavily upon the working classes at the time when they can least afford to bear the strain, at the period when the parents are advancing in years, and the requirements of the family are growing heavier year by year. By our present compulsory system we entail on the head of the family a double hardship, we compel him to send his children to school—and rightly so I think—at a time when they might be put to some sort of employment and thereby help the family exchequer. I say we rightly compel

attendance at school, because undoubtedly the State is widely and deeply interested in the education of every member of the community, but I do not think it is just to compel the parent to forego the assistance the child's employment would afford, and to pay school fees at the same time. Furthermore, in my opinion our system of granting remissions from the payment of school fees tends to offer a bounty to improvidence, intemperance, and wastefulness. It is not the thrifty, the honest and industrious workman who benefits by the remission. These men never ask for remission except perhaps in cases of the greatest emergency; it is the improvident, spendthrift class who are benefited, and in justice to the more prudent and economical among the working classes you ought at once, when you have the opportunity, to concede free elementary education. It is said (I do not know what truth there may be in the rumour) that the Government intend to make some remissions in taxation, but speaking as one who is in close touch and sympathy with the working classes, I can say that however greatly some may desire to have what has been called a "free breakfast table," I believe, if a *plébiscite* were taken among the industrial classes of the country to-morrow on the subject, that as between a free breakfast table and free education, their verdict would be in favour of the latter. I entirely disagree with the statement that has been made repeatedly during the course of this debate that if school fees were abolished the attendance at school would not be increased. I hold an entirely opposite opinion, and what is more, I believe that one effect of the abolition of fees would be that the children would be kept longer at school than they now are, and by that means we may in some degree relieve the congested districts, and help to solve many of those social questions that are staring us in the face, and which will have to be dealt with by the House in a vigorous way sooner or later. Keeping children longer at school will help towards the solution of important social problems looming in the immediate future. I support this principle of free education also because of the economy which will be effected in the teaching time at school. I may refer for a moment to my own experience. For many years I was very closely identified with teaching in my own district, and though in that particular district we were somewhat favoured, as the great bulk of school fees was deducted from the miners' wages paid at the colliery office, yet, notwithstanding that, a certain portion of the fees from children attending school had to be collected, and I can testify to the great amount of time that had to be wasted by the employment of pupil teachers in this collection during school hours. With the free system this time will be saved for educational purposes. For these and other reasons with which I do not care to trouble the House at the moment, I shall certainly have much pleasure in voting in support of the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

*(9.25.) MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): Some apology is, I think, due to the House from anybody who takes part in this discussion, for surely it is an abuse of the forms of the House which is taking place now. I understand—and I have now had an experience of many years in the House—that the object of moving an Amendment to the Address is in order to call attention to some urgent matter not otherwise to be dealt with, and is it not an abuse of language to say that this question of the remission of school fees is one of these urgent matters? First of all, I deny that it is at all urgent—of course I know that there I differ from hon. Gentlemen on the other side, but we cannot agree upon everything—but even if it is urgent, is this the only opportunity that hon. Gentlemen could find to urge their opinions on the attention of the House? Is there no other means than by this endless protraction of debate on the Address to bring such questions before Parliament? If so, then the sooner we re-model our Parliamentary system the better. I know that the condition of affairs here has made us a laughing stock outside the House. The debates on the Address are not read, because they are regarded more or less as protracted uninteresting talk. Only the other day I heard a gentleman not connected with the House say, "Nobody cares to read the debates now, for we think they are only a device for protracting time and obstructing the ordinary business of Parliament." I think we have almost reached the

limit of discussion, but of course if hon. Gentlemen think it incumbent upon them to follow the line they have taken, we must say something in reply, but I will not occupy time with any lengthened remarks. If we were to follow the examples of the hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded this Amendment, we might speak for a week, travelling over the whole ground of elementary education, of intermediate education, of Welsh education, of the rival merits of voluntary and Board schools. In fact, the whole education question has been touched upon, I admit, with great ability, but as you, Mr. Speaker, would, if you were free to speak your opinion, admit in a manner entirely out of accordance with ancient Parliamentary practice. I am not going to follow that example. The Amendment expresses regret that as free education in elementary schools is granted in Scotland, no reference has been made in the Queen's Speech to legislative proposals for giving similar advantages to the rest of the United Kingdom; that is, the House is invited to accept a simple proposition in favour of the remission of school fees. Now, I have two things to say: First of all, I differ from the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken as to the feeling of the working classes on this subject. It may seem presumptuous on my part, for the hon. Member (Mr. Fenwick), of course directly represents an important section of the miners in the North of England; but I fancy I know something of the feeling among the working classes in London and in the South of England, and I do not believe that the *élite* of the working classes there make this demand at all. I am certain that the better part of the working classes in London and in the South prefer to pay for the education of their own children. I challenge contradiction of that statement, and why is it my conviction? I do not believe that the working classes and we are of a different stock, or of different flesh and blood. I prefer to pay the cost of education for my children, and I believe they prefer to pay fees for the education of their children. To say that 2d. or 3d. a week is more than an ordinary working man with good wages can pay is more than hon. Gentlemen opposite will induce the House to believe. That is not the real motive for this movement. The motive is not the remission of fees. The real object is to abolish all voluntary schools. I have been struck to-night by the change of tone of hon. Members opposite. Nevertheless, we all know that there has been a determined assault out of doors on the continued existence of voluntary schools. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow said recently that nothing should induce him to give one penny to schools which were not under popular control. Here the mask was thrown off. What does it mean? Can the voluntary system continue to live if put under what is called popular control? The right hon. Gentleman knows very well that the two things cannot co-exist. What is asked is that in return for State assistance the ratepayers should have the right of nominating representatives on the management of the schools. What have the ratepayers got to do with assistance from the State? I do not see many Gentlemen from Ireland present; but what would they say to the ratepayers nominating managers for the Roman Catholic schools? Would they like to have the representatives of the ratepayers brought in to manage their schools? No; they would not tolerate it for a moment. It is because hon. Members and their Friends think that the Church of England is weak—and in this I believe they are mistaken—that our voluntary schools are attacked. I believe the working classes are as ready as they always have been to pay a reasonable and fair sum for the education of their children, and as I believe further that the voluntary schools are an integral part of the education of the country, I am determined to defend them. It has been said that the upper and middle classes are not ashamed to receive assistance in the education of their children, and that therefore we ought not to grudge assistance to the children of other classes. But I traverse that directly. I have accepted in the person of my own sons the assistance of endowments at schools and colleges, but it has amounted to nothing like the cost of education. On the other hand, we do at this moment assist the education of the working classes. We do not ask them to pay anything like the whole cost of the education of their children;

we only give them an opportunity to do what they have done in the past—to contribute a small share of the total cost. It must not be forgotten that the great part of the education of the children of the working classes is paid out of the finances of the country. Reasonable men do not object to paying these small school fees. There must always be a residuum ; there will always be certain people who, through misfortune, accident, or their own fault, are unable to pay for the education of their children, but the State provides for them. We are always met by the argument that the present system of remitting fees is pauperising and degrading in its effects. But if a man cannot maintain his family he must go to the State, and why should it be more degrading to ask for the remission of school fees than to apply for assistance to support a family ? But the members of the Royal Commission say that if it is mixed up with the pauper element, they are quite ready to adopt some means to remove the taint. I do not admit that there is any degradation, but we do not wish to cast any stigma on these unfortunate people. We are always met in this matter by the remark that there is free education over the Channel in France, Germany, and Switzerland ; but I have a lurking feeling that the British workman is after all a superior man to the working classes on the Continent. He prefers to manage his own affairs to having them managed for him. He prefers to look after his own children. Hon. Gentlemen seem to think that free education would improve the education of the British workman. Is there any proof of that ? Where are the best working men in the world to be found ? Who are the men to whom an employer of labour goes when he wants his work well done ? Is it not the British workman who can turn out better work than anybody else ? Cannot that be said to be the result of the education of himself and his forefathers. That argument, then, falls to the ground. It may be an old-fashioned sentiment which I entertain, but I prefer to continue on the grounds on which we and our forefathers have acted for so many years.

(7.10.) MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) : Until the hon. Member for Oxford rose I thought we had had an excellent debate, conducted with great moderation on all sides. But the hon. Gentleman has advanced the statement that this Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House. I can hardly think the leader of the House will agree in that, inasmuch as the other night he said the Government could not deal with this question of free education, as public opinion had not sufficiently expressed itself, but we should have some discussion in the House which would tend to enlighten that public opinion. Was there ever a case before where a Prime Minister distinctly promised that a great measure should be introduced, and where he distinctly declared that the pledge should be redeemed if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a surplus ? That was the sole condition. If, said the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has a surplus the thing shall be done. How can anyone complain, then, that this Amendment is moved when the subject has been suddenly dropped from the Queen's Speech, and we are told instead that public opinion has not yet made up its mind on this question ? We are told the working classes have not demanded it. I believe there is no question upon which the working classes are so unanimous as this one of free education. I am afraid there are not many of the working classes in the constituency represented by the Member who has just spoken ; but I can tell the hon. Gentleman this—that he represents more men who have received assisted education than any other man in this House, for although he traverses the statement that the higher and middle classes receive assisted or free education, the total amount of endowments which go almost exclusively to the middle and upper classes is two millions a year, and the greater part of this is intended for the poor. The hon. Member opposite says :— " Your real object is not the abolition of fees, but the abolition of voluntary schools." I maintain that that is an unjust accusation. We have no wish to attack voluntary schools—that is to say, really voluntary schools, for there are a good many schools that are called voluntary that are not really so. The hon. Gentleman opposite has sat on a Royal Commission ; did he ask how many voluntary schools have no subscriptions ? I remember that when I was at the Education Department, 12 per cent. of voluntary schools had not one

farthing of subscription, and I believe that a good many of them made money out of the grant. How can those schools be said to be voluntary schools? I recognise the noble sacrifices that have been made in past times, especially by the clergy, for education; the clergy, in fact, have been much more generous than squires and those who could better afford it. When I was at the Education Office I knew of many and many a clergyman who had plunged himself into debt and difficulties because he wanted to maintain his schools and keep out the School Board. Those men deserve sympathy, and I am sure that the House would wish to deal generously and reasonably with them. It is not fair to use these old arguments of the National Society, now, I believe, abandoned by it. The hon. Member told us that he was tired of the foreign argument. But are we not tired of foreign competition? Do we not see the excellence and variety of the foreign workmen, and do we not wish to put our own workmen on an equality with them? We know that the British workman is one of the best workmen in the world—if not the best—if we only trained him fairly and gave him the same chance as the foreign one has. But why do hon. Gentlemen opposite try to deprive the British workman of this chance, and why, for the last five years, have they done so little for him in point of education? What about the working men on the other side of the Tweed? Are they degraded by the measure of last year? The hon. Member says that if they were convinced that such a measure as we are advocating would do something for public education they would support it. I will give the hon. Member an argument which I think he will find it rather difficult to answer. In the Report of the Scotch Education Department for 1889-90, signed by Lord Cranbrook and Lord Lothian, it is said that—

"The measures proposed had been aimed, firstly to promote the efficiency of education, and secondly to confer a substantial benefit upon Scotch parents by assisting them to give their children the full advantage of the school supply so amply provided, by abolishing the necessity in the case of poor parents of resorting to the machinery of the Poor Law Authorities, which has been the cause of so much friction in the operation of the Education Act."

Those are the motives which animated the Government in giving that great boon to Scotland. Then we are told that though it may do for Scotland it would be a very bad thing for England. But the whole question has been given up, the thing has come to an end, it does not require argument; when you have given free education to Scotland you cannot keep it from England. I would like to call the attention of the House to a speech delivered not very long ago by a very important Member of the Government. In December, 1888, when the hon. Member for Aberdeen, who gained this great victory for Scotland, moved that the share of the Probate Duties allocated to Scotland should be applied to free education, he was answered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who said—

"I must say that it would clearly have been impos ible to adopt in Scotland the principle of free education without extending it at the same time to England and Ireland. I do not think that the Government could have proposed a measure for remitting school fees in Scotland without imposing the greatest possible grievance on England and Ireland, and creating a powerful demand for a similar measure."

But you have done it. The Government have remitted school fees in Scotland, and have, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, imposed the greatest possible grievance on England. What answer is there to that statement? But how long since was it that the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House promised that English and Scotch education should be treated alike? I am almost tempted to make a quotation from another leader of the House, and say that we want to be treated with equality and similarity. It is a strange thing at this day that England should be placed in a worse position than Scotland. I think that there are very few people in this country who have realised how striking is the difference in regard to education north and south of the Tweed. My right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council said that Scotland stood in a different position to England. But he did not tell the House that out of 3,126 public schools in Scotland there are only 85 where any fees at all are paid in compulsory standards, and only 44 really fee-paying schools; and it is provided that wherever there is a fee-paying school

there must be free places for every child. In this respect we want to be placed on perfect equality with Scotland. The Vice President was pressed by my hon. Friend the Member for the Evesham Division to take up the old *non possumus* arguments of the National Society. But I believe that even the National Society has changed its methods. A friend of mine obtained from the secretary of the Society some of those pamphlets which once fell as thick as snow over the country, and the arguments contained in them seem to be pretty strong; they might have been composed by the hon. Member for Oxford himself. They say—

"The first peril is that if the school were free there is a danger of the education becoming entirely secular; secondly, there is the danger that its management would be placed in the hands of a locally elected body; the third peril is that religious teaching would be squeezed out, and the children would grow up without religious teaching. There is danger to religion and royalty, danger to piety and public safety, danger to the altar and to the throne."

Then reference is made to—

"The perils of the last proposals of a dangerous and unprincipled statesmanship"—

which statesmen on the opposite Bench want to adopt,

"under the cover of free education, and the result of these evil devices will be seen in the growth of a godless and faithless population."

So it goes on. A friend of mine who has written on free education was very anxious to get the National Society's view on free education, a number of these leaflets, which played an important part in the elections of 1885-6, being circulated by the thousands. My friend wrote to the secretary. This is the answer he received—

"Dear Sir, by book post I send various papers on the subject of free education. Although the society has no need to change its views on the subject, the recent declaration of the Prime Minister in Nottingham has considerably modified the situation, and the leaflets are not now being circulated."

This is just one month old. They were withdrawn very recently, after the pronouncement at Nottingham. What was considered the daring unprincipled statesmanship, which my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham and so many of us supported in 1884-5-6, disappeared immediately Lord Salisbury made his declaration. The hon. Member for Evesham rather startled me by his disparaging remarks about Swiss education. I think I know as much about Swiss education as I know about English education, and I entirely differ from the hon. Baronet. Let me recommend my hon. Friend to read the book of Mr. Adams, late minister at Berne. The hon. Gentleman says that the children do not go to school for six months in the year in Switzerland; but Mr. Adams says that by the Federal pact of 1877 no child can be employed in mills or on public works until he reaches the age of 15, and, in the rural districts, the holidays are fixed with due regard to harvest and the tourist season—extending to from eight to 10 weeks and not to half the year. And, in fact, Mr. Adams speaks of the Swiss schools more enthusiastically than I or any Gentleman in this House has done. I differ, too, from the hon. Baronet in his statement that Scotland has nothing to show comparable to our English voluntary schools. Education in Scotland, in my opinion, is as far superior to the education of England as Swiss education is superior to that of Scotland in many respects. I know that some voluntary schools are as good as money can make them—I wish there were more of them—but many of them are as bad as they can be. The very careful Report of the Committee of Management of the School Board of London, dated July, 1889, throws an interesting light upon the question of the condition of the children attending the London Board Schools. It states that during the year the number of children in average attendance was 341,495. Of these 43,888, or 12·8 per cent., were returned as habitually attending school in want of food. Only less than half of the 42,000 are at present provided for, leaving 24,739 children attending school who, notwithstanding the efforts made, do not obtain enough food. The Report states that 130,759 individual children, that is 32·4 per cent., or practically one-third of the total average attendance, had their fees remitted during some part of the year ending March, 1889. Imagine an inquiry into the circumstances of over 130,000 children. Imagine the inquisitorial investigation—the poor mothers obliged to attend the

School Board and tell their pitiable tales —and then say whether this does not require any advance in the direction of free education. I say you will have done a great deal to instil self-respect into the minds of the people when they have schools of their own to which they can send their children without these investigations. What is the condition of the voluntary schools? They cannot remit fees. I believe the Catholics pay the fees of more than 12 per cent. of the children attending their schools. Everyone must admit that the Catholics form the poorest part of our population. But their schools stand well. I am astonished how well they do stand. In some of our large towns in the north of England they stand better than our Church schools. In Preston, for instance, the Catholic schools stand better than the Church schools. I think the hon. Member will bear me out on that point.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): The difference is in their favour.

MR. MUNDELLA: Then let the House look at the number of children sent to Boards of Guardians to get remission of fees. It is impossible, so far, to ascertain the exact amount paid by Guardians for fees, but this Return shows something over £60,000 a year, which at 5s. per head per annum gives 240,000 children whose parents must attend the Boards of Guardians to obtain remission of fees. If it is degrading to the Scotch to bring them in contact with the machinery of pauperism, surely you should do more for the relief of the English children. The Vice President of the Council has said that the Government is not to be drawn. The Government has not to be drawn. It has already pronounced. They have withdrawn the case, Lord Salisbury having given a distinct promise that free education shall be conceded immediately the Chancellor of the Exchequer has a surplus to enable the Government to do it, and it is due whenever the next Budget comes on. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself is as fully pledged as the Prime Minister, for on December 19, 1888, when the question of free education for Scotland was first mooted, he said: —

"I must say it would have been clearly impossible to adopt in Scotland the principle of free education without extending it at the same time to England and Ireland. I do not think the Government could have proposed a measure for remitting school fees in Scotland without imposing the greatest possible grievance upon England and Ireland, and creating a powerful demand for a similar measure."

That is from *Hansard*, Dec. 19th, 1889. Under these circumstances I do not see how, when the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer comes to deal with his surplus he can fail to grant free education I do not wish to go into the question of intermediate schools, because I think we can hardly drag that subject into this debate; but I say that, if we are to have free schools—and we shall have them—we cannot have them without at the same time admitting public management. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President held up to the House the bugbear of what would be the fatal consequences of the abolition of voluntary schools. But no one has proposed such a thing. Did Lord Salisbury suggest it when he spoke of free education? The fact is that nobody has ever dreamt of such a thing. But I say it will be a bad day for the voluntary schools when it is held to be necessary for their existence that the working classes should be deprived of this boon of free education. The argument that free education is possible in Scotland but not in England because of the interests in the voluntary schools would tell very severely against these voluntary schools in the mind of the English working man, and he would demand why, under such circumstances, they should be continued to his disadvantage. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that 76 per cent. of the English schools are voluntary schools. Does he not know that that statement is a little misleading? There are not 76 per cent. of the total number of children in those schools; while it should be added that the voluntary schools include the undenominational British schools. If regard is had to these things, we find there are 2,100,000 children in those schools already, which would make a considerable difference in the right hon. Gentleman's computation. Again, with regard to the maintenance of the voluntary schools, not a small portion of the voluntary subscriptions contributed to their support is, after all, raised out of the compulsory

rates, taken from the pockets of the working men. The right hon. Gentleman has said that at least £28,000,000 will be the cost of new buildings required to replace the voluntary schools; but if that be so, I ask what is to be done with the buildings already used for school purposes under the voluntary system? I am glad to know that many of the clergy are not of the same mind as hon. Members opposite on this question. Many of them have expressed their desire that the schools should come under public management, and the wise words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Percival, and many others, show that the clergy are ready to meet us half way in the matter, the Government undertaking the other half. Some of the ablest statements I have seen in favour of free education have recently come from quarters whence they were little to be expected. I hold in my hand a series of articles published in a provincial newspaper under the mystical initials "A.S.E.C." Those articles are strongly in favour of free education, and show plainly to the clergy of the Church of England and the public that there is no danger to be apprehended from the adoption of this principle. They also assert that how free education can prejudicially interfere with religious education is difficult for anyone to imagine. It is an open secret that the author of these letters is the Assistant Secretary of the Education Commission. I should like, in conclusion, to say a word in reference to the question of public management. I say that where the school is intended for all it should be managed by the representatives of the whole community; at the same time, the schools of any section of the community, such as the Catholics or the Jews, might continue to receive support under the management of that section, as in Scotland. If we are to have free education it must not be partial; it must be free from top to bottom, and be brought within the reach of every child and every parent.

(10.25.) MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Reference has been made in the course of the debate, by speakers on both sides of the House, to the opinions which I have expressed elsewhere upon this subject. I confess that I have always taken a deep interest in the matter, and have even taken a somewhat prominent part in the agitation which I hoped would lead to the establishment of the principle. At the outset I desire to congratulate the friends of education on the advance which the question has made. I remember very well on my first entry into political life, when I and some of my friends took this question up, that at that time we were in a miserable minority. My hon. Friend and Colleague the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), who certainly has done as much as any man in popularising the system of National Education, brought the question of free schools before the House of Commons at the time the late Mr. Forster introduced his Elementary Education Act, and on that occasion failed to take with him into the Lobby more than 60 Members. In 1885, coming down later, matters were not much better for us. That was the date of the unauthorised programme, of which free schools formed an important item. I do not think I am over-stating the matter when I say that if we had attempted to take any vote of the House at that time upon the question we should have had the Conservative Party almost to a man against us, and only a minority of the Liberal Party with us. When my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian issued his address to the electors, he referred specially to the question of free education; and I must say—though in no spirit of complaint, because the right hon. Gentleman at that time represented the opinion of the majority of the Party he led—that he gave me very poor comfort in that manifesto. He stated many objections—very forcible objections—to any system of free schools, and wound up his comment on the proposal by saying that it was not a question of practical politics, in effect relegating it to the dim and distant future. That was the situation only four years ago. May not, then, those who have been the consistent friends of education congratulate themselves upon the change of the position? We find now that the Liberal Party are practically unanimous in favour of free education; and that the Conservative Party

are pledged, as far as they can be pledged by the declaration of the Ministry in this House, to establish free education at the earliest possible date. My right hon. Friend who has just sat down has amused the House by reference to some arguments that were used against free education five or ten years ago. Is it worth while now to go back upon the past? The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the National Society have withdrawn some of their circulars; but has he withdrawn some of his former statements? I do not make it a matter of accusation against my hon. Friend or against hon. Members on either side of the House that on this matter they have changed their opinions. It is a conversion—one of the most wonderful conversions that has taken place in a political matter at any time; but it is a conversion in the direction of progress, and it has been brought about not by interest, but by argument and reason. We have had an experience of educational work, which I think has brought conviction into many minds which at one time were full of suspicion of a proposal so Radical as they thought this to be. I sincerely congratulate myself and the House on the fact that we have arrived at this point—that the majority, not only of the Liberal Party, but of the Conservative Party, have accepted the principle. If that be the case, it is not really worth while to devote very much time to arguments in favour of or against the principle. I confess I was disappointed with the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple). I thought that conviction must have come to his mind also. I am sorry he should have tried to hold back the Government, of which he is one of the most loyal supporters, from a course which would redound to their infinite credit; but in that effort I do not think my hon. Friend will be successful. I do not think they can be restrained. The arguments used by my hon. Friend are really now old-fashioned and out of place. Four years ago we might have expected to hear that the independence of the parent would be interfered with if we established free schools; but when my hon. Friend tells us that already in the Metropolis seven-eighths of the expenses of education are now paid by the State, I do not think that he need be so careful about this miserable fraction of independence—this one-eighth of parental responsibility that is now left. According to my hon. Friend's view, if he be logically right, the voluntary schools should not retain the seven-eighths now paid by the State, but allow the whole expense of education to be borne by the parent. On the other hand, we maintain that not only is the independence of the parent not in question, but that what is really in question is the responsibility and the duty of the State. We say that education is required not in the interests of the parent. It is mainly required in the interests of the children, and though it may be the interest of the parent to secure the interests of the children his personal interest is in the opposite direction. We say that the real interest in the matter is the interest of the community that every one of its future citizens shall be educated and qualified to take his part in the government of the State. We maintain that if this be the interest of the community it is the obligation of the whole community to provide the expense. Further, we say that a parent is not relieved from his share of responsibility, but that he takes that share, not as an individual, not as a parent, but as a member of the community. He has to pay his share, whatever it may be, in the shape of rates and taxes, by which the expenses of education are provided, as a citizen and not as a parent. My hon. Friend (Sir R. Temple) has given another reason against free education—one of the old reasons with which we are all familiar—that it would conduce to irregular attendance. All I can say is that if that is the experience of the London School Board it is contradicted by universal experience in every country in which free education has been adopted. In America, where free education was adopted, the immediate result was an enormous increase in the attendance, and the same was the case in Australia. In Birmingham, when I was Chairman of the School Board there, we were unable to establish free education, because Mr. Forster's Act prevented it; but we almost compelled the Education Department—for we used something more than persuasion—to allow the

establishment of schools in which the fees were reduced to a minimum. This curious result followed, that in the case of every school in which the fees were reduced from 3d. to 1d., within 12 months the attendance increased three-fold, so that the receipts were almost the same as when the higher fee was in force. It may be said that this result was obtained at the expense of the voluntary schools. Well, I had a census taken within a certain area around the schools, with the result of showing that the voluntary schools in the neighbourhood had also increased their attendance, though not to the same extent as the Board schools. I may also quote the case of the Manchester Free School, which was worked side by side with the parish schools of Manchester before the passing of the Education Act of 1870, and where it was found that the average attendance was much larger than it was in the voluntary schools. What is the result of the experience of every School Board with regard to every child who comes to school at the present time without the fee? Either the child has to be admitted without fee or sent back. If it be admitted without fee, the fee is never obtained; but if sent back it will probably not make its appearance again for the rest of the week, even if it comes back to school at all until compulsion is brought to bear on the parent. I do not hesitate to say that, in my opinion, this question of free schools is more important in an educational point of view even than compulsion. If I had to choose between free schools and compulsion, I would choose free schools, because I believe that they will bring more children to school than any amount of compulsion. But, after all, what I want to impress upon the House is that, practically, the argument is concluded. Some hon. Members may still think that free schools will be attended with mischief; but I do not think there is one Member of the House who does not believe that free education is a question of the immediate future. The principle of free schools has been accepted by the country, and I believe the experience of every hon. Member in his own constituency will bear me out in that opinion. The immediate question before us is not whether free schools shall come, but by whom they shall come, how they shall come, and when they shall come. These are the questions to which the practical attention of the House should now be directed. This is the chief value of the discussion which has been raised by the Amendment; and I hope it will assist the Government in what I believe to be their settled intention to carry the principle into effect. In my opinion—it is more than an opinion, for I believe it is a matter than cannot be disputed—there are only three ways in which free schools can be established. Let me first deal with a preliminary point. Funds have to be raised to meet the expense. Expressing my own opinion individually, I think they can only come from the Imperial Exchequer. If I am right, if the principle I have endeavoured to lay down—which I believe to be the principle on which free schools can alone be defended, namely, that it is a national question—can be defended, then it is the nation, and not the locality, that is bound to provide the expenses. Supposing that to be granted, there are only three methods by which the matter can be settled. Before I state what those three methods are I will point out to the House the fact that the real obstacle is our old friend—religious distinctions. Upon the point of the continued existence of the voluntary system and of denominational schools there is an issue between the Government and the Opposition. The Government have stated, in the most unmistakable terms, that they will do nothing to weaken the voluntary system. The Opposition want to destroy the voluntary system. [*Opposition cheers and counter cheers.*] I perceive that there is a difference of opinion among the Opposition on that point. I expected it, and I do not wish to mis-state the matter at all; but I believe that the opinion of the majority of the Opposition is that the time has come when denominational schools should be abolished, and when there should be substituted for them a general system of free Board schools. That is the really important issue between the two sides of the House. I have said that there is a difference of opinion in the Opposition on this point, and the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has stated that it is far from his intention to abolish voluntary schools.

Well, when we come to consider the specific proposal which the right hon. Gentleman has made, we shall see how far his desire to retain voluntary schools is assured. He proposes to take away from voluntary schools everything for which subscriptions in the voluntary schools are given, and he imagines that the subscriptions will come in when the object for which they are given is entirely destroyed. But there is another section of the Opposition whose opinion I am curious about on this particular point. The strongest supporters of denominational schools are the members of the Roman Catholic Church, to which most of the Members from Ireland belong. I am curious to see whether in the division that will take place on the question those hon. Members are going to vote with their Church or with their Party. I am sure it is a matter of perfect indifference to me what they do; but it is a matter of great curiosity. And now I will proceed to consider the different methods which might be adopted. And I believe I can show that some of them tend in the direction of the desire of the majority of the Opposition, whilst others might be accepted without interfering with the object of the majority of the supporters of the Government. We might establish a partial system of free schools by allowing every Board school to become free, and by increasing the grant to Board schools in proportion to efficiency. Under this system the voluntary schools would be left as they are, and would have no additional grant. Therefore, the adoption of this method would mean the absolute extinction of voluntary schools. What would happen? It would be ridiculous to suppose that you could stop there. You could not allow Board schools and create free schools without giving the choice to all parents of sending their children to the Board schools. You must then follow that up by establishing Board schools in every parish, and you must give to every parent the choice between the voluntary school with a fee and the Board school without a fee. Knowing what human nature is, I have no doubt that there would be an end of voluntary schools. It would be impossible, in a great proportion of cases, for the voluntary schools to maintain their existence in face of the superior temptations that would be offered at the Board schools. Another proposal is that additional grants should be given to all schools, voluntary schools and Board schools alike, and that the change in the case of voluntary schools should be coupled with popular representation. That is the proposal of the hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. A. Acland), which finds favour with the right hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella.) But what does it mean? What is meant by popular representation on the management of the voluntary schools? The right hon. Member for Sheffield means by it popular control, which is a very different thing from popular representation, which was all that was referred to by the hon. Member for Rotherham. If by popular representation is meant that in the event of an increased grant being made to the voluntary schools some public authority, such as the School Board or the District Council, should be entitled to send a representative on to the School Committee, the step would be very desirable. The advantage would be that public opinion would be brought to bear upon the School Committees, while their independence would not be interfered with. Their power would remain undiminished, but abuses could be prevented. But I do not conceal from myself that this popular representation would not meet the views of my hon. Friend who moved the Resolution, or of the majority of the Opposition, those to whom I have attributed the intention of ultimately abolishing and destroying the voluntary system. What they want—what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield thinks is a very moderate proposition—is popular control, that the voluntary School Committees should accept a majority of popular representatives, that to these representatives should be given the full control of the schools, and that the voluntary subscribers to these schools should give up all power into the hands of their new colleagues. Why, this proposal is on the face of it ridiculous. I do not say it is undesirable; but I say it would be ridiculous to suppose that the supporters of voluntary schools would accept any such plan. The proposal, in short, like the first which I examined, is a proposal

for the extinction of the voluntary system. Very well, that is a practically intolerable proposition. I ask hon. Gentlemen if they have considered what that means? The Vice President of the Council explained his view of the new burdens which would be laid on the taxpayer if this policy were accepted. My right hon. Friend has criticised the figures of the Vice President. Well, I do not agree, I admit, with the figures of the Vice President, and I do not agree with the criticism of my right hon. Friend. I am going to attempt a calculation of my own, and submit it to the judgment of the House. Now, what is the state of the case? I prefer not to take the number of the voluntary schools, because an important question is the size of the voluntary schools. I propose to take the accommodation. The accommodation in these schools amounts to 3,659,251 places, about twice the accommodation provided by Board schools. Suppose the voluntary system were extinguished, would this accommodation still be available for purposes of education? The right hon. Member for Sheffield appeals to the patriotism of the managers of the voluntary schools, and proposes that they should hand over their schools for public uses, when the original purpose for which those schools have been erected no longer exists. For my part, I do not think that the managers would do this. It is highly unlikely that in the majority of cases these schools, which my right hon. Friend admits have been built, as to three-fourths of the cost, at private expense—it is highly improbable that these schools, built for a particular purpose, will be handed over to anybody for a different purpose. That is not to be expected, even if the terms of the trusts under which the schools were erected would admit of it. To force the managers to hand over the schools—Parliament, I suppose, can do anything—would be nothing less than confiscation. There is another point to be considered. We have had experience in Birmingham and other towns of voluntary schools handed over to the School Boards. In almost every case the buildings have been found to be inadequate for the purposes of the School Board, insufficiently equipped and provided. The result is that other premises have had ultimately to be procured. Well, if we extinguish the voluntary schools of the country we shall have to provide school buildings for 3,650,000 children. ["No, No!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] I hear an hon. Member say that accommodation will only have to be provided for the average attendance. I should think that hon. Member had never been a member of a School Board.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I have been a member of a School Committee in London for 10 years.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a very different thing.

*MR. CREMER: A School Board Attendance Committee working the Act.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That provision I affirm would at once be declared insufficient by the Education Department, for provision must be made for the greatest number of children that can attend. As everyone knows, the average attendance is a very different thing from the gross attendance. It is, in fact, less by 20 or 30 per cent. What would be the use of providing schools from which, on certain days when there was a full attendance, it would be necessary to turn many of the children away? Taking the accommodation that would have to be provided if the voluntary schools were done away with as the basis of my calculation, I find that the cost would be over £40,000,000. At £12 per head that would be the cost. Taking only the average attendance, which is 2,200,000, the expenditure would be £28,000,000. Take it at what you please. All I ask hon. Gentlemen to do is to recognise the consequences of the policy they recommend. That is not all. You lose the voluntary subscriptions. I do not care to enter into the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman as to whether those voluntary subscriptions are not to some extent in the nature of a voluntary tax. At all events, that source of income would be no longer forthcoming, and it amounts to £746,000. But there is another item of expense. The average cost of education in School Boards is 8s. 4d. per head of the average attendance higher than in the voluntary schools. I think that the education is better; but that does not touch the point. Now this sum of 8s. 4d. per head of the average attendance amounts to £934,000; therefore we should have to provide from the rates, if

we wiped out the voluntary schools to-morrow, not only a capital expenditure either of £28,000,000 as a minimum or £40,000,000 as a maximum, but an annual expenditure of £1,680,000 in addition to the present rates. Now, the present rates are £1,232,000. We should add 130 per cent. to the total amount of the present rates. I do not think I have ever posed as a friend of the denominational system. I have been regarded as one of its enemies. I do not know whether that is a fair position in which to place me; but undoubtedly if I had to deal with a new system in this country, if I had a *tabula rasa*, I would infinitely prefer the system which prevails in America—a great national system—to this system of mixed voluntary and State-aided education. It is the duty of the State to provide for the education of the children, and I should be glad to see it undertaken by the State. But as a practical man I say I am not prepared. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] It does not much matter what my opinion is. [*Renewed ironical cheers.*] No; I attach much more importance to your opinion than to my own. Therefore I ask you what is your opinion? Are you prepared to go to your constituents and face this expenditure? Are you prepared, honestly and frankly, to tell your constituents what is the practical result of the policy which in theory you approve and which I approve? Are you prepared to tell them that there will be imposed upon them a capital cost of £30,000,000 sterling, and an annual expenditure of £1,680,000, in order to extinguish denominational schools? I have dealt with two methods of providing free schools; but there is a third method, not open to this objection, but open to other objections. The third method is this. You may make to all schools, voluntary as well as Board, a grant equivalent to the amount of the fees. Let us consider what are the objections to that proposal. The objection which I understand is taken by many educationists is that this would form an additional State endowment of denominational education—that it would increase the Government grant to the extent of the present fees. I maintain, however, that it is not an additional endowment. I maintain that it is the substitution of one endowment for another. I say that the fees, as they are at present provided, are a compulsory tax on a particular class of the community—the parents. I say that the additional grant would only be a compulsory tax on the whole community. I admit the incidence of the tax is slightly varied; but I deny that the fees are any less a tax than the additional grant would be. If this principle of an equivalent grant were adopted we should leave the denominational question and the religious difficulty exactly where they are. We should not increase the power, the influence, the strength of the denominational system; on the other hand, we should not weaken it in the slightest degree. I wish to treat these two questions on their merits, and I say that free schools are good things in themselves; that they are desirable on grounds social and educational; and that on those grounds they ought to be conceded. I express my own personal opinion that denominational schools are a bad thing; but I say, at the same time, that I am willing to argue that question separately, altogether from the question of free schools, and that the question of free schools ought not to be prejudiced by this question of the existence of denominational schools. We ought to count on the support of hon. Gentlemen opposite for free schools, because we ought to say to them that in dealing with the question we do so without *arrière pensée*, and we are not endeavouring to use it as a lever to injure their denominational system. We are ready to deal with the denominational question separately, and to meet them frankly on that question when the opportunity arises; but, in the meantime, we are dealing with the great social and educational question of free schools. I admit that there are other difficulties besides the objection to which I have referred. It would be very difficult in granting the principle of an equivalent contribution from the Government to the amount of the fees to distribute all that equivalent among the different schools. It would be impossible to avoid giving some schools more than they gain from the fees, while giving to other schools less than they gain; and in that case the schools which got less would disappear, while the schools which got more would not be

materially stronger than at present. I admit that there is considerable difficulty in this matter; but it seems to me to be a difficulty which has been overcome in practice in connection with Scottish education; and I cannot help thinking that it is a difficulty which the Government would overcome were they to devote their minds to the question. It ought not to stand in the way; and I would impress on hon. Members who are friends of the denominational system that it would be a most unwise thing were they to act as if the fate of the denominational system were bound up with resistance ot this principle of free schools, which has been practically accepted by the majority of the nation. Of course, I have to decide what course I shall take on the Amendment. I wish that the Vice President of the Council (Sir W. Hart-Dyke) had made a little less of the difficulties in the way of free education and had made more of the advantages to the population which would follow from its adoption. But, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman said one thing which I hope will be emphasised, if necessary, or confirmed at least, by any other Member of the Government who addresses the House. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government did not go back one iota from the declarations which have been made by the Prime Minister and by the leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith). Now, what are those declarations? They are, in effect, that the Government accept the principle of free education, and will deal practically by legislation with the question of free education as soon as they have the opportunity. Is it, then, fair to say that the Government have the opportunity this Session? Is there any hon. Member who will say on his honour that he believes the Government will have time to deal with this complicated subject, as well as with the other business which is down for them to deal with? If the majority of the House believes that the Government will have time to deal with this matter, by all means let them vote for that Amendment. I do not believe they will have time. I do not believe that hon. Gentlemen will give them time. I believe the matter is entirely in the hands of my hon. Friends on this side of the House. If they give that favourable and impartial consideration to the other measures of the Government which they always promise and which they sometimes perform, I believe there will be time for this question of free education. But if the experience of previous Sessions is to be repeated there will not be time during the present Session to deal with this matter, and under those circumstances I think the Government were right not to mention in the Queen's Speech a matter as a subject for legislation which they and the House know hon. Members on this side of the House will not allow them to deal with. The Amendment professes to express regret that the Government are unable to deal with the question this Session. I share in this regret, and if that were a Motion in the nature of a pious opinion expressed by hon. Members on a Tuesday or on a Friday evening on the Motion for Supply, I would be found voting with them; but hon. Members have adopted their own course, they have chosen to raise this question when it cannot be discussed upon its merits, when they have deliberately connected with it the existence of the Government. This is a vote of want of confidence, because hon. Members on this side have made it probable that the Government would be unable to deal this Session with a subject which they have pledged themselves to deal with on the earliest opportunity. I say I will not vote to displace a Government which is pledged to free education, in order to substitute for it a Government which is pledged only to postpone free education and many other important reforms to a project of constitutional change which must take two years, at least, to carry, and which may and, I believe, will take an absolutely indefinite time.

(11.17.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I was about to congratulate my right hon. Friend, for he and I have worked together for years in the cause of free education. [*Ministerial laughter*]. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite may laugh, but my right hon. Friend will not deny it. My right hon. Friend knows perfectly well that when he was at the head of the Birmingham Education League outside this House I was supporting him below the Gangway on the other side of the House. That is more than 20 years ago. My right hon. Friend knows

also that in the campaign of 1885 I stood by his side for free education. Therefore, my right hon. Friend, at all events, will not deny what I have said. Well, I was going to congratulate my right hon. Friend upon being so early in sight of victory, but with the habit, which seems to be characteristic of him, he dashes from the lips of his friends the cup which he had previously offered. The doctrine which he has preached to-night is not the doctrine I learnt from him in the days of the Birmingham League. We heard then none of those passionate denunciations of popular control with which we have been favoured to-night, and which have been cheered from the opposite side of the House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg my right hon. Friend's pardon; he entirely and absolutely misrepresents me. I never said a word against popular control. I approve of it; but I pointed out that we could not have popular control and voluntary management in the same school.

SIR W. HARCOURT: But I am in the recollection of the House whether the whole argument of my right hon. Friend was not directed to induce the House not to give popular control on account of the expense which might attend it. My right hon. Friend says that the Opposition are unanimous for free education, and that the great majority of hon. Gentlemen opposite are in favour of it. He says that the conversion on this side of the House is very recent. I cannot agree with that assertion. I remember a very celebrated speech made by my right hon. Friend in 1885, when he pledged himself that he would take office in no Government which would not carry out free education. Well, but he satisfied himself with reference to the Government that he joined in 1885. My right hon. Friend is not the man to break a solemn pledge of that kind, and it therefore follows, as an explanation of his having joined the Government of 1886, that the Members of that Government were pledged to, and were about to carry out, free education.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My right hon. Friend has appealed to me and I feel bound to answer. I do not understand whether my right hon. Friend intends to infer that the Government of 1886 was pledged to carry out free education; if so he is mistaken again. The Government of 1886 was pledged only to inquire into the subject.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Then what is the meaning of the melo-dramatic statement of my right hon Friend that he would join no Government not pledged to free education?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am sorry to interrupt my right hon. Friend again, but I think his memory is not serving him accurately. I beg him to quote the words of the pledge he refers to. He will find that I did not pledge myself to refuse to join a Government which in terms was not pledged to carry out free education. I deny it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I accept the denial of my right hon. Friend. I made the statement upon the strength of my own recollection, and that of my right hon. Friend by my side (Mr. J. Morley). But it appears that both I and my right hon. Friend were entirely mistaken. However, my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham being, as he says, a sincere friend of free education, and seeing that the Liberal Party is unanimous now, and was not before, in favour of free education, owing to him, and seeing that he has converted the great majority of the Conservative Party, has made a speech to-night which I will venture to say, by the ingenuity which is always conspicuous in the speeches of my right hon. Friend, has dealt the heaviest blow that could have been struck at the hopes of free educationists. He has exhausted the whole of his ingenuity and used his unrivalled powers to destroy that cause. Notwithstanding, he will not join a Government that is not pledged to free education.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I never said so.

SIR W. HARCOURT: But he will support a Government that will not pledge itself.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is pledged.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Pledged! What did the First Lord of the Treasury tell us to-night?

An hon. MEMBER: Postponed.

SIR W. HARCOURT: And why is it postponed? Not on account of want

of time or persistent opposition; it was a statement made to catch your cheers and to do as much mischief as possible to that unanimous opposition which was to carry free education, and if possible to injure its cause. How did my right hon. Friend set to work? He began by taunting the Irish Catholic Members, offering them a choice between Church interest and Party interest and appealing to their religious prejudices. But I hope the Irish Catholic Members will disappoint him. I hope that the ingenious manner in which he has endeavoured to secure their votes will not be successful. What is it he says on the subject of popular representation? I always thought he was a great advocate of popular representation. What is the view he desires to represent and support? That if a man, whether he be a squire or clergyman, makes a fractional contribution towards a school in a rural parish, he and he alone should have any voice in the management of that school. It was my opinion, until to-night, that my right hon. Friend attached the highest value to popular representation because it gives a voice to parents of children in the education of their children. That I understood was the Liberal principle on the subject of popular representation in school management, but that principle, which in theory my right hon. Friend still pretends to hold, he has endeavoured by every argument and figure he has used to destroy to-night. I cannot understand why he should think that popular representation would be so odious to managers of voluntary schools. I know many managers of voluntary schools who value and invite popular representation in the management. Then another blow that the right hon. Gentleman struck at the cause of free education was by declaring that the object of the Opposition, or of the greater part of it, is to destroy voluntary schools. I absolutely deny that. I always denied it when with my right hon. Friend years ago we were fighting the battle of free education. I have always maintained that we have no desire or object in destroying voluntary schools. I had intended to take no part in this debate, and I do not wish to go into the argument so well stated on both sides. It cannot be denied that the Government held forth through the mouth of Lord Salisbury the expectation that free education was to be given this year. The noble Marquess said it depended on the Budget, and on the Budget alone. But that position has been abandoned. The First Lord of the Treasury, at the opening of the Session, gave as a reason why the Government did not propose to deal with the question that opinion was not ripe on the subject. So far from there being that complete conversion my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham speaks of, the First Lord of the Treasury said the Government were waiting to see if that conversion would take place. Why, everybody knows what has stopped free education this Session. We have heard it to-night from the mouth of the representative of Oxford University (Mr. Talbot). Every argument that could be used against the principle of free education was used by that hon. Member on behalf of the class and profession he represents in that University to induce his Party to put a veto on free education. I deeply regret that my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, who has rendered such signal service, as I will always testify, for education and to free education, should have thought fit to-night to make a speech which, in my opinion, has done more than any speech I have ever heard to throw back that cause. My right hon. Friend says this is not a Party question, and it may not be a Party question as between himself and the Government sitting opposite, but it is a Party question as between himself and hon. Gentlemen on this side, and in my opinion he has abandoned that great cause for which we have fought, in order that he might inflict a blow upon hon. Gentlemen on this side.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am afraid that in the few remarks I wish to address to the House I shall not be able to follow the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down into the heated atmosphere which he appears to have entered. I must, however, say that there was a good deal in the right hon. Gentleman's remarkable speech that ought to be noted by the country. The right hon. Gentleman

appeared to think that the best way of forwarding the interests of free education was to attack the right hon. Member for Birmingham, who had made the best speech in favour of free education that had been made in this House for years. The right hon. Member for Derby said that the right hon. Member for Birmingham had struck the heaviest blow that had ever been levelled at the cause of free educaton. And why? Because the right hon. Gentleman has shown us that it is perfectly possible to admit of free education without damage to voluntary schools. I must say it seems to me that, if on no other account, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham is memorable because he has put down his foot so strongly on that subject, saying that while he strongly supports the principle of free education, he supports it conditionally on being able to continue in this country the existence of voluntary schools. Now, in the second place, I want to know what right the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has to take any credit to himself whatever in the matter of free education? What has the right hon. Gentleman ever done for free education? I doubt if any man in this House will remember a single word of any speech the right hon. Gentleman has made on the subject. I want also to know this. The right hon. Gentleman was a leading member of the Cabinet which, he says, was pledged to free education. What did that Cabinet ever do for free education? Did that Cabinet ever put one word into the Queen's Speech pledging them to free education? Yet that Government came into office absolutely pledged to free education. I want to know upon what ground the right hon. Gentleman can justify his support of this Amendment when, having had the opportunity of bringing in a measure of free education, he did not introduce one. The fact is, if we look at the matter dispassionately, the right hon. Gentleman has never done anything for free education; the only Party and the only Government in this country which has done anything for free education is the Party and the Government that is now in power. Now, if I may pass from the right hon. Gentleman who did not contribute much towards the real discussion of the matter, to other speeches, I should like to allude to one or two from this side of the House. I believe that one of the main objects in bringing forward this Amendment was to attempt to show that we on this side of the House are somewhat divided in opinion upon the subject, but I believe that attempt has lamentably failed, because I am satisfied, from the speeches that I have heard to-night from these Benches, that we are absolutely agreed as to the object we desire to attain, and that when the time comes for us to state our methods it will be found that we are in perfect accord. There are one or two points upon which I think all Members of the House are agreed. I do not think that any one will deny the truth of the proposition of my noble Friend the Prime Minister that the introduction of compulsion has given the subject of free education a tremendous impetus. Parents are compelled to send their children to school and lose the benefit they formerly derived from their children's labour. hence arises a claim for free education as assistance towards the poorer parents. That necessity has always been recognised both by Board schools and voluntary schools, which in some cases remits the fees parents, are required to pay. It has been recognised also, by that system to which allusion has been made, where parents have to apply to the Board of Guardians for payment of the fees; and all who have read the evidence taken before the Royal Commission must feel that the present system of the payment of school fees is eminently unsatisfactory, and that in the matter of the remission of school fees we must of necessity go further. Knowing this my noble Friend, the Prime Minister, spoke upon the subject of assisted education in 1885 and in 1889. He put his view before the country with that clearness that distinguishes his statements, and he made his statement with the assent and full concurrence of his Colleagues in 1885 and 1889, and to every word of the statements made we, his Colleagues, are absolutely prepared to adhere. We do not go back from a single word. We are bound. I think it is our duty when opyortunity arises to press forward and give effect to that policy, but of course

we intend to choose our time. We do not intend to allow the Opposition to settle the time and manner; we shall choose our own time for explaining the details of our proposal, and are not so foolish as to attempt on an occasion like this to bring forward the details of a scheme that we do not see the opportunity of carrying through. The time will come when we shall have that opportunity, and then we shall give to the House the actual details of the proposals we intend to make. Of course, we are perfectly well aware of the difficulties. No one can have heard the speeches made to-night without recognising that there are difficulties that any Government must surmount. There are difficulties not only on the one side, but also on the other, and we have taken note of them all to the fullest extent. It is our desire that we should be enabled to make our proposals to the House with due regard to two principal objects. The first of these objects is that in nothing we propose we should damage or injure the prospects of voluntary schools. We are perfectly well aware that there are many managers of voluntary schools who view any proposals on this subject with some anxiety. We are perfectly prepared to study, and we are studying, the difficulties which the problem presents in that direction, and we are determined that when we act every one of them shall be considered. The hon. Member for Evesham argued strongly against free education, but is my hon. Friend prepared to say that he would leave the question to be dealt with by those who are determined to destroy voluntary education, rather than take any step in the direction of free education with those of his friends who are equally determined to preserve voluntary schools? I am certain that if my hon. Friend will think over his position for a short time he will be satisfied that we are perfectly justified in adhering absolutely to the proposals we have made, and in stating our determination to give effect to them when the opportunity occurs. Secondly, we want to consider this question of free education in connection with the other great branches of the subject, and any one who has read the report of the Royal Commission will know that they are difficult and numerous. One of these subjects is the 17s. 6d. limit, which, as hon. Gentlemen know, is condemned because it is a discouragement to the improvement of education. Some want to abolish the limit and some want to raise it; others want something in the nature of a double limit. The subject can be dealt with only by a Bill, and if we think it necessary so to deal with it we desire at the same time to deal with the question as a whole, and to present to the country the policy we think best calculated in our view to advance the education of the country. I don't think I need detain the House beyond a few more observations. The gist of the Amendment is to complain that we have not mentioned free education in the Queen's Speech; and the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) in his very rare references to the subject immediately before the House, selected, I must say, extraordinary ground for supporting the Amendment. He argued that we are bound to introduce at once proposals for free education because of what was done for free education in Scotland last year. Now, last year Parliament gave Scotland a system, not of absolutely free education, but something much nearer what the Prime Minister has called a system of assisted education. The right hon. Gentleman has argued in favour of popular control in the administration of grants to voluntary schools, although last year we did not so proceed in Scotland. Again, on the ground of simultaneity in dealing with England and Scotland he supports the Amendment. Yet the right hon. Gentleman knows very well the circumstances of last year were altogether very different from the circumstances in which we are now placed. Last year we had to distribute a fund, and we gave a part to education in Scotland because we found that the Representatives of Scotland earnestly demanded that that concession should be made. The portion allotted to England we gave to other objects, but equally with the general concurrence of the Representatives of this country. I will not go into matters that have been abundantly dealt with by my right hon. Friend (Sir W. Hart Dyke). No Government would think of inserting in the Queen's Speech reference to any

subject which they did not honestly think there was a reasonable chance of their being able to deal with. We are satisfied there is no chance of our being able to deal with this important subject, and therefore we did not refer to it. We all understand the object of the Amendment. It is well understood that no Government can accept an Amendment of this character to the Address. Therefore, it is moved to give an opportunity to its supporters to make speeches more or less in favour of free education, and to enable the Opposition to say, whatever speeches may be made on behalf of the Government, that the Government voted against the proposal. I am quite sure the country will see through it, as every man in this House undoubtedly does. It is without the slightest fear of our being misunderstood in the course we are taking that I ask the House to vote against the Amendment.

(11.50.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of Members of the Opposition making speeches in favour of free education more or less with a view to the country. Who set the example of that? When the Prime Minister spoke at Nottingham in favour of "assisted" education, by which I suppose he meant free education more or less, he must have intended—speaking as the head of the Government, and therefore I may fairly assume with the assent and consent of his Colleagues—that speech to be something more than a speech for a Nottingham caucus. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham has amazed me by the attitude he took to-night. I am sure he will not deny that he and I have stood side by side for 17 years on this question, and that 17 years ago I co-operated with him. What is the effect of my right hon. Friend's speech to-night? Its effect is distinctly to throw back as far as he can do so the very reform for which we formerly fought side by side. My right hon. Friend was apparently irritated by the reference of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby to what took place in the autumn of 1885. I was present on the occasion to which my right hon. Friend referred as when the right hon. Gentleman made that melodramatic statement. The language of my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham was this—

> "On the other hand, it would be dishonourable in me, and would be lowering the high tone which ought to be observed in public life, if, after having committed myself personally as I have done to the advocacy of these proposals"

in which free education was a prominent item,

> "I were to take my place in any Government which excluded that policy."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Aye, aye; excluded.

MR. J. MORLEY: Then this Government of 1886 did not include or exclude it. Who are now endeavouring to carry that article of the programme? Are they the Members of the defeated Government of 1886 or the Opposition of that date? It is said that my right hon. Friend has no right to complain, because free education was not included in the Queen's Speech in 1886. That is a most futile remark, because we did not make the Queen's Speech of 1886. As far as the general question is concerned, I am not going at this time of night to enter into it. The arguments which appeared to me and to my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham in 1873 to be conclusive have certainly been rather confirmed in the interval between 1873 and 1890. Our position, I think, is this—that when a school is intended for all it should be managed by the representatives of the whole community. Where, on the other hand, the school claims to be for the use of a section of the community, as, for example, the Catholics or the Jews, it may continue to receive public support as

long as it is under the management of that sect. That, of course, is the Scottish system; it works well there and without any friction. That appears to me to be a position which we and even the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway may consistently take up. That is the principle on which I shall vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham, and it is on that principle and upon the general advantages which have been dealt upon in this debate to be gained in the cause of education itself we support the Amendment.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to say that I accept the declaration just made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, speaking on the part of the Liberal Party, that the Vote on this Amendment for the principle of free education does not close or even prejudice the rights of conscience, but allows us to maintain the principle that when a school is under the management of persons of a particular creed and attended by children of a particular creed it must still remain under that management after the system of free education has been adopted. Accepting that principle and recognising the authority of the right hon. Gentleman as the spokesman of the Liberal party, I shall have no difficulty in voting for the Amendment.

(12.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 163; Noes 223.—(Div. List, No. 7.)

Main question again proposed.

Debate arising.

And, it being after midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

METROPOLIS WATER BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, the 2nd of April, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Mr. J. Morley

EXTRAORDINARY TITHE REDEMPTION ACT, 1886.

Return ordered showing—

Names of Parishes in England in respect of which the Land Commissioners for England have, up to the present date, prepared and issued the Drafts of Certificates, under the powers conferred on them by "The Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act, 1886."			
Area of each such Parish.			
Nature of special cultivation.			
Area liable to the Extraordinary Charge—	At date of Tithe apportionment.	Hops.	
		Market gardens.	
		Fruit.	
	In 1886.	Hops.	
		Market Gardens.	
		Fruit.	
Rate per acre of Extraordinary Charge.		Hops.	
		Market Gardens.	
		Fruit.	
Gross amount of Extraordinary Charge at date of Act (1886).			
Certified Capital Value under the above Act.			
Resulting four per cent. Rent-charge.			
Number of Landowners liable.			
To whom Rent-charges payable.			

—(*Mr. Brookfield.*)

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: On the Motion for adjournment I wish to say that, having endeavoured to find out the views of all parts of the House, I have come to the conclusion that I had better definitely put the Motion which stands in my name down for Monday, March 3rd, and I propose on Tuesday to ask for facilities for Supply.

House adjourned at a quarter after twelve till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 24th February, 1890.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Lord Kilmaine a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Viscount Templetown, deceased, with the Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: Delivered (on oath) and Certificate read.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Lamington, after the death of his father.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. L.) nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairmen of Standing Committees:—

E. Cadogan. (*L. Privy Seal.*)
E. Derby.
E. Milltown.
E. Camperdown.
E. Kimberley.
E. Selborne.
L. Esher.
L. Herschell.

That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. XLVII.) nominated the following Lords to serve on "the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.":—

L. Halsbury. (*L. Chancellor.*)
L. Archbp. York.
V. Cranbrook. (*L. President.*)
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
E. Stanhope.
L. Bp. Carlisle.
L. Bp. Oxford.
L. Clinton.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery. (*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Clanwilliam. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
L. Chaworth. (*E. Meath.*)
L. Sudeley.
L. Leigh.
L. Monteagle of Brandon.
L. Elgin. (*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
L. Aberdare.
L. Coleridge.
L. Norton.
E. Milltown.
E. Belmore.
E. Minto.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Strafford.
E. Selborne.
V. Oxenbridge.
V. Cross.
L. Watson.
L. Brabourne.
L. Bramwell.
L. Monk-Bretton.
L. Northington. (*L. Henley.*)
L. Monkswell.
L. Hobhouse.
L. Lingen.
L. Ashbourne.
L. Esher.
L. Herschell.
L. Grimthorpe.
L. Thring.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Basing.
L. Morris.

That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. XLVII.) nominated the following Lords to serve on "the Standing Committee for General Bills":—

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
E. Cadogan. (*Ld. Privy Seal.*)
D. Saint Albans.
D. Bedford.
D. Rutland.
D. Westminster.
D. Fife.
M. Abercorn. (*D. Abercorn.*)
M. Ripon.
E. Mount-Edgcumbe. (*L. Steward.*)
E. Lathom. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Derby.
E. Pembroke and Montgomery.
E. Suffolk and Berkshire.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Cowper.
E. Radnor.
E. Spencer.
E. Bathurst.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Lucan.
E. Harrowby.
E. Brownlow.
E. Vane. (*M. Londonderry.*)
E. Camperdown.
E. Granville.
E. Kimberley.
E. Ravensworth.
E. Wharncliffe.
E. Northbrook.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
L. Bishop of London.
L. Bishop of Rochester
L. Knutsford. (*One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries.*)
L. Willoughby de Eresby.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Ashford.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Lovaine.
L. Foxford. (*E. Limerick.*)
L. Ker. (*M. Lothian.*)
L. Wemyss. (*E. Wemyss.*)
L. Poltimore.
L. Wenlock.
L. Belper.
L. Egerton.
L. Romilly.
L. Kenry. (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)
L. Sandhurst.
L. Rowton.
L. Hothfield.
L. de Vesci. (*V. de Vesci.*)
L. Rothschild.
L. Wantage.
L. Elphinstone.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Herschell.
L. Hillingdon.
L. Stalbridge.
L. Kensington.
L. Thring.
L. De Ramsey.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL—(No. 19.)

SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I need not repeat the statement of its scope and objects made in the discussion which took place upon it last time. The only observation I have to make about it is in reference to the new provisions of the Bill, which I imagine will increase the probability of its being passed. The first of those provisions is, in Clause 3, that where proceedings have been instituted in the High Court for the administration of

the estate of any deceased person, and, by reason of the small value of such estate or otherwise, it appears to the Court that the estate could be more economically or better administered by the Public Trustee, the Court may order that to be done. The other provision is one which may, perhaps, conciliate and secure the advocacy of a large class of persons who, I am afraid, did not quite concur in the Bill as it stood. Section 11 of the Bill as it now stands provides that where a testator, settlor, or other creator of any Trust directs or authorises the employment of any particular solicitor or bank, or where either the co-Trustees of the Public Trustee, or the persons appearing to the Public Trustee to be for the time being entitled to the income of the Trust, or, if they are infants, their guardians, shall require the employment of any particular solicitor or bank, they may so direct, subject to proper restrictions, and such solicitor or bank shall be so appointed, but subject to removal upon good cause on the application of the Public Trustee or persons appearing to the Court to be interested in the Trust. My Lords, I believe that new provision may possibly conciliate and obtain for the Bill the support of those who disapproved of, though they were not perhaps altogether responsible for the rejection of the measure last year; and, under these circumstances, I venture to hope that the public and your Lordships' House will now welcome this Bill.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: May I ask the noble and learned Lord one question. The Bill applies only to English wills. Is it meant by English wills, those deposited in Somerset House, or would it include wills which were proved partly in England and partly in Ireland? What I want to know, in other words, is whether it applies solely to wills of persons domiciled in England, or to those cases in which the trust property is in England?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am afraid I cannot give an absolute answer to the inquiry of my noble Friend. The Bill provides for the appointment of the Public Trustee in regard to any English will settlement or Trust by an order made in accordance with the section. That may be subject to exceptions. I am afraid I cannot absolutely reply to my noble Friend.

Lord Halsbury

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

TRUST COMPANIES BILL.—(No. 21.)

SECOND READING.

LORD HERSCHELL: I need detain your Lordships but a few moments in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, because it is, with one exception, in exactly the same terms as those in which it passed this House last Session after careful consideration by the Law Committee. The object of the Bill is to enable Trust Companies to be appointed Trustees of wills or settlements, and its main provisions apply to the voluntary act of those who desire to make Trust Companies their Trustees. I have never been able to see why those who desire to make such appointments should not be at perfect liberty to do so, or why the necessary machinery should not be afforded by the law as regards the appointment of those companies as Trustees of existing Trusts That is a matter which will be left, as has been proposed, carefully guarded by the action of the Courts, so that in no case will a company be appointed Trustees under an existing Trust, unless the Court should be satisfied that that is really a beneficial and desirable course. My Lords, this Bill is not intended to be in any respect antagonistic to that of which my noble and learned Friend has moved the Second Reading. It is quite consistent with the existence of a Public Trustee and the power to create that public official Trustee under a will or settlement that those who desire it should be allowed, if they please, to appoint a Trust Company to the office of Trustee. One cannot conceal from one's self that there are, perhaps, some people who have, I may say, a suspicion of any official, and who may imagine that there would be delay or rigidity in the proceedings of the office which might be likely to exceed that which would be experienced in the case of a Trust Company. At all events, I do not understand why there should be any objection to those who wish to appoint a responsible company of this description their Trustee if they please. Security is provided for in the Bill for the solidity of the companies who are allowed to fulfil those

functions, and care must be taken that they are so far under public control as to ensure that they are not companies or undertakings which are obviously unfit for such a purpose. It has been thought by some that there is less security in the case of a company of this description than in the case of an individual Trustee appointed by a testator or a person who makes a settlement. I own I am unable to take that view. When a Trustee is appointed, no doubt he is expected and supposed to be a solvent and upright man; but, unfortunately, that expectation is not always realised, and my belief is that Trusts would be safer in the hands of a carefully-selected company, and with the liability of the shareholders in that company to make good any breach of trust, than they would be in cases of appointment of private individuals. At all events, what I have to submit to your Lordships is that where persons desire, in making a settlement, or a will, to repose the Trust in a company, there should be no impediment in the way of their doing so. There is only one provision in the Bill of this year which I need specially mention, but I think I ought not to omit mentioning it. It is, of course, expedient that a Trust Company, which undertakes a variety of Trusts, under which it holds large sums in Consols, should not mix together the funds which it holds under its various Trusts. As the regulations of the Bank of England stand, I believe the Bank will not earmark more than four different sums of Consols held in the same name. If an individual holds four different funds of Consols they will earmark them and keep them distinct. Now, there is a clause in the Bill that a Trust Company shall not be limited to four such funds, and that the Bank shall be required to earmark by letter or number, or in some other way, all funds which these companies may hold for other people. It is not intended that the Bank is to be affected with notice of the Trust or with knowledge of it or to be bound by it in any way; it is simply desirable, as a matter of convenience, that those funds should be kept separate in the books of the Bank. That is the object of this provision in the Bill, which, in the same form with that exception, was passed last Session after careful consideration. I hope, therefore, your Lordships will have no hesitation in giving it a Second Reading.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, there are only two observations which I think require to be made. One is with regard to the solvency of these companies which my learned and noble Friend has referred to. When he says there would be, as a guarantee of solvency, the liability of the members of the company, it must not be forgotten that these are limited companies, and, therefore, their shareholders are not like ordinary Trustees liable to the last farthing they are possessed of. The shareholders would only, of course, be liable to the extent of the shares they held. I do not put that forward as an objection in any way. I only say it by way of caution. Then there is another matter, and that is the amount of reserve fund. Considering that a large Trust Company might be carrying on an extensive business in this way, £50,000 would be a very small reserve. In such cases the amount of the estates held in Trust might be enormous; and a breach of the trust might easily destroy the entire company if that breach of trust was to any considerable extent. I cannot help thinking that when the Bill gets into Committee, some principle of this sort should be adopted: care should be taken that some sort of proportion should exist between the amount of reserve fund and the extent of the funds of which the company may have the disposal. It is, I think, very desirable that some enactment should be made that the funds committed to the care of such companies should be proportionately covered by the reserve funds.

*LORD TEYNHAM: My Lords, the noble and learned Lord who has presented this Bill remarked that it was perfectly consistent with the Bill which has been brought in by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack; but the question which I should like to suggest for your Lordship's consideration if you should think it of any value is whether the mode of dealing with Trust Funds under this Bill is not preferable to that provided for by the Public Trustee Bill. And I make the suggestion, my Lords, for this reason. Only fancy what might

be the consequence if a very large proportion of the settled property of the country were in the hands of a single Public Trustee! I believe, my Lords, that a Roman Emperor—was it Nero?—expressed the wish that all the rich men in Rome had but a single neck that he might decapitate them at one blow. It seems to me that the noble and learned Lord has been so good as to supply that single neck in the person of the Public Trustee. I do think, my Lords, that any legislation is dangerous which proceeds upon the assumption that the institutions of this country are based upon adamantine rock; I say they are not, and I venture to say that the Bill which has been presented by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack might very properly be styled a Bill for the purpose of offering high premium to Socialistic agitation. Take, for instance, the 5th clause. The Bill has been most carefully drawn, and it has been carefully provided that the Public Trustee should have proper protection in the execution of the office committed to his charge; but take the 5th clause and see how his office is constituted: The Treasury, with the concurrence of the Lord Chancellor, shall appoint a fit person—it may be Mr. John Burns—to the office of Public Trustee during pleasure! It appears to me, my Lords, that such an administration of advanced Liberals as might possibly preside over the destinies of this country within the next 20 years might make very short work of everything under an Act of this description; and I must say, therefore, that I prefer the Bill of the noble and learned Lord in reference to Trust Companies. I would suggest to your Lordships whether that alternative is not preferable to the system of placing so much in the power of an individual Public Trustee.

Bill read 2ª (according to order).

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I should under ordinary circumstances, if this were a new Bill, propose that it should go to the Law Committee. Of course, if the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack desires, I will do so; but as the Bill passed through Committee last year, and there is only that one clause in it different, I do not suppose it is necessary.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I think so.

LORD HERSCHELL: Then I move that it be referred to the Law Committee.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

CROWN OFFICE BILL—(No. 20.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, the other day the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack stated that there would be a saving effected by the abolition of the office of Secretary of Presentations of about, I think, £425 a year, but I am told there will be an additional salary of £200 to be paid to another person in the Department of the Lord Chancellor for performing the duties which have hitherto been carried out by the Secretary of Presentations. I shall be glad if the noble and learned Lord will inform me whether that is the case. I think it is desirable we should know whether £225 is the net amount of the saving that will be effected.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I think the statement referred to was made by the noble and learned Lord Selborne; but I think that is the amount which has been stated as the saving effected.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Then I understand that the net saving will only be £225?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: No.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Then perhaps the noble and learned Lord who introduced the Bill will kindly inform me of the exact amount.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I will ascertain it exactly.

Bill reported without amendment; and to be read 3ª To-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 24th *February*, 1890.

NEW WRITS.

For Lincolnshire (South Kesteven or Stamford Division), . . *v* . . John Compton Lawrance, esquire, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice; for St. Pancras (North Division), . . *v* . . The honble. Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Cochrane-Baillie, now Lord Lamington, called up to the House of Peers.

QUESTIONS.

DESTITUTE FOREIGNERS.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if it is true destitute foreigners have been inmates of our poor house at Dover and supported at the cost of the ratepayers; what was their nationality; under what circumstances were they received as inmates; have any complaints reached him as to their general habits; were British inmates compelled to associate with them; were special arrangements made for their accommodation, and, if so, how is the expense to be defrayed; can they be compelled to return to their own country; and how will their travelling expense to their own country be met?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is the case that a Patagonian Indian, with his mother, his two wives, and three children, were for four days maintained in the Dover Workhouse at the cost of the Union. It appears that they were landed at Dover in a state of destitution, and were taken to the relieving officer, who gave an order for their admission to the workhouse. As to their habits, I am informed that the description of another savage tribe given by a midshipman in one of Captain Marryat's novels exactly applies—"Manners they had none, and their customs were beastly." They were placed in separate wards, and the other inmates were not required to associate with them. The total cost to the Guardians in this matter was only £1 16s. 8d., and it will be borne by the common fund of the Union. The persons in question were taken away from Dover by an agent from the Consul General for Chili for the purpose of being returned to their own country, and the Guardians were informed that the Chilian Government would bear the cost.

IRELAND—JUDICIAL LEASES.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many tenants in the County of Donegal who applied to the Land Commission before the 1st November 1887, to fix the fair rent of their holdings have subsequently accepted judicial leases at a rent agreed upon by landlord and tenant without adjudication by the Land Commission; and do the agreements so entered into between landlords and tenants out of Court owe, in many cases, their origin to the delay of the Land Commission in hearing applications to have fair rents fixed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that it would not be possible to furnish the information indicated in the first paragraph unless by referring to the file in each individual case where rents were fixed by an agreement, and then comparing the entire 12,027 in those cases in which originating notices were served, a work which would seriously interfere with the ordinary duties of their Department. The Commissioners can, however, state that between January 1, 1888, and January 1, 1890, rents were fixed on consent by the Head Commissioners in 27 cases where originating notices had been served prior to November 1, 1887. The Commissioners have no information as to the motives which led the parties to agree to the rents being fixed without a trial in Court.

THE WATERFORD ARTILLERY.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is a fact that during the non-training period the battery sergeant-majors and sergeants of the Waterford Artillery are obliged to show their kits once a month, and shake out their shirts, socks, &c., side by side with the trumpeters, and in view of the non-commissioned officers and men of the

Cavalry in the barracks; if it is usual for battery sergeant-majors of the Royal Artillery or colour-sergeants of the Line to show kits with the men of their corps; if it is true the non-commissioned officers of the corps in question made a representation on the subject complained of in 1885, to Colonel Shortland, R.A., Commanding Auxiliary Artillery, Cork District; whether he gave orders it should be discontinued; and whether this was done while he remained in command?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincoln, Horncastle): Although I have telegraphed for the information I have not yet received it. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to put the question down again.

LENZIE ACADEMY.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that Lenzie Academy, termed in the prospectus as "a new higher grade public school," is in reality a Board school supported by the local rates and in receipt of Government grant; whether complaints have reached him that the school fees charged in class 4 of the junior department for "scripture, reading, recitation, writing, dictation, arithmetic, grammar, history, geography, drawing, singing, needlework, and cookery," are 15s. per quarter, or £3 per annum per pupil, which are practically prohibitory to the children of the working classes in Lenzie, and that there are close on 100 children resident in Lenzie district who have to travel to other Board schools at a distance of from one to two miles further from their homes than Lenzie Academy; whether, when the wants of Lenzie district to School Board accommodation were originally set forth, all the children in Lenzie district were included in the number of children for whose accommodation a Board school was required at Lenzie; what is the school accommodation of Lenzie Academy, and what is the average attendance; and whether the Scotch Education Department will take steps to secure that the children in Lenzie district, for whose accommodation Lenzie Board school (termed "Lenzie Academy") was built, shall receive the benefit of the Probate Duty grant for free education in the compulsory standards in the school specially built for their accommodation?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I understand that Lenzie Academy is termed in the prospectus a higher grade public school. As that name would import, it is under School Board management, and it receives support from the School Rate and the Parliamentary grant. A complaint was received by the Department in October last referring in general terms to the fees as being beyond the reach of the working classes. A reply was sent stating that sanction had been given to this as a fee-paying school, only upon the assurance of the two School Boards interested in the school, with whom the primary responsibility rested, that there was a supply sufficient for all who desired them of schools suitably situated in which free places were provided. Neither in the original letter of complaint, nor subsequently, have any such particulars been received as regards fees and number of children as are given in the hon. Member's question. The Department is unable to say what lines were followed by the School Boards interested in estimating the number of children for whom the school should be built, but it is presumed that, in the circumstances of the locality, the School Boards allowed for an increase of population. The school is sufficient for 560 children, and the average attendance for the year ended May last was 201. Any statistics showing that hardship exists will receive the consideration of the Department, but until the reasons upon which the proposals of the School Boards under the minute of 26th August last were based can be shown to be unfounded the sanction already given to these proposals cannot be withdrawn.

IRELAND—THE CORK UNION.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Local Government Board have at length consented to give the grant due to the Cork Union for labourers' cottages; and how long and for what period the grant in question has been left unpaid to the Board?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The late Board of Guardians of the Cork Union had already received out of the sanctioned loan a sum in excess of the amount re-

quired for the houses proceeded with. Their application of November 28 for a further instalment could not, therefore, be considered without further information, which the Local Government Board applied to them for on December 11, but this information was not furnished by the Guardians. The Local Government Board are now in communication with the Vice Guardians on the subject.

DR. TANNER: For how long a period has the grant in question been left unpaid to the Board, and what is the sum due?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The grant was applied for on the 28th of November, but the amount was not part of the hon. Member's question.

DR. TANNER: As the answer of the right hon. Gentleman is most unsatisfactory I will put the question down again for to-morrow, and from day to day until I get an answer.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen a Report of the meeting of the Cork Dispensary Committee on the 18th instant, at which complaint was made of the action of the recently appointed Vice Guardians in stopping an outdoor relief grant of 4s. per week from a man named James Madden, who has recently lost his sight and has a wife and family dependent upon him; whether he is aware that a large number of complaints of a similar character in connection with the stoppage of outdoor relief have been made in the Cork Union District; and if he will direct the Local Government Board to institute inquiry into the matter of these repeated complaints?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I trust that the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) will take this as an answer also to his Question No. 24.

DR. TANNER: I am afraid that I cannot do so, especially in reference to the fourth paragraph of my question, in which I ask what economy would be effected by the action of the Vice Guardians. What I desire to know is whether a remonstrance has reached the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the treatment of the poor old blind man by the recently appointed Vice Guardians to the Cork Union; whether it is true that for some considerable time past Madden has been in receipt of 4s. weekly out-door relief, which helped him and his wife and six children to keep out of the workhouse; whether the Vice-Guardians have recently made the following order respecting him in the relief book: "Stopped, Order Ticket for Workhouse;" what economy would be effected by such action in such a case; and whether the facts of the particular case referred to have been received by him from the Cork Dispensary Committee?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already in substance answered the question. The action of the Guardians is undoubtedly in the direction of economy.

DR. TANNER: Did not this poor man beg and implore to continue in the receipt of this 4s. a week out-door relief? Did he not request again and again to be allowed to live with his wife and family, and not be separated from them by being sent to the workhouse? Is it not the fact that instead of an expenditure of some £10 a year the rates will be increased to £70 in consequence of the action of the Vice Guardians?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I should think that that is not the case. The object of the Guardians was to get this man into the hospital.

DR. TANNER: There is another part of the question which the right hon. Gentleman has not answered. Has he received any information in regard to the facts of this case from the Cork Dispensary Committee recently appointed by the Vice Guardians, forwarded by the High Sheriff of the City of Cork?

MR. A. J BALFOUR: I have received an account of a meeting which has been held.

*MR. FLYNN: Had the Vice-Guardians any knowledge that the stopping of out-door relief would drive this man into the workhouse, and consequently lead to a large increase of the rates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information that there has been a large increase of the rates; on the contrary, I believe that the action of the Vice-Guardians has conduced to economy.

DR. TANNER: Is it not the fact that the Dispensary Committee has quite recently been appointed by the Vice-Guardians, and that it is in consequence of their protest and in the interests of humanity that I have been induced to ask these questions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what reasons may have induced the hon. Member to ask these questions, but I cannot give him any further information.

THE SUPPORT OF PAUPER PARENTS.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a case tried by the Magistrates at Evesham, on Monday, 10th February, in which Charles Taylor, a labourer, of Honeybourne, was summoned by the Relieving Officer for non-payment of 37s. arrears of payment under orders to contribute 1s. per week towards the maintenance of his father and mother in the workhouse; whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence, which showed that Taylor had a wife and a crippled son to support, and had further had a daughter on his hands for 12 months; that Taylor's wages being 10s. a week nominally, but subject to deduction for wet weather, had averaged not more than 9s. a week; and that, for the last six weeks, Taylor's earnings had only been a total of 20s., or 3s. 6d. a week; whether he is aware that it was urged in favour of Taylor's ability to pay that he had an allotment of one and a-half acres, for which he had to pay four times the agricultural rent; whether the Bench, in condemning Taylor to pay 20*s.* in satisfaction of the claim and costs, stated "that they had been very lenient with him"; whether the law requires that agricultural labourers, earning 9s. to 10s. a week, should be called upon to contribute towards the support of relatives in the workhouse; and whether he will consider the advisability of transferring the appeal from Petty Sessions to the County Court, considering that the decision rests entirely on ability to pay, and that the practice of different Petty Sessional Courts varies very considerably?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry of the Justices and have seen a newspaper report of the proceedings. It appears that two orders were made upon this man in June, 1886, to pay two sums of 6d. per week towards the maintenance of his father and mother. He fell into arrears of 18s. 6d. under each order. The Guardians, having made inquiry into his ability to pay, applied to the Bench to enforce payment in full. The Bench decided to enforce payment to the amount of 10s. on each order, but not to issue process until such time as the man could pay. They came to the conclusion that his average income would be about 15s. a week. He was not at that time supporting a daughter. He occupied an allotment of about two acres, but the Bench do not know at what rent. I understand the law to be that orders to contribute towards the relief of pauper relatives should only be made on persons of sufficient ability, and that is a question of fact for the Justices to decide. I have no reason to believe that County Court Judges would decide this question with more uniformity than the Justices in Petty Sessions.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM: Upon what evidence does the right hon. Gentleman say that this man had 15s. a week?

MR. MATTHEWS: That is the information the Bench of Magistrates communicated to me in answer to my question.

MERTHYR TYDVIL WORKHOUSE.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the action of the Rev. T. L. Davies and Sister Naomi, of the Church of England, in entering the Union Workhouse at Merthyr Tydvil, on 8th February last, without the knowledge of the master, and at a time when they had expressly been told it would be inconvenient for them to visit any of the inmates; whether it is true that they were found by the master at 8 o'clock on the morning of that day at the bedside of James Bennett, who was not dangerously ill at the time, with two lighted wax candles; and whether any person has a legal right to enter a workhouse without the permission of the Guardians, and in opposition to the authority of the master?

*MR. RITCHIE: My attention had not been drawn to this matter before notice was given of the question; but I have since received communications from the Guardians and the rector of the parish on the subject. The facts appear to be substantially as given in the ques-

tion, except that Mr. Davies, the clergyman who visited the workhouse, states that he had previously obtained the permission of the matron to attend at the workhouse at the time mentioned for the purpose of administering the Holy Communion to the inmate in question. Speaking generally, persons have no right to enter a workhouse without the permission of the Guardians; but the licensed minister of the religious persuasion of any inmate may at all times in the day, on the request of the inmate, visit the workhouse to afford religious assistance to such inmate.

REPORTS ON IRISH AGRICULTURE.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Reports on Irish Agriculture, which are furnished to the Lord Lieutenant by the Registrar General, and subsequently presented to Parliament, are entirely prepared by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and Metropolitan Police Force; what special training do Irish policemen undergo to qualify them to report on agricultural matters; has his attention been called to the Report of the police officer at Kanturk, that—"Prices are fairly high and remunerative; I attribute this to a better feeling existing in the country;" and is there any source of information on Irish agricultural matters available to the Government of Ireland other than the Irish Police Force?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Reports on Irish Agriculture issued by the Registrar General's Department are not prepared by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and Metropolitan Police. The information on which these Reports are founded is collected by enumerators selected from these forces, who have considerable experience, a large number of them having been employed in this work from time to time for many years. The District Inspectors report from their local knowledge as to the probable cause to which the good or bad yield may be attributed. The District Inspector at Kanturk stated his opinion as given in the question. There are various sources of information on such matters available to the Registrar General, who, wherever necessary, communicates direct with the agriculturists themselves. I may say that the Return of the Registrar General cannot be described as the Report of the Government, although it is an official Return. I may also remind the hon. Gentleman that the persons employed in collecting the statistical information on which the schedule of prices of the Land Commission was based were not members of the Police Force.

*MR. LANE: Does not the right hon. Gentleman consider that the time has come when there should be some Department of the State appointed in Dublin for the purpose of looking after agricultural matters in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not at all sure that some improvement might not be effected in the direction mentioned by the hon. Gentleman.

THE IRISH TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

MR. LANE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether "learners," who have neither pay nor responsibility, are permitted to have access to the Mallow and other telegraph offices in Ireland: is it in accordance with the Rules of the Telegraph Service that such persons should deal with and learn the contents of telegrams passing through these offices in small country towns; can he explain why those learners are sent to relieve the regular staff at other stations; and whether he will consider the desirability of sending duly appointed clerks on this duty?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): At Mallow, as at other places throughout the United Kingdom, learners without pay have access to the telegraph office; but it cannot be said that they have no responsibility, as they are all required to make the official declaration before a magistrate. It is obvious that unless persons were allowed to learn the telegraph work it would be impossible for the Department to provide itself with qualified telegraphists. It is both in accordance with the Rules of the Service and with the necessities of the case that such persons should deal with actual telegrams. After the learners become thoroughly competent, and while they are waiting for vacancies on the establishment, they are employed to relieve absent officers at other places. This is economical to the Department, and it is beneficial to the learners, in that it

affords them some emolument whilst they are waiting for permanent appointments.

*MR. LANE: Arising out of that answer, does the right hon. Gentleman think it desirable that persons should be employed in learning the business in such very small places as Mallow? Is it not more desirable that they should be stationed in the larger towns?

*MR. RAIKES: I will make inquiry, and ascertain how far that suggestion can be acted upon.

*MR. LANE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, with reference to the fact that within the past few years six vacancies (five for males and one for females) have occurred in the Cork Telegraph Office, and that five males and one female clerk have been drafted from country towns and railway stations to fill these vacancies, if he will explain why these vacant positions in Cork, or the ones vacated in the country towns and railway stations, were not given or offered to the "learners," who have been waiting at and performing the duties of substitutes in the Cork Office for four or five years?

*MR. RAIKES: Since January, 1886, there have been nine vacancies for male telegraphists at Cork, of which four have been filled by learners in that office and five by telegraphists from other offices. Of the five vacancies thus created at other offices, one, at Limerick Junction, was offered to a learner at Cork, who declined it; a second was not filled at all, the situation being abolished; and of the other three two were filled by learners in the respective offices in which the vacancies occurred. For female telegraphists eight vacancies have occurred at Cork since April, 1884, and of these seven have been filled by learners in the Cork office, and the eighth by a telegraphist from Knocklong Railway Station, the vacancy there being given to a learner from Cork.

*MR. LANE: Was there no learner in the Cork Office capable of filling either of these vacancies, so that it was necessary to introduce strangers from other offices?

*MR. RAIKES: I have no reason to believe that the persons referred to were unfitted; but the individuals selected were thought to be more competent.

Mr. Raikes

GUARD ROOM AT GIBRALTAR.

MR. MOUNT (Berks, Newbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the New Mole Guard Room at Gibraltar, which was closed during the summers of 1888 and 1889 on account of its unhealthy position from being over the sewer of the town, has been re-opened with the sanction of the medical authority; and whether it continuance is essential to the Service?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The New Mole Guard Room was re-opened in 1889 with the sanction of the principal medica officer, but it has been again closed a his suggestion. The position of thi room is at the entrance to the fortres s and the General Officer commanding considers a guard room necessary there.

PRISON LABOUR.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any prison labour is let out by tender for any sort of manufacture except mat making; and can he state in what prisons labour is let out by tender for mat making; the number of hands employed under tender in those prisons; the names of the contractors for labour in such prisons; and for how long each contractor has hired labour in the prison or prisons?

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to the hon. Member's first question is that it is true that in some prisons contractors undertake to furnish materials to the prison authorities for the making of certain articles other than mats, and to take the products at a certain agreed price. This work, however, is all done in the prison, and under the supervision of prison officers. As to the hon. Member's second question, I cannot, in the interest of the Public Service, give any information beyond that which is already given to Parliament in the annual Reports of the Prison Commissioners in accordance with the Prison Act of 1877.

*MR. QUILTER: I beg to give notice that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I shall repeat the question again in some form or another until I get a satisfactory answer.

*MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): Is it not true that these mats are sold in competition with mats manufactured outside at considerably lower prices than they can be produced by outside makers?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Commissioners have nothing to do with the sale of the mats.

SCOTTISH ISLANDS—POSTAL COMMUNICATION.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if there be any rules as regards population or otherwise which guide the Post Office in dealing with outlying localities; whether he is aware that the Island of Tarrinsay in Harris, with a population of 60, dependent on the Post Office at Tarbert, and the Island of Heisker in North Uist, dependent on Lochmaddy, and with a population of 143, have neither of them any postal communication whatever; and whether he will take their isolated case into his consideration, with the view of granting them at least a weekly post?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the question of establishing new posts must, in some degree, be determined by the consideration whether the expenditure bears a reasonable proportion to the revenue available. In the case of the two Islands named, I regret that no arrangement is practicable for affording postal communication, except at an outlay largely in excess of the revenue from the correspondence, which is small in amount; and I may add that even now the main service to Harris and North Uist entails a heavy loss to the revenue. At the same time, I shall be happy to again examine the question raised if any persons interested should be prepared to enter into a guarantee to meet the necessary increased expense.

SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

COLONEL LAURIE (Bath): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the dispute as to the territory comprised between the Rivers Shashi and Macloutsie, claimed by Khama, Chief of the Bamaugwate, and Lo Bengulo, King of the Matabele, has been settled, and in whose favour the award has been given?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The chiefs named have not agreed to submit their competing claims to this territory to the award of Her Majesty's Government, and its neutrality is therefore being maintained for the present under the police of the Protectorate.

THE AMERICAN MAILS.

MR. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the fact that on every voyage during the year 1889, as well as on her first voyage in 1890, the steamer *City of Paris* arrived at New York from 36 to 48 hours in advance of the mail-carrying steamer, which left Queenstown at the same time with her; and will he state why Her Majesty's mails are sent by the slower steamer instead of the faster?

*MR. RAIKES: As the steamer *City of Paris* does not belong to either of the two companies contracting for the conveyance of Her Majesty's mails twice a week from Queenstown to New York, the Post Office does not take official cognisance of her performances, though I was aware that she was making excellent passages. It is, of course, not practicable to bring within the scope of the contract every fast Atlantic steamer that may be put upon the line by a rival company. But the public can always obtain the use of fast outside steamers by specially superscribing their letters to go by such steamers, and this arrangement works very satisfactorily. Her Majesty's mails are conveyed by the Cunard and White Star Lines of steamers under contracts approved by Parliament in June, 1887.

COLLIERY EXPLOSION AT LONGTON.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the verdict of the coroner's jury, as reported in the *Manchester Guardian* on 31st January, in the case of the 64 lives which were lost through the explosion at Mossfield Colliery, Longton, on the 17th of October last, from which it appears that the jury declared the manager, Mr Potts, was—

"Deserving of severe censure in not personally inspecting the mine for so long a time previous to the explosion,"

and that the coroner, in addressing Mr. Potts, said—

"He had systematically broken Rule 21, which required his daily supervision of the mine, and had also disregarded Rule 7 of the General Rules, which required that he should withdraw the men from the pit in the case of danger;"

and, if so, whether the Government propose to take any further action in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I am aware of the finding of the coroner's jury; but until I receive the Report of the counsel who attended the inquest on behalf of the Home Office I am not in a position to say what action, if any, the Government will be able to take after the lapse of time that has occurred. I am expecting the Report every day.

MR. FENWICK: Will the Report be presented to Parliament, and will copies be obtainable by hon. Members?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will make inquiry, and inform the hon. Gentleman.

COUPLING APPLIANCES.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Returns ordered of Coupling Appliances in use on the goods waggons of the Railway Companies, and also on waggons belonging to private owners, will be completed and presented to the House?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Returns were presented on the first day of the Session.

THE PHŒNIX PARK, DUBLIN—BAND STAND.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Board of Works are taking steps to erect the band-stand in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, promised last year; and when it will be completed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The cost of erecting the band-stand in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, will be provided in the Estimates for 1890-1891, and as soon as the money is made available the work will be proceeded with.

BANTRY HARBOUR.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether anything has been done since last Session to mark with buoys the entrance to Bantry Harbour; and whether several accidents have occurred to Her Majesty's Ships, which frequently resort to this Harbour, from want of proper marks?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): A temporary buoy has been placed at the entrance to Bantry Bay pending the supply of buoys of a more permanent character. With the exception of the first reserve ship, which is stationed there, Her Majesty's ships very rarely visit Bantry Harbour. Only one accident, and that a slight one, has happened to Her Majesty's ships in Bantry Bay for a considerable number of years past.

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Does the noble Lord mean Bantry Harbour or Bantry Bay?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I presume that Bantry Harbour is Bantry Bay.

MR. E. HARRINGTON: Certainly not.

LORD G. HAMILTON: If the hon. Member will put the question down I will make further inquiry.

INFLUENZA AT SHEERNESS.

MR. EDWARD KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Rochester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a statement which recently appeared in a naval and military journal to the effect—

"That a sailor was lately taken from one of the ships at Sheerness suffering from influenza; that the next day he was sent in a tug to Chatham Hospital, a two hours' journey; that on the following day he died;"

and, if this be true, whether he will take steps to insure that in the future such cases shall be treated in the locality where they occur?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I presume that the question of the hon. Member refers to a seaman named James Goulin, quartermaster of Her Majesty's ship *Wye*, who was sent to the infirmary wards at Sheerness Barracks on the 9th of January last and transferred to Chatham Hospital on the following day suffering from influenza. This man died on the third day afterwards from pneumonia, a frequent sequence in

the case of the present epidemic of this disease. Goulin was conveyed to Chatham in a cot on board the vessel specially fitted for the removal of the sick from Sheerness, accompanied by the surgeon of the *Wye*, who took every care of him during the passage, and handed him over himself to the principal medical officer of the hospital. The reason why this man was removed from the barrack infirmary at Sheerness was that the wards were overcrowded at the time with serious cases of influenza. Under the circumstances, every care seems to have been taken by the medical officers in charge of the case.

CARETAKERS IN IRELAND.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in view of the labour which would be involved in preparing a Return for the whole of Ireland of the number of tenants made caretakers under Section 7 of the Land Act of 1887, and subsequently re-instated as tenants in full possession of their rights, whether a Return could be prepared over certain districts sufficiently large to enable an approximate judgment to be formed; and whether the Government will consent to give such a Return for the county in each of the four Provinces of Ireland in which most notices of ejectment have been served?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The suggested Return would, no doubt, be very interesting and important if it could be obtained. But I am not sure that the necessary information could be procured from any official sources. And I would point out that while the right hon. Gentleman admits the labour that would be involved in attempting in an unofficial way to collect the details, his present proposal is that the attempt should be made where the labour would be greatest. I must also point out that even were the attempt made the result would not afford a safe ground for calculation as to what had happened in other parts of Ireland, since the eviction notices are naturally highest in counties where illegal conspiracies have prevented settlements between landlord and tenant.

PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Minister for Agriculture whether it is the intention of the Government to establish an experimental station where the exact nature of pleuro-pneumonia can be ascertained, and conditions established under which inoculation can be scientifically carried out; and, failing this, whether they will contribute to the expenses of any Local Authority which will undertake to carry out these experiments?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (MR. CHAPLIN Lincoln, Sleaford): In reply to the hon. Member's question, I am advised that experiments have been carried on for years in this country and abroad with the object of discovering the microbe of the disease, but hitherto without any satisfactory result. This inquiry is still being continued at the Royal Veterinary College, London. The annual Report of the Veterinary Department will contain a statement of all that has been done on this subject by scientists up to the present time. It is being prepared; and, having regard to this fact, and to the conflicting evidence given before the Departmental Committee which was appointed to inquire into pleuro-pneumonia and tuberculosis in 1888, it appears desirable to wait for the statement which I have referred to before any further steps are taken.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he will make known the result of the inquiries held by the Special Commission into the various proposed lines of Light Railways along the West Coast of Ireland, and the decision come to by the Irish Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope that the information to which the hon. Gentleman refers will be ready next week, so that it may be brought before the grand juries.

THE TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes any legislation to counteract the stringency of the 10th clause of the Tramways (Ireland) Act of 1883, so as to

enable counties or baronies to give guarantees limited to their means?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The subject is one of interest, and is at present under consideration.

MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the salary of the office in Armenia to which Mr. Clifford Lloyd has been appointed, and whether he has succeeded to an office and salary already existing, or whether in either respect the appointment is new or special; and whether Mr. Lloyd has been sent with a view to composing the unhappy quarrels and distractions among the various populations of Armenia?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The salary is £700, with an office allowance of £300. He succeeded to an office and salary already existing. The answer to the second question is in the negative.

TYPHOID FEVER AT THE CURRAGH CAMP.

COLONEL DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that owing to a severe outbreak of typhoid fever during the autumn of 1888 a portion of the huts in the Curragh Camp were condemned by the medical authorities, and that the War Office refused the £100 then asked for the restoration of these huts to a sanitary condition, whether he can explain how it happened that the War Office Authorities quartered the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards in these condemned huts last autumn, with the result that there was another outbreak of typhoid fever, from the effects of which four officers of the regiment nearly died?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: There was no outbreak of enteric fever in 1888 in that part of the Curragh Camp in which the Grenadier Guards were quartered in the autumn of 1889. In fact, only one case was reported as having originated there in 1888. During the previous months of 1889 other troops had occupied these huts without any ill-effects, and there was no ground for anticipating the unfortunate result of quartering the Grenadier Guards there. All arrangements for accommodation of troops in Ireland are made by the General Officer commanding, and are subject to local considerations, with which the War Office Authorities have nothing to do.

JUDICIAL FACTORS.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the fact that, under the Judicial Factors (Scotland) Act of last Session, an accountant of the Court of Session is authorised to be appointed, at a salary to be provided by the Treasury, for the purpose of superintending and auditing the accounts of judicial factors and other persons therein referred to, including the accounts of trustees and judicial factors in bankruptcy cases; whether, under the Act, fees for such official work are, for the first time in Scotland, directed to be charged in bankruptcy cases, whilst no fees are authorised to be charged in the case of other and solvent estates; whether there is any good reason why insolvent estates should be charged for the services of the official accountant, whilst solvent estates should obtain such services without any charge; and whether he will consider the matter of putting both classes of estates, solvent and insolvent, on an equal footing?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: In reply to the question of the hon. Member, I beg to inform him that every estate, whether solvent or insolvent, coming under the supervision of the Accountant of Court, is charged fees which are fixed by Act of Sederunt. Cases under the Bankruptcy Acts were not so charged before the Act of last Session.

THE NORDENFELT GUN COMPANY.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Maxim-Nordenfelt Gun and Ammunition Company are executing an order for English guns for the Government; and whether he has any information to the effect that the workmen at present engaged on this work are foreigners who have been brought into the country to take the place of the English workmen now out on strike?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The Maxim-Nordenfelt Gun and Ammunition Company are executing an order for the Government. I have no information to the effect stated in the latter part of the question.

EMIGRATION TO CHILI.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the representations on which a considerable number of British Subjects were recently induced to emigrate to Chili were put forward by emigration agents authorised by the Government of Chili; whether these representations have been fulfilled; and whether Her Majesty's Government will urge the Government of Chili to help these British emigrants, who are in a state of great misery, to return home?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are not aware in what expectations all the recent emigrants to Chili left this country; but, as I have already stated, some of them complained on their arrival that they had been disappointed. I also stated that the Chilian Government had exerted themselves to procure employment for those persons. But we cannot accept responsibility on account of proceedings of which we have no knowledge.

THE CHIN LUSHAI EXPEDITION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether there is any truth in the statement that the Punjab coolies for the expedition from Chittagong towards Burma were so neglected and exposed on the way there that the majority of them were incapacitated by sickness before they joined; and, if so, whether inquiry has been made to fix the responsibility?

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I have also to ask the Under Secretary of State whether he has yet received any reply from the Government of India as to the alleged serious mortality amongst the troops engaged in the Chin Lushai expedition; and, if so, can he make any statement as to the truth of the telegram in the *Times* of February 10th on that subject?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): I will answer both of the questions at the same time. The Secretary of State has received information from the Government of India that the statements in question alluded to in the question of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy are wholly incorrect, and that the sickness on the Chin Lushai expedition has been greatly exaggerated.

STATE OF THE CROPS IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, owing to the deficiency of rain in October to December 1889 in Southern India, the collectors and other revenue officials in the southern districts of the Presidency of Madras who were absent on leave from their stations and during the Christmas holidays were, at the end of December last, recalled by the Government of Madras to their respective headquarters, to inspect personally and to report at once upon the present state of the crops in their respective districts, and what the outcome of the failure of the rains is likely to be; whether such Reports have been received by the Madras Government; and whether the Secretary of State will lay them upon the Table?

*SIR J. GORST: The statement in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is correct as regards eight districts to the south of Madras, in which up to the last week in December the rainfall of the North East Monsoon had been deficient. During the last week of December, however, there was good rain over the threatened districts; matters have changed for the better, and prospects are reported generally fair. The detailed Reports by the district officers have not yet been received by the Secretary of State.

RAILWAY FROM CHITTAGONG TO ASSAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State for India will lay upon the Table the Despatch received by him from the Government of India in July last, recommending the granting of a concession of land 7,500 miles in extent to a syndicate of railway

promoters, as one of the conditions for the construction of a railway from Chittagong to Assam, together with any Correspondence thereon; and whether he will state if the Secretary of State has adopted or rejected the recommendations of the Government of India?

SIR J. GORST: In July last the Secretary of State received a Despatch from the Government of India on the subject of the Chittagong-Assam Railway. The contents of this Despatch are incorrectly described in the question. The matter is still under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman that the contents of the Despatch are correctly or incorrectly described in the question?

SIR J. GORST: I said that they are incorrectly described.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: As the statement has been repeatedly made, can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House what are the correct contents of the Despatch?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir. I cannot state the contents of the Despatch until the matter has been decided. It is not usual to give such information until a decision has been arrived at.

HALFPENNY POSTAGE CARDS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what would be the estimated loss for this year to the Treasury by selling halfpenny postage cards at a halfpenny each in place of the present price?

MR. JACKSON: I am informed that the estimated loss of revenue would amount to about £61,000 a year.

PERSIAN KURDS.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received any confirmation of the statement telegraphed to the *Daily News* of the 19th instant that the Persian Kurds are being constantly supplied with Martini-Henry rifles by the Turkish authorities; that more than 50,000 rifles have been issued from the different Government stores; and that the armament of the Kurds is causing anxiety in Teheran, and alarm among the Armenian and Nestorian Christians, who dread a great massacre?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have received no confirmation of the statement referred to; but the British Representative on the spot has described a similar statement, which appeared shortly before it, as absurd.

ASSESSMENT OF RATEABLE PROPERTY IN LONDON.

MR. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is necessary for occupiers to answer the questions, Nos. 4, 6, and 7, on the quinquennial "Return for the Assessment of Rateable Property in the Metropolis for the year 1890;" and, whether he is aware that improper use may be made of answers to these questions, and will the penalty be enforced if the questions are not answered?

MR. JACKSON: About 10 years ago the number and character of the questions were modified. The Treasury cannot interfere with an Assessment Committee in the exercise of their powers to call for information; and I do not see in the questions referred to any demand for information which may not fairly be asked in the interests of the taxpayers at large.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): If it is not possible for persons to answer the questions will the penalty be enforced?

MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Member wishes to put another question he had better give notice.

MR. HOWELL: It is the last part of the question of the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Morton).

MR. JACKSON: As the Treasury have no power to interfere with the Assessment Committee, it is obvious that there would be no power to interfere in the case of penalties.

KILKENNY LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the constitution of the Board of Governors of the County and City Lunatic Asylum of Kilkenny, and also to that of the Visiting Committee of Her Majesty's Prison of Kilkenny, and that not even

one of the names of the three representatives of the ratepayers of county and city appears upon the lists; and whether, in view of existing vacancies in both bodies, he will have such omission rectified?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to defer the question for two or three days. Inquiry is being made.

MALTA—MISSION TO THE POPE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the appointment of an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of high rank to the Pope, in connection with an ecclesiastical matter in the Island of Malta, is in any way connected with the desire of the Pope to be treated with diplomatically, as if he were a Temporal Sovereign; and if he will explain why the Secretary of State, in making this appointment, has taken a course which this country has so long refused to adopt?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The answer to the first question is in the negative. Her Majesty's Government in employing Sir Lintorn Simmons on a special Mission in regard to matters affecting the welfare of the people of Malta have not acted inconsistently with the abstinence hitherto to appoint a permanent representative of Her Majesty at the Vatican.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: What I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman is why, in a very small affair of this kind, Her Majesty's Government has thought it necessary to appoint so high a personage as an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The matters treated of will be laid before Parliament at the close of the negotiations, and I think they will not be found to be of very small importance having regard to the size of the Island of Malta.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS AT GWEEDORE AND FALCARRAGH—THE BATTERING RAM.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true, as stated in the *Irish Times* of 20th February, that evictions on a large scale are to be carried out next Tuesday in the districts of Gweedore and Falcarragh; and is the battering ram to be employed in the carrying out of these evictions, and is it to be worked, as in January and April last, by the Royal Irish Constabulary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that there are evictions impending in the districts named; but there is no official information as to its being arranged to carry them out on Tuesday next. As a matter of fact, the ram was not used by the constabulary at the evictions in January and April last, and I am not aware that it is to be used at the pending evictions.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that I myself, in company with others, saw the battering ram at the police barracks at Falcarragh, and that it was exercised at Gweedore by a detachment of constabulary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not followed the hon. Gentleman's proceedings in the public Press or elsewhere. But what he has now stated to the House is not inconsistent with the fact that the battering ram was not used.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this instrument has been paid for by the landlords, and may be used by the constabulary if brought to the scene of the evictions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information.

ARRESTS AT CLONGOREY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the promised local inquiry enables him now to state to the House the circumstances connected with the arrests of a number of persons, including the parish priest, at Clongorey, on several days of last week; and particularly, whether the arrests were made upon warrants; what were the charges on which the arrests were made; why the prisoners were first handcuffed, and afterwards admitted to bail; and upon what legal authority a private dwelling-house was broken into by force?

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) had also upon the Paper the following question: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the following statement in the *Daily News* of 20th February:—

"Twenty-nine more workmen were arrested to-day in Clongorey for building houses for the shelter of evicted tenants. The arrests were effected by a force of 100 policemen, and the prisoners were brought handcuffed to Newbridge, and were detained in the Bridewell until 6 o'clock, when they were discharged under bail to appear at Newbridge Petty Sessions to-morrow week. The district has been greatly excited by these arrests;"

whether it is a fact that on the previous day 14 other tradesmen and labourers engaged in similar work were, with Mr. Everett, their foreman, arrested and brought to Newbridge police barrack; whether these men at the time of their arrest were working on land from which tenants had been previously evicted, or on land still in occupation of tenants; why were they handcuffed, or did they show any disposition to evade arrest; and, on what grounds, or by whose authority, were the forces of the Crown so employed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With the permission of the House I shall now also reply to the question of the hon. Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew) on the same matter. It is a fact that on the 19th inst. 29 labourers or workmen were arrested in the act of converting certain out-offices attached to the farm of Mrs. Kelly at Clongorey into dwelling-houses, in defiance of a precept issued by the Resident Magistrate and served at Mrs. Kelly's residence on the 15th inst. Thirteen of these 29 persons had been arrested for a similar offence on the previous day and discharged, being then cautioned not to repeat the illegal act. The persons were marched to Newbridge, having refused to allow themselves to be conveyed by cars. They were handcuffed in accordance with Constabularly Regulations, an attempt at rescue or escape having been feared. As already stated, 13 of these 29 persons had been arrested on the previous day, brought to Newbridge, and discharged. These tenants were working on a farm from which the tenant had not been evicted, as she had paid her rent, it is alleged, with the approval of the managers of the Plan of Campaign conspiracy on the property, the object being to retain the farm as an accommodation for tenants evicted in consequence of the adoption of the Plan of Campaign. The constabulary acted in pursuance of a legal order issued by a Resident Magistrate, under powers vested in him by the 23 and 24 Vict., c. 154, section 35, and this precept was issued on a sworn information made by the agent to the estate, who deposed to having witnessed persons in the act of committing a gross act of waste within the meaning of the Statute quoted. The dwelling-house of Mrs. Kelly was broken into in pursuance of a warrant issued by a Resident Magistrate to arrest persons who had been engaged in an unlawful assembly, and who were seen by the police inside the house. As the inmates refused to admit the police they were compelled to force the door.

MR. MAC NEILL: Was the precept served upon Mrs. Kelly as well as upon the 13 persons who were arrested?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that Mrs. Kelly was absent, and that the precept was served on her daughter.

MR. SEXTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman any information as to the arrest of the parish priest?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; the parish priest was arrested, as he was engaged in an illegal conspiracy.

SEA FISHERY STATISTICS.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if statistics showing the quantities of the various kinds of sea fish landed in England and Wales are now systematically collected at the ports and fishing villages along the coast, and furnished to the Sea Fishery Department of the Board of Trade; if these important Returns are at present available for the information of those interested in the different localities, and particularly for the use and guidance of the local Sea Fishery Committees to be appointed; and if these figures, indicating to some extent the localisation of the various kinds of fish, cannot be included in the forthcoming statistics of the Sea Fishery Department for the past year?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The information collected would be at the service of the local Sea Fisheries Committees and of parties locally interested, on these applying to the Board of Trade, who would afford every facility which may not involve disclosure of individual returns. The quantities and value of fish landed at particular ports are already shown in the annual Return with as much detail as has

been found consistent with not unduly swelling it. If the hon. Member will intimate to the Department what further details may be desired, the matter will be considered.

MR. ROWNTREE: May I also ask how many applications for the formation of Sea Fishery Committees have as yet been received, and from how many County Councils and Municipal Corporations respectively; if there are any considerable portions of the East Coast of England concerning which no such applications have been made; and if copies of any Schemes for the representation of the different fishing interests affected, sanctioned by the Board of Trade, may be laid upon the Table for the information of Members of this House?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Fifteen actual applications for the formation of sea fisheries districts have been received, namely, 11 from Councils of counties or county boroughs, one from a municipal borough, two from Boards of Salmon Conservators, and one from a Harbour Authority. But in the case of proposals for combined districts, one application usually covers several counties or boroughs. The applications, or notices of intended application, which have been received cover the whole East Coast of England, with the exception of the portion between Ingoldmells Point, in Lincolnshire, and Aldborough, in Suffolk, Norfolk being the only entire county on that coast in respect of which no application, or notice of application, has been received. An Order conferring the powers of a Local Fisheries Committee on the Southampton Harbour Board was laid upon the Table of the House last Session, and Orders for the creation of the Cornwall and Northumberland sea fisheries districts will, I hope, shortly be laid before the House, and these will show the arrangements sanctioned by the Board of Trade for the representation of the different fishing interests affected.

THE SALFORD GAS FRAUDS.

MR. HOWELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, considering the charges of gross corruption in connection with the gas contracts of the Salford Corporation, the fact that its late engineer is now undergoing a long period of imprisonment for participation in the frauds which were perpetrated, the charges that are now being made of other acts of corruption, and the accusations against members of that Corporation of complicity in attempting to condone the offences of those who were parties to the frauds, the Government will consent to the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the allegations that have been made, and the mode of contracting carried on by the Gas Committee of that Corporation?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am infm ed that a Petition of the inhabitants of Salford, praying for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into this matter, is now in course of preparation. Pending its receipt, and a more full and exact statement than I have yet had of the grounds on which the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry is demanded, the Government are not in a position to say what action on their part, if any, may be necessary.

IRISH BUTTER.

MR. SHEEHAN (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the correspondence and articles which appeared recently in the Irish Press, alleging that the values of Irish butter are materially reduced owing to the depreciation of the standard of the brands affixed to the butters inspected in Cork Butter Market, which is regulated by the provisions of a recent Act of Parliament; and whether any Government Department in Ireland has the power to hold an inquiry into the matter and to enforce any necessary reforms?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no official information on the subject of this question. But the Trustees of the Market state that the prices of Cork-branded butter compare as favourably now as ever with the prices obtained for any other butters. So far as I am aware, the reply to the inquiry in the second paragraph is in the negative.

REGISTRARS OF COUNTY COURTS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether any vacancy in the office of Registrar of County Courts has taken place since the passing of "The County Courts Act, 1888,"

when the salary and fees of such office, and of the office of District Registrar held with it, exceed £1,000 per annum; and whether the Lord Chancellor has in any such case directed that any newly-appointed Registrar shall devote the whole of his time to the duties of his office?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am informed that no case has yet arisen.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Samuel Thomas Evans, esquire, for the County of Glamorgan (Mid-Division).

NOTICES OF MOTION.

IRELAND—THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian I desire to give notice that, on Monday next, when the First Lord of the Treasury makes the Motion of which he has given notice with reference to the Report of the Special Commission, the Member for Mid Lothian will move to omit all the words after the word "House," in line 5 of the Motion, in order to insert the following words:—

"This House deems it to be a duty to record its reprobation of the false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based upon calumny and forgery, which have been brought against Members of this House, and particularly against Mr. Parnell, and, while declaring its satisfaction at the exposure of these calumnies, the House expresses its regret for the wrong inflicted and the suffering and loss endured through a protracted period by reason of these acts of flagrant iniquity."

SIR C. LEWIS (Antrim, N.): With reference to the notice just given, I beg to give notice that, in the event of the Amendment just read becoming an original Resolution, I shall move to add thereto—

"This House nevertheless deplores that, by such Report, it is further found—first, that John Dillon, William O'Brien, and seven other Members of this House were parties to a treasonable conspiracy; and, secondly, that Charles Stewart Parnell, John Dillon, William O'Brien, Thomas P. O'Connor, Timothy M. Healy, and 38 other Members of this House were parties to the criminal conspiracy described in such Report; and this House is of opinion that the conduct of such Members in those particulars is deserving of severe condemnation."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I referred on Friday last to the necessity that I should be under of asking the House for facilities for Supply. I assume that the Address will be voted this evening, and that it will not be necessary for me to ask the House to conclude the debate to-morrow by any formal Motion. Therefore, I now give formal notice that at the sitting of the House to-morrow I propose to ask the House to give facilities for Supply during the week.

MR. J. MORLEY: Will that except Wednesdays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; I propose to except Wednesdays.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Will the right hon. Gentleman state what facilities he is going to ask for?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I propose to ask for Tuesday and Friday.

MOTION.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS AT CLONGOREY.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

(4.25.) MR. SEXTON, Member for West Belfast, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the illegal and violent course of conduct by which the Irish Executive are endeavouring to prevent the provision of shelter for the evicted tenants of Clongorey, and are thereby endangering the public peace and the lives of homeless families; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen,

(4.27.) MR. SEXTON: I beg to move the Adjournment of the House, and I do so for the purpose of bringing to the notice of the House with the expedition which the matter requires a statement of facts constituting in my humble judgment a case which the House will,

find to be abundantly definite, and which I venture to hope, the House will consider to be urgent. I ask hon. Members of all parties candidly to consider whether the course of conduct which I shall have to describe would be ventured upon by the Government in any part of Great Britain; and, if not, whether there is any adequate reason, or any reason whatever, why such a course of conduct should be indulged in even in Ireland? The name of Clongorey is, unfortunately, not new to this House. It has been made, unhappily, too familiar. Last year, after a number of families had been evicted from their homes on this estate, a body of emergency men went to these houses in the dead of night carrying with them a stock of petroleum. They were accompanied by a force of armed police, and in the dead of night they gave these houses to the flames, and left standing in the whole of that village but one house which was required for the use of the police. That outrage sent a thrill of horror through the whole community. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he did not in express terms approve of it, at any rate did not condemn it, and to the substantial encouragement which he gave on that occasion I attribute the developments which it is now my duty to describe. I may inform the House that these Clongorey farms are simply minute strips of reclaimed bog-land obtained by cutting away the bog which forms the bed or bottom of the land after the turf has been removed. These strips of land were reclaimed exclusively by the labour of the tenants. Every penny of value which has been given to the land is the result of the labour of the tenants, who have built the houses which stand on the holdings with their own hands. Not only are the houses erected on mere strips of reclaimed bog, the equitable value of which belongs to the tenants, but it was originally the system to allow the tenants to remain in possession of them for nothing. Not only are they strips of bog-land, but they lie lower than the adjacent river. In the year 1886, there occurred a disastrous flood, by which the tenants' scanty crops were destroyed and their farms seriously injured. The tenants applied to the landlord for an allowance—or, perhaps, I should not say to the landlord, because, in the case of the Clongorey estate, as in that of so many other estates which have become notorious—the landlord has lost or forfeited the right to control the property, and the right has vested in three trustees, one of whom resides in Wexford, another here in London, while a third is living in Denmark. The tenants asked for an allowance to be spent on the grass lands, and a full allowance of one year's rent, which would have gone a little way towards enabling them to cope with the misfortune that had overtaken them. The tenants were very moderate. They merely asked for an allowance of 35 per cent. on the non-judicial rents, and of 25 per cent. on the judicial rents, which claim they subsequently reduced to 30 per cent. in the first case, and 20 per cent. in the latter. The trustees offered an abatement of 10 per cent. on the non-judicial rents, and in the case of the judicial rents they refused to allow one penny, although the judicial tenants had suffered equally with the others by the flood. The Trustees, however, seemed to think that the judicial tenants had committed an unpardonable offence in having gone to Court to get fair rents fixed. As a matter of course, evictions then began; but some of the tenants who had been left in possession managed to find their way to the County Court for the purpose of getting fair rents fixed. The Judge of the County Court in that district, Dr. Darley, is a well-known Conservative, and I do not think he will resent my describing him as a strong Tory. Well, that County Court Judge, on the report of the land valuer, reduced the rents of those tenants to an average of more than 30 per cent., though in some cases the reduction was as much as 40 per cent., and in others as much as 50 per cent.; at any rate, the permanent reductions allowed by this Conservative gentleman were greater than were asked by the tenants in respect of a special claim. But the County Court Judge did more than reduce the rents; he made two suggestions to the landlord. In the first place, he urged on the landlord that these farms were poor, isolated strips of bog-land, and recommended that the tenants, who had built the houses themselves and had been ruined by the flood, should have the arrears due from them altogether extinguished; indeed,

the learned Judge used some remarkable language from the Bench. He said: "It is absurd to tell me that these arrears can be paid;" but although he urged the landlord to extinguish them altogether his appeal was unheeded. He then made another suggestion, namely, that if the arrears were not extinguished, they should be reduced according to the scale on which the new rents had just been determined. If the Government had given to Ireland the same clause which they gave to Scotland, enabling the county Judge to deal with the arrears and, if necessary, extinguish them, or at any rate to reduce them, Judge Darley would have wiped off the arrears due upon these miserable patches of bog-land, and I assert that it is entirely due to the Government that these miserable tenants at Clongorey are not in their homes to-day. The second suggestion of the Judge—that the arrears should be reduced—was also ignored, the landlord and the trustees refusing to take off one penny; and it is for these unreduced arrears that, in defiance of the Judgment of the Court, these wretched people have been evicted. I should also say that the County Court Judge pointed out that the tenants never had been able to pay their rent out of the produce of the land, and it was only by reason of their being allowed to cut turf from an adjacent bog that they had been able to make any payment at all. It seems a melancholy thing that not a penny could be paid out of the holdings themselves, and it is a still more melancholy thing to find that the landlord has taken away the right of cutting turf, and has thus deprived the tenants of their only means of paying rent. Well, Sir, on the 7th and 8th of the present month twelve families were evicted for non-payment of the unreduced arrears, and all hope of shelter in their own homes was taken away from them on the following day when a force of emergency men, encouraged by the acts of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, went to the scene of the evictions, cut down the roofs of the houses with hatchets and saws, levelled the walls with crowbars, and carried out the demolition of each of the houses, accompanying the work in each case with a round of cheers. The people meanwhile stood by and looked on as witnesses of this outrage and wanton destruction, there being among them some of the tenants who had built these houses. Nevertheless, the crowd stood by and never by act or word attempted to interfere. It is an evil lesson which the Government teaches when peacefulness is rewarded as the peacefulness of these poor people has been. The neighbours endeavoured to find shelter for the evicted families, and one of the tenants, Mrs. Mary Kelly—the most substantial tenant on the estate, who has paid her rates and is in possession of all the rights of tenancy—determined to make some alterations in the out-houses of her farm for the purpose of providing shelter. A number of artisans—masons, carpenters, and others—were consequently engaged from the adjoining towns, and went to the farm for the purpose of altering those out-buildings. They set to work, and the additional buildings were erected. On Saturday, the 15th inst., Mrs. Kelly was served with a precept signed by Colonel Forbes, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to read that document to the House, as the purport of it is not nearly conveyed by anything I have seen in the Press. One account of it is that it was to direct the tenant to desist from making these alterations; another is that it called on her to appear on a subsequent occasion at Petty Sessions and show cause why she should not be ordered to desist. This precept appears to me to be a very curious document. It certainly rests on the authority of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act of 1860; but the provisions of that Act are directed against unlawful waste, and the procedure of the tenant on this occasion in regard to out-houses built by herself on her own farm could not be held to be a procedure tending to produce unlawful waste; on the contrary, it would be rather to improve the value of the property, and render it worth more to the landlord. But proceedings had been initiated in the Court of Queen's Bench, and am I to be told that in this civil case, as between one subject and another, it was competent to any one to determine the law before it had been decided by the Superior Court, and not only to call on the tenant to appear at the next Court of Petty Sessions at Newbridge, but actually to proceed to the employment of force for the purpose of compelling the tenant to desist from

what she was doing? The tenant, perceiving that the question at issue was to be decided by the Queen's Bench, or by the Newbridge magistrates at Petty Sessions, directed the workmen to go on with their work. The men, acting on this direction, remained at work, and on Tuesday last a body of police marched out from Newbridge to Mrs. Kelly's farm. They found some 15 men at work, and arrested them all, without warrant. I have always understood that a man cannot be arrested without warrant except in a case of felony, and I suppose that even the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will hardly pretend that a felony had been committed here. The men were marched into the town of Newbridge, and having been brought before Colonel Forbes, were, after an imprisonment of some hours, discharged. Now, the question I have to ask is, why were those men arrested? I submit that the Statute of 1860 dealing with unlawful waste does not provide for arrest. It enacts that, where anybody commits what is termed unlawful waste, a precept may be issued, and that course of procedure is that anybody disobeying that precept may be brought before Petty Sessions and rendered liable to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding one calendar month. I say that the course of procedure in this case should have been by summons, and that to proceed by arrest was, in my judgment, illegal. Why should these workmen have been arrested? They were doing a day's work, and earning a day's wages. Am I to be told that an Irish carpenter or stonemason engaged by an Irish farmer to do a day's work is obliged, before he enters upon that work, to inquire, under penalty of jeopardising his liberty, and satisfy himself as to the right or wrong of a technical legal question of unlawful waste as between landlord and tenant? That question is determinable as a matter of equity by a Court of Superior Jurisdiction. It comes to this, that an Irish workman when pursuing his day's work will have to go about with a lawyer to represent him. I say these men had a right to do their work, and that the operation of the precept only extended to the tenant. These 15 men were discharged in the course of the day. On Wednesday a large force of police, I believe about 100 men, marched out of the town to Mrs. Kelly's farm. They found 29 men at work, and arrested and handcuffed them. When a question was put to him, the Chief Secretary raised the pretence that these men were handcuffed because a rescue was apprehended. Did not the men submit quietly to arrest on the previous day? Did they not go to the barracks quietly? What substantial reason then had police to apprehend a rescue or an attempt at escape? Father Kinsella was present on this occasion at the farm. Father Kinsella is a man advanced in years; he is a man of whom very little has been heard in Irish life; he is a person of a singularly quiet, gentle, and retiring disposition—a man held in the highest esteem by all with whom he comes in contact. Father Kinsall protested against the usage to which these poor artisans were subjected, for no worse crime than doing their day's work. The 29 men arrested on the Wednesday were released on bail at 6 o'clock that evening with a caution, and to appear again at the subsequent Petty Sessions. The rising temper of the police, and the increasing audacity of those in command of them, is shown by the fact, that two men in Newbridge, who simply cheered on the Wednesday, were arrested and ordered, on bail, to appear to a charge of riotous behaviour. I now come to the third day. On that day a force of 100 police marched from Newbridge to the farm, this time with fixed bayonets—so the course of events progressed. They found the house closed. They broke into it with the crowbars of the emergency men, who are the allies of the police. The right hon. Gentleman has been asked to day why they broke into the house. He says they had a warrant. I venture to think he has been misled. Can you with a warrant break into a house where the charge is not one of felony? I am informed that the police were asked to show their warrant, and they did not do so, and, until good reason is shown to the contrary, I shall maintain that their refusal to exhibit it is sufficient proof that they had no warrant. They broke into the house, certainly. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Lowther), who was once Chief Secretary for Ireland, appears to be much amused by the statement I have just made.

Does he mean to say that a police officer having a warrant for a certain purpose, can, in the execution of that purpose, break into a person's house? The police are obliged to show their warrant, and their failure in this instance to do so is a satisfactory proof that they had no warrant. The police, having broken into the house, arrested 17 working men, and handcuffed them. I must protest that this handcuffing was a wanton and cruel outrage, and I think the same view will be taken of it by men of their own class—the artisans of the United Kingdom. I think the act was not only cruel but injudicious, and the right hon. Gentleman forgets, as his subordinates appear to forget, that men of precisely the same class as those artisans who have been arrested, are now potentially the rulers of this Kingdom. Sir, I have now to give proof of the most deadly malice on the part of those in control of the police. They arrested these men after dark on Thursday evening, and, instead of going by the direct way to the barracks, which is through a street deserted at that time of night, they made a detour with their prisoners through a part of the town which is always crowded at that hour of the evening. They did it for no other conceivable cause than to get among the people with these prisoners in custody. They laid about them accordingly with their batons. One man had his eyeball burst by the blow of a baton. The skull of another man was fractured, and he lies at this moment in danger of death. A respectable tradesman of the town was dragged out of his open doorway. His hat was snatched off, and then, I suppose by a natural sequence, he was knocked down and kicked about brutally. The Chairman of the Town Council was violently assaulted. In driving themselves among the people with their prisoners the police obtained a pretext for this savage assault. The prisoners were lodged in the barracks. A local solicitor asked to be admitted. Admission was refused. The men arrested on the Tuesday and Wednesday had been released the same evening. The men arrested on the Thursday were kept all night. They were herded together all night in one small room, which was without any means of ventilation. On the Friday morning the Chairman of the Town Council and two other gentlemen offered bail for these honest and respectable artisans. They were hurried and hustled away from the police barracks. You are very often asking for sureties in Ireland under the Statute of Edward III., but if a surety presents himself you chase him away with batons. On Friday morning a Castle Magistrate, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald made his appearance in the town of Newbridge. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald is a magistrate who has distinguished himself by hustling soldiers and counsel out of his Court, and when persons accused before him expressed discontent at being undefended, he commits them to prison week after week for contempt of Court. In the case of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork, his counsel (the hon. Member for Longford) was expelled from the Court, and when my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork expressed his indignation at the plight in which he was left, the magistrate listened quietly on the Bench until my hon. Friend had concluded. Then, after an absence of 15 minutes, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald returned with an elaborate warrant, which he could not have drawn up in the time, and, in the exercise of a jurisdiction never before exercised, and never suspected to be in existence, he sent my hon. Friend to spend three months in prison. Well, the appearance of this gentleman in Newbridge, on Friday last, was signalised by a second baton charge. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald entered the police barrack; the police sallied out with batons and attacked every one they saw; in point of fact, they acted as if the people were obliged to imprison themselves in their houses, and as if their presence in the streets was a crime. The next step was for the fourth successive day to despatch a party of armed police to Mrs. Kelly's farm; as soon as the police left the town a party of dragoons, 200 in number, marched from the barracks. They came, I assume, by the order of Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald. They were armed with carbines, and they marched with drawn sabres. They took possession of all the approaches to the town. They did not allow any one to pass in or out of that town; throughout the day locomotion was suspended; a funeral happened to come in the way, and they refused to allow it to pass over the bridge; the mourners had to go up the river bank until they came to

Mr. Sexton

a ford, over which they passed with some danger to their lives. How they contrived to get the coffin across I have not ascertained. The police meanwhile had proceeded to the farm. They found Father Kinsella, described as a dangerous person, sawing a plank. They arrested him and conveyed him to Newbridge. He was brought before Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald in the police barrack. His solicitor had applied for admission, and had been refused. The case was heard not in public, but in private. The magistrate refused. This gentleman, bred to official life in India, who would not be considered fit for any magisterial function in any part of Great Britain, is considered good enough to exercise very exceptional magisterial functions in any part of Ireland. The solicitor asked that at least one shorthand writer might be admitted to make a record of the proceedings and enable us to have some check on the system of falsehood that is continually applied to these reports in Ireland, but the magistrate refused to admit a solitary shorthand writer. The affair went on in private. Now, I ask what was the charge against the working men? I need not ask what it was against Father Kinsella. I have read the text of the complaint. He was charged with defying and contravening the precept of Colonel Forbes, but the precept of Colonel Forbes was a precept of civil operation dependent on the ultimate decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, and it was directed to the tenant and not to Father Kinsella. It was a precept to show cause at Newbridge Petty Sessions, and before the case came before the Sessions, and before the determination of the question by the Court of Queen's Bench, the magistrate had Father Kinsella arrested for disobeying the precept. I say, that even if Father Kinsella had committed an offence in disobeying the precept, the course was to summon him for that disobedience, to cause him to appear before the next Newbridge Petty Sessions, and at that Petty Sessions, according to the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1860, the utmost penalty that could have been inflicted was imprisonment for a term not exceeding one calendar month. What course was pursued? The charge of disobeying the precept was heard in private in a police barrack. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald came to no finding on the charge. Let it be legal or let it be illegal, let it be valid or let it be invalid, Mr. Fitzgerald came to no finding on the charge, but he put it aside, and putting the charge aside, he turned to the Statute of Edward III., and under that—in reference to an act which, if it were an offence at all, was prosecutable, not before an individual, but before a Court of Petty Sessions, and if a Petty Sessions Court convicted was not punishable by a higher sentence than one month—under that statute, I say, this individual magistrate in private took it upon himself to call upon Father Kinsella to find bail himself, and to get two other sureties, to be of good behaviour. Because Father Kinsella refused to confess himself to be a rogue and vagabond by giving and finding bail under this mediæval statute - a statute long obsolete in England, and never at any time, in England or elsewhere, intended for use except against rascals of evil fame — because Father Kinsella refused to confess himself a rogue and vagabond, this gentleman, bred in India, sitting at a private police barrack, in reference to an offence only punishable by one month's imprisonment, sentenced that venerable and respected priest to go for a period of two months to Kilkenny gaol. He is in Kilkenny gaol at the present moment, and he will be there, I suppose, for the next month, if he can so long endure the ordeal. This is the extraordinary condition of society under the personal rule, as he is fond of calling it, of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester. Father Kinsella, in this quiet town, in this quiet county, having been so arrested and condemned, was taken to a railway station by an escort of dragoons, and when the people assembled at the station and peacefully cheered their departing pastor, the third baton charge of that week occurred, and many persons suffered injuries. The first baton charge occurred when the police provoked it, the second signalised the entry of Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, and the third occurred at the departure of the parish priest. There remained to be dealt with the case of the 17 men arrested on the previous day and kept imprisoned in the barracks all night. These humble artisans—whose crime was that they were endeavouring to live,

who were earning a day's wages for a day's work, the legality of which was beyond their capacity to settle—had been imprisoned all night and the succeeding day, when their cases came up to be dealt with. I should here state that the solicitor asked the magistrate if he would state a case for a higher Court in regard to the action against Father Kinsella, but the magistrate refused to do so. The creatures and instruments of this Act were not willing that their criminal pranks should be reviewed by any Court. Well, the magistrate took up the case of these 17 men. He refused to proceed with the hearing that day, deciding that the case should be taken on the day following. Late that night there was another riot, and 16 more men were arrested; so that, in order to prevent shelter being given to 70 poor people, old men and women and young babies amongst the number, the Government have arrested and sent to prison one respected clergyman and 70 or 80 blameless artisans. And, now, I come to a curious part of the case. On Saturday, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald took up the adjourned case of the 17 men arrested on Thursday, and he was asked by the County Inspector to again adjourn the hearing—and let it be noted that these requests for adjournment and all these proceedings were ordered by telegram from Dublin Castle. On Friday a question had been asked in this House as to the nature of the charge against these men. Up to Saturday it had been disobedience to the precept. On Friday the batches of men arrested on Tuesday and Wednesday having been discharged, either with a caution or on bail, the magistrate turned away from the charge before him to the Statute of Edward III. and called on the men to find bail. Though the offence was one determinable by the Court of Petty Sessions, though the maximum penalty provided by law is imprisonment for one month, yet because these men refused to find bail they were committed by the will of this individual magistrate to prison for two months. On the Saturday occurred the change of front; the charge of disobedience to the precept was abandoned—the authorities seeing that if a charge could be maintained at all it could not be so maintained under that name—and the charge of "unlawful conspiracy" was made. On this charge these 16 men have been called upon to appear before a Coercion Court; that is to say, they are to be tried for an offence which the law declares to be not determinable by a Coercion Court but by a Court of Petty Sessions. Four batches of working men have been treated in four different ways for precisely the same offence—if it were an offence, and I say it was no offence whatever—and after that I submit the question of the consistency and legality of the course of the Irish Government is one on which even the Member for Dover, in spite of his self-assured smile, would find it difficult to satisfy the House. I have laid before the House as definitely as I can the facts of this case. The events which I have referred to are events which have occurred within the last few days in a peaceful district of a peaceful county. The county of Kildare is a county in which the Sessional Judge and the Judge of Assize concur in congratulations to the people on the absence of disorder and crime. The last criminal calendar for the county, if I remember rightly, included just two cases, which were not cases which need alarm the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as pointing to any danger or disorder. One was of uttering base coin and the other of petty larceny. But what evil lesson is being taught by the Government to that peaceful place? The people are being given to understand that the more peaceful, the more law abiding and patient they are, the more likely are they to be oppressed. I think it is the duty of the House and of the Members of all Parties in the House to put the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on his defence. He has been in the habit of boasting lately in this House and elsewhere that the rule in Ireland is his personal rule. ["No, no!"] Yes, I have heard him within the last few days call the Government of Ireland "my rule," just as his subordinate, the late Viceroy of Ireland, used to call his Viceroyalty of Ireland "my reign." Discreditable as the fact may be to the House of Commons, the boast of the right hon. Gentleman is that his rule of Ireland is not the rule of the Queen or of the Constitution, or of the law as you understand it and respect and honour it in this country. His rule

is that of a horde of unscrupulous, irresponsible instruments, who rely upon the favour of a Minister practically absolute, owing to the conduct of the majority in this House—who rely upon his favour not only to condone but to reward and applaud their worst excesses. I say it is the duty of this House to put the Minister on his defence, and whether this House discharges or disregards its duty, I think the people of England, unless I am very much mistaken—and especially at this moment the electors of North St. Pancras—will look with very particular interest to the judgment of the House upon the series of acts which I have detailed—a series of acts which, in my humble judgment, exceeded in lawless audacity the worst that has hitherto been heard of in the personal rule of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester, in Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—*(Mr. Sexton.)*

*(5.15.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said that the Secretary for Ireland should be put on his defence. The Chief Secretary has not, so far as he is concerned, the slightest objection to the operation, but, on the contrary, he is always glad to have an opportunity of explaining face to face with those who intentionally or unintentionally — and no doubt the hon. Gentleman has done so unintentionally—"misrepresent the condition of things in Ireland. The speech of the hon. Member has travelled over a considerable amount of ground, and some of the observations he has made appear to me to be not altogether relevant to the issue that is now before us. He began by giving us an account of the unhappy condition of the tenants on the Clongorey estate; and I concede this much to the hon. Gentleman—that I believe the estate is a poor one, that the land is indifferent, and that, as invariably happens under these circumstances, the tenants cannot rank amongst the prosperous class of farmers in Ireland. But I fail to gather either from the speech of the hon. Member or my own reflections on the subject any ground whatever for basing on that fact the conclusion that these persons should be allowed to break the law with impunity. Poverty may be an excuse for much. It is not an excuse for deliberate and organised illegality.

MR. SEXTON: It is a reason, in my judgment, why the Government should not prevent distressed people from obtaining shelter.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will deal with the question of shelter in a moment. I say that the shelter that these tenants are said to have required was owing to their having been evicted, and their eviction was itself the result of an illegal conspiracy started and fomented on the estate, by the friends of the hon. Gentleman. I fail to see that the poverty of these men was an excuse for their action, or that of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. These tenants were not rich or prosperous; but they were, at all events, well enough off to pay money into the campaign funds, and at the earlier stage of the conspiracy to offer to pay the agent, on condition that the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) was allowed out of prison. Those tenants have a right to their own opinion as to the legality or illegality, the justice or injustice, of the sentence passed on the hon. Member for North-East Cork; but I submit that if the legality or illegality, justice or injustice of a sentence passed by a Court of Law on any man in Ireland is a ground for some other men not fulfilling their obligations, the chaos which already exists in Ireland where the Plan of Campaign is in operation will not be easily mitigated. The hon. Member dealt with another question which I think irrelevant to the question before the House. He gave a version of the incidents which accompanied the destruction of certain houses from which the tenants had been evicted. I think the hon. Gentleman should have been more careful in his statement of the facts. I did not give police protection on the occasion of the destruction of the houses.

MR. SEXTON: The police were there.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Policemen were there because there were caretakers there, and caretakers have to be protected by policemen, on account of the teaching which has always accompanied the institution of the Plan of Campaign. There were no policemen sent for the purpose of protecting the agent. The police were

no more than were there under normal conditions protecting the caretakers, and they had no notice whatever of the proceedings which the agent proposed to take. While I absolutely repudiate every sort of responsibility for affording police protection in a transaction which I heard nothing of before it took place, I must add this general observation: that if landlords and agents in Ireland would take my advice they would be extremely sparing of ever using the methods that were employed by the agent on this occasion; but to say that the agent destroyed the property of the tenants is not to state the facts as they are. The tenants had been evicted because they refused, in obedience to an illegal conspiracy, to pay their rents; and they having by their own fault been evicted under circumstances which prevented their taking the legal remedies which the House has provided for the protection of every Irish tenant in the improvements he has made on his holding, the holding belonged absolutely to the landlord. Whether, therefore, the landlord was right or wrong in destroying the houses, at all events he only did what he pleased with his own. The hon. Gentleman has stated that these tenants were turned out in consequence of excessive arrears being exacted from them; and he led the House to believe that they would have been ready to fulfil their obligations if the landlord had been prepared to make a reduction in those arrears proportionate to the reduction made by the County Court Judge in the rents. I have not a full account of the transactions between landlord and tenant; but I have enough to show that that statement is not correct. I understand that last October, three years' rent being due, the agent offered to receive one year's rent, less 25 per cent, that being the reduction subsequently made by the County Court Judge in the permanent rent of those tenants. The hon. Member has quoted some statements made by the County Court Judge in respect of those tenants, implying that he thought the rents very much too high, and that the landlord was acting in a harsh manner.

MR. SEXTON: And that the arrears should be wiped out.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can hardly believe that the hon. Gentleman has given an accurate version of it. As I understand it, there was a decision that there should be a stay of execution till January, and that the tenants should be allowed to remain undisturbed during that period; but that in January one year's rent out of three should be paid. January came, and the one year's rent was not paid. Therefore, I suppose we may take it that the County Court Judge, having all the facts before him, thought it was an equitable arrangement; but the tenants, acting, I presume, under the advice of the leaders of the Plan of Campaign, absolutely refused to accept the terms imposed by the Judge on that occasion.

MR. SEXTON: The County Court Judge said it was impossible for the landlord to get those arrears; that the poor tenants had built the houses and reclaimed the land from bog; and that it was absurd to say that the tenants could pay.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: But the County Court Judge ordered the tenants to pay one year's rent in January. The tenants have declined to carry out that arrangement. I come now to the action of the police and the magistrates. As I understand the indictment of the hon. Gentleman it consists of two parts. He thinks, in the first place, that the action of the police and the magistrates was harsh, and in the second place that it was illegal. The accusation of harshness rests upon the undoubted fact that those workmen were arrested and handcuffed. The hon. Member forgot to tell the House that the police had provided transport for the prisoners; that the prisoners refused to use it; that the police were inferior in number; and that the general condition of things in Newbridge justified the police in believing that a rescue might be attempted. I have more than once stated to the House my opinion that it is desirable to discourage absolutely the use of handcuffing except in cases where it is absolutely necessary, but that it must, from the nature of the case, be left to the discretion of the officer commanding to decide when it is necessary. I do not know a case in Ireland which has come to my knowledge in which the discretion has been abused. The next allegation of the hon. Member was that the police took the prisoners

not by the shortest route but by a long and roundabout way, in order that they might have the pleasure of batoning the crowd. The hon. Member must have known that such a charge is extravagant to the verge of absurdity. It is perfectly true that the way which the police went was not the shortest, but it was by far the widest, best lighted, and most convenient; and there would have been no batoning if the inhabitants of the town had allowed the police to take their prisoners quietly before the magistrate. The hon. Gentleman told the House that one person lost his eye, and that another had his skull fractured. The information which I have received does not bear out that statement. I believe that two persons were injured; but, so far from one having lost an eye, or another having had his skull fractured, they were, I believe, going about next day. The third case of what the hon. Gentleman called brutality was with regard to the alleged action of the military in stopping a funeral. The hon. Gentleman said—and, I think, said truly—that respect should have been shown, or, at all events, that a large amount of licence might have been granted to a funeral going to a place of interment. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman is not aware that the funeral was not going to the place of interment, but was coming back from it; and I think he will admit that simple statement of fact deprives his allegations on the subject of most of its point.

MR. SEXTON: They had as good a right to come back as to go.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They had as good a right to come back as to go; but they went not by right but by favour. If they went through public streets, where the traffic had to be stopped for the purpose of preserving public order, they went not by right but by favour; and if they came back through streets where the traffic had to be stopped they came back not by right but by favour. The hon. Gentleman gave no reason why the favour should be extended to a funeral returning.

MR. SEXTON: There was this special reason—that their homes lay on the other side of the bridge.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the slightest doubt that the funeral did desire to come back by the bridge. That is not denied; but the whole of that part of the speech of the hon. Gentleman was founded on this—that a dead body was in the funeral *cortége*.

MR. SEXTON: I said I had not heard whether the corpse was there or not.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The phrase the hon. Gentleman used was that the funeral might be respected until its functions had been discharged. I apprehend that when the dead was buried its functions had been discharged. I pass now to the far more important question of the legality or illegality of the action of the police and the magistrate in the case. I understand that the first charge brought against the police was that on the first three or four days with which we are concerned arrests were made upon the precept under the Act of 1860 issued by the magistrate. On the face of it the precept entirely justified the arrests. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite will refer to the Statute in question he will see that it distinctly contemplates arrests. So far, therefore, there is no ground for complaint unless the arrests were illegal; and if they were illegal there is a summary method by which any such illegality may be punished. The arrests having thus been legally made under the Act of 1860, on the first day the men on being brought before the magistrate were cautioned and sent away, and next day they repeated the offence. The hon. Gentleman says that these labourers were earning their bread; and he asked, were the labourers to be obliged to carry about with them a revised edition of the Statutes in order to see whether they were acting illegally or not? Well, every labourer in Ireland may assume that when he is brought before a magistrate and told his action is illegal, and further, that at the next Petty Sessions his case will be brought up for final decision, that if he persists in his action he is breaking the law. The hon. Member appears to assume that this precept has only a provisional operation, and has no binding efficacy until it is finally decided at Petty Sessions. But if the hon. Gentleman will look at the words of the Statute and the precept he will see that is not the case, and the magistrate in absolutely forbidding under the precept any further waste being committed was

acting entirely in accordance with the law as it is now.

MR. SEXTON: The labourers were ordered to show cause. Does not that imply that the precept was a conditional document dependent on the decision of the Court?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am advised that the precept is not as the hon. Gentleman supposes — a conditional document, but an absolute document. Well, these labourers, having been arrested and having been cautioned by the magistrate, went back and repeated the offence, and on that occasion they were bound over and let out. Some of them went back a third time, and for the third time committed the offence. Then they were bound over under the Statute of Edward III. Next, when they committed the offence a fourth time, they, or some of them, were arrested and brought before the magistrate, and they were summoned to appear before a Crimes Act Court for illegal assembly, of which, I presume, it is hardly denied they were guilty.

MR. SEXTON: On the third occasion they were thrown into a cell and kept there all night, and finally they were sent to prison under the Statute of Edward III.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The third time they were ordered to give bail, and sent to prison in default, and the fourth time they were summoned to appear before a Crimes Act Court under the charge of illegal assembly. What is the extraordinary criticism which the hon. Gentleman passes on this transaction? He says that for the same offence four different methods of procedure were adopted, and he bases on that an invective against the arbitrary and illegal government of Ireland. It appears to me that the action of the magistrate was the most merciful which could be adopted. On the first occasion, when the men might be presumed to be ignorant, they were warned and sent away. On the second occasion, when they must have known that they were committing an offence, they were discharged and summoned. On the third occasion they were bound over under the Statute of Edward III., and it was not until the offence was committed for the fourth time that they were summoned for illegal assembly. The hon. Gentleman has taken occasion to trot out ancient and somewhat threadbare observations upon the Statute of Edward III. He says that it is a statute obsolete in England, and only recently brought into operation in Ireland. That statement has been refuted over and over again. From the days of Edward III., down to 1890, that statute has been in constant use in England as well as in Ireland. [MR. SEXTON: Against respectable people?] Against people who are expected to break the law. I will not compete with the hon. Gentleman in defining respectability. This Act of Edward III. is not obsolete; it is part of the common procedure of this country, and in Ireland there have been thousands of cases during the last 20 years in which it has been employed, and to say that we are taking down from some ancient armoury this rusty weapon of oppression is to misrepresent the best known facts of criminal legal procedure in this country as well as in Ireland. The last point which the right hon. Gentleman took exception to was the treatment of Father Kinsella. But it is clear from all the circumstances of the case that the one great object of that gentleman was to be sent to prison. He was warned that his action was illegal, and he replied that he would persevere in it whether it was legal or illegal, and a man who publicly declares his intention of persisting in illegal action cannot complain if he is bound over to keep the peace. The hon. Gentleman alleges that the magistrate acted harshly in making two months' imprisonment the alternative to giving bail to be of good behaviour, because he says the maximum penalty for the offence was only one month. But what Father Kinsella was guilty of was unlawful assembly, for which, according to the law both of England and Ireland, the maximum penalty is not two months, but two years' imprisonment.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask what was "unlawful assembly?" Was it disobedience to the precept, which says one month's imprisonment?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Father Kinsella's offence was, I take it, open and violent defiance of the administration of the law, and a man declared guilty of persisting in an illegal course cannot complain if he is taken out of the category of respectable persons. I think I

have now gone over most of the specific allegations of the hon. Member. Before coming to a determination in this case I would ask the House to bear in mind a fact which the hon. Member has not referred to—namely, that for three years the Plan of Campaign has been in operation on this estate. The hon. Gentleman told us that Kildare is a quiet county, and that Judges and Magistrates have exchanged congratulations on its peacefulness. No doubt Kildare as a whole is a quiet county. But in Kildare, as in other counties, there is an exception to be made in respect of those districts where the Plan of Campaign exists. There it is that you have this violent resistance to the law, there it is that you have riotous assemblies, there it is that you have the forces of the Crown brought into conflict with the people. The persons responsible for this are those who started the Plan, not those who oppose it. The hon. Member began by stating that in no other portion of the United Kingdom would such proceedings as these on the part of the executive be tolerated. The hon. Gentleman is wrong. If day after day an illegal and disorderly crowd persisted in breaking the law, the law of this country would be strong enough to keep them in order. Are we to be told that because the Clongorey estate is poor, and the tenants are not prosperous and have joined the Plan of Campaign, they are therefore to be allowed to break the law precisely to the extent they desire? It appears to me that the magistrate acted legally when he issued his precept, and that that precept having been defied no action was open to the authorities but that which they took. I hope the House in voting upon this question will see that we are practically asked to say that the law may be broken with impunity when the law breakers are backed up by a powerful conspiracy, and that no heavier blow could be struck at the prosperity of Ireland.

*(5.50.) SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney): I think there are few who have listened to the course of this debate who will be disposed to deny that the hon. Member who moved the Adjournment of the House was perfectly justified in the course he took, for it will be admitted that it was startling to have announced to the House that, under the circumstances which have been detailed, somewhere about 80 persons have been arrested, some at one period and some at another. Taking the facts as stated by the hon. Gentleman, and not contradicted by the right hon. Gentleman, it appears that there being a number of evicted tenants houseless and homeless on this estate, one of the tenants, a Mrs. Kelly by name, allowed certain alterations to be made in the outoffices attached to her farm with a view to giving some kind of shelter to these poor houseless persons. She was doing that upon a farm, which in point of law was her farm in part, and the landlord's farm in part, for it is too late in the day to deny that a tenant's farm is partly his and partly the landlord's. A number of men were engaged, and peaceably engaged, until the interference of the police, in doing what may, without exaggeration, be termed an act of mercy—erecting shelter for the houseless. Then someone on behalf of the trustees of the estate applied to the magistrate under the ill omened Statute of 1860 for a precept forbidding such work. I do not desire to discuss this question in any narrow spirit of technicality, and I will, for the purpose of argument, admit that the grant of the precept was within the authority of the magistrate, and that under that precept the constable charged with the execution of it could lawfully make arrests. But I deny that the statute under which this precept was issued was ever intended to deal criminally with such cases as this. It was a gross abuse of the technical and literal powers given by the statute, to apply it to any such case. The Attorney General for Ireland will not deny that Section 35, under which the precept was issued, was aimed mainly at wilful waste on the part of the tenant—waste designed to injure and calculated to depreciate the property of the landlord. I will admit, for the purpose of my argument, that there was a technical right of arrest, but what was the moral justification for the arrest? What was there in the circumstances that would have rendered the ordinary proceeding by summons inadequate to the occasion, and how comes it that the force of police—it looks as if they desired to invite a conflict with the people—that the force of armed police went out for the purpose

of making arrests upon the extensive scale they did? Now, let me correct the right hon. Gentleman. He says Father Kinsella was charged with unlawful assembly. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that the magistrate could inquire into that charge, and send a man to gaol for two months—[Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never did say so]—or send him to gaol for any period? Did the right hon. Gentleman say that Father Kinsella was charged with unlawful assembly? Surely he did.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not intend to say so.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: I accept the right hon. Gentleman's statement of what he intended to say, but I beg to assure him he made the statement. The charge against Father Kinsella was, in the words of the precept, that he did, with the other defendants, "assemble on the premises of Mary Kelly for the purpose of proceeding with certain works, namely, the enlargement"—not the destruction or the committal of waste, mark you—"of certain out-houses." This was contrary to the precept, which laid it down that the defendants' proceedings were calculated to create a breach of the peace. Does that justify the proceedings of the magistrate? No, it does not. The offence charged is contravention of the precept, and I wish to know what power or authority the magistrate had to deal with any charge of unlawful assembly. Under the statute it is distinct and specific, after the service by posting of the precept, the punishment is one month's imprisonment and one month only. Ah! but why is this other proceeding resorted to? Because the magistrates know that when under such circumstances honourable men, men respected by their fellows, are called upon to give bail for good behaviour, they regard it as a slur upon their character to which they ought not to be subjected. Therefore it is that resort is had to these proceedings, and this old Statute of Edward III. is misused for the purpose of inflicting a heavier punishment than the magistrate could otherwise inflict. The right hon. Gentleman says the Statute of Edward III. is in force in this country, and of course I know it is, but it has never been applied to such cases as these in England. Refer me to any case where a man holding a responsible position such as this gentleman did—I do not refer to the others for the moment—whose address was known, who had lived his life in the presence of his fellows, and was respected by those who knew him; tell me any case where in England a man in this position has been proceeded against under the Statute of Edward III. This statute has been often referred to, and it might be worth while to call attention to it more particularly. It would be useless to quote the old Norman French. This statute provides that in each county there shall be magistrates whose duty shall be to restrain offenders, and among other duties imposed is that of arresting all "pillers and robbers from beyond seas who have come again, and go wandering, and will not labour as they were wont." Also to arrest such as may be suspected of offences and are not of good fame, and who may be required to give sufficient surety and mainprize for good behaviour. Now, I noticed there was one point in the allegations made of illegality in the action of the police and the authorities on the occasion to which the right hon. Gentleman has not adverted; I mean the breaking of doors.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I forgot that.

*SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: I say at once it is a criminal proceeding against the spirit of the statute of 1860, for there is no evidence of real waste of property, and it was an insidious method of preventing protection and shelter being given to these people. I say further, that if the arrests were lawful under that Act, they were not needed. It was a wanton disturbance of the peace to bring the police under such circumstances with such a show of armed force, when, names and addresses being well known, a summons would have accomplished the same purpose. The breaking of the doors under the circumstances was illegal. I do not know whether I differ from my learned Friends on this point, but I understand that the doors may be broken after first demanding admission and being refused, or when the person inside is under indictment or known to have committed treason or felony, or has inflicted a dangerous wound, or has escaped from lawful custody; or when a constable can hear that violence is being committed within the house a door may be broken to arrest an offender or sup-

press an affray when the party within refuses to open on demand. In this case there was, it seems to me on the facts stated, no power to break open the door, and in that particular there has been a violation of the law. Does anyone who has heard the right hon. Gentleman accept the justification he has offered for the handcuffing of this large number of men? I could refer to cases where actions have been brought in this country and heavy damages awarded against officers who, without full justification, of which a jury, and not a policeman, judged, handcuffed individuals unnecessarily, even when charged with serious offences. These are not small and unimportant matters, and are not so regarded in Ireland. For myself I feel little interested in discussing the mere details of what I conceive to be the despotic Government of the right hon. Gentleman. I confess I think it is to a great extent waste of time. The policy of the right hon. Gentleman may be good or it may be bad, but it is not a system which can long stand side by side with a Government supposed to be based on constitutional principles; one or the other must go. I have only discussed the details in this case because it is an instance of the absolute manner in which the right hon. Gentleman in every case stands by those whom he looks to for enforcing the laws, however brutal, however unfeeling their conduct may be, however much they may disregard the rights of private liberty. I say it is an instance, one of a great many we have had, and I think the House is indebted to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) for calling our attention to it.

*(6.10.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I will endeavour in the few observations I have to make to avoid discussing this matter in a narrow and technical spirit. The hon. and learned Gentleman has raised a very broad issue which, to a certain extent, is an issue of law. He has referred to the Act of 1860, which he has called an ill-omened Act. It is not for me, and this is not the occasion, to criticise the Act of 1860. That Act has in its spirit been departed from in modern legislation, whether rightly or wrongly it is not for me now to discuss, but this I say, that the provision of the Act now under discussion is as relevant to the relations between landlord and tenant now as on the day after the Act was passed. I mean the sections that provide the means of temporarily arresting proceedings complained of on the ground of waste pending the adjudication of a competent tribunal. But the broad question to which the hon. and learned Gentleman invites the attention of the House is this: he says, An Act of Parliament in this particular case has been wrested from its proper application, that it has been applied to what is not legally really and substantially within the conditions imposed by the Act. Now, with all the hon. and learned Member's research, I do not think he could have read the twenty-third volume of "Law Reports," Ireland, and if he thinks it worth while further to consider the question which has been raised by this Motion for the Adjournment of the House, I invite his attention to two particular cases in which he will find that the very action in question, the destruction or alteration of premises used as an agricultural holding by the erection upon such of what are popularly known as Plan of Campaign huts, has been decided to be a wilful and gross act of waste as between landlord and tenant. One of these cases was brought before not one of those inferior tribunals in regard to which we are accustomed to hear so many adjectives applied, but before the Court of the Vice Chancellor of Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: One of the weakest Judges in the Empire.

*MR. MADDEN: One of these cases was brought before the Court of that most eminent and respected Judge, one of the most learned Judges on the Bench, the Vice Chancellor of Ireland. Another case was brought before the Court of the Master of the Rolls, and this last case was carried to the Court of Appeal. I do not know whether this phalanx of legal authority will be deemed satisfactory by hon. Members opposite, but at any rate it is the best that Ireland can supply; two Judges in Courts of First Instance and the Court of Appeal. If the persons who were defendants in the last instances thought that Irish Judges were affected by any kind of prejudice in regard to such matters nothing would have been easier for them than to bring their case before the House of Lords.

MR. SEXTON: This was a case of erection of huts.

*MR. MADDEN: Alteration of premises by their conversion from a dwelling house with outhouses suitable for an agricultural holding into what are popularly known as huts. I do not think any lawyer will stand up in this House and contend that there is not a stronger case of actual waste if instead of erecting huts on the outskirts of a farm there is an actual conversion into dwelling houses of out-houses suitable for the occupation of an agricultural holding. Therefore, on the main question in which the hon. and learned Member challenges us, the decisions to which I have referred afford a complete and satisfactory answer. How does the matter stand? Allow me very shortly, and in plain English, avoiding technicalities, to tell the House what this precept means. It means that a Petty Sessions Court will be held on a certain day, and that the question of waste will come before that Court for trial. Meantime, says the precept, you must stay your hand from the proceedings complained of, or if you refuse to do that, you must go to gaol. That is what the precept means. I do not know whether a similar proceeding exists in England. I have enough to do dealing with the laws of my own country; but if it does, does anybody doubt that the Executive would interfere in England to prevent forcible interference with the magistrate's precept. The hon. Gentleman says there have been 80 arrests, and surely that very fact shows there was a large force brought together outside the workmen actually doing the act of waste, a considerable body of men who constituted in law an unlawful assembly committing this act of wilful waste. Is it to be supposed that the Courts of Law in England would be so weak as not to meet and punish instanter any such lawless defiance of the authority of a competent Court? There are plenty of remedies open to any person who feels aggrieved by an order made under the Act in question. It may be said that the Petty Sessions is not the best Court to decide cases of waste; and I am disposed to agree. Well, there is under the Act a summary procedure by which one of the superior Courts of Equity or Law can immediately be appealed to. The facts of the case amount to this—that with such remedies at command there was an unlawful and organised defiance of an order legally issued by a competent Court. My hon. and learned Friend mentioned the Act of Edward III., and I notice that a laugh can always be raised in the House by quoting antiquated the phraseology of the Statute and the reference to "pillers and robbers," always gets a cheer from hon. Gentlemen opposite, but when the hon. and learned Gentleman asks if this Act has been applied to such cases in England, I would ask him have such cases ever arisen in England.

SIR C. RUSSELL: I meant to speak of persons with known addresses and positions, such as those in question.

*MR. MADDEN: Of course I accept the hon. and learned Gentleman's correction. I understood him to challenge the application of the Act to the classes of cases to which it has been applied in Ireland; but if he admits that it would be applied in England to such things as to which it has been applied by a long series of decisions in Ireland; for instance, to the non-payment of rent in 1882, by a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, to boycotting cattle and acts of that kind; if I understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman admits that the Act can be applied to proceedings of this kind, I have nothing more to say on this subject. But I gathered from his allusion to the Act of Edward III. that he was contesting the application of the Act to that class of cases, rather than dealing with the comparatively trifling question of whether the offenders in this particular case might not have been dealt with otherwise if summoned. The case before the House, I would point out, is still to a great extent *sub judice*, bnt I must state that the institution of the proceedings is the action of the landlord, and is not due to the initiative of the Executive. The obtaining of the precept was the act of the landlord, for the protection of his private rights. The action of the Executive in the matter has been what it would have been in any other civilised country—namely, to prevent by lawful means an organised and systematic defiance of the law.

(6.20.) MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Those of us who are well acquainted with the cases that the right hon. and learned Gentleman

has cited know that they are distinguished from the cases in which the House is now concerned. In the two cases before cited the point was not the enlargement of an out-house, but the erection of a large number of huts upon the land. In the first instance the erection of houses on the holding was decided to be a destruction of the agricultural character of the holding. In the case Steel *v.* Turner the special point was that the erection of new buildings on the holding was a breach of statutory conditions. I may also remind the House that a tenant may be restrained by the injunction of a Civil Court. The cases are totally distinct from the case under notice, which is the enlargement of a single out-house, which certainly is not a destruction of the character of an agricultural tenancy in any sense whatever, but is rather an improvement of the holding for the landlord. Moreover, the cases cited by the right hon. Gentleman apply to the civil remedies of the landlord; and the commission of waste is not a criminal offence, though, in the case before the House, the Government have made it a criminal offence. Beyond doubt this is a case to which the Statute of Edward III. was never intended to apply, and the Government have acted in defiance of the spirit of the law and the Constitution. Anyone who reads the 35th, 36th, and 37th sections of the Act of 1860, will see that they are intended in the first place to provide a civil remedy for the landlord, and if a criminal offence is established, it is proceeded with before two Justices in Petty Sessions, and, on sentence after trial, only a month's imprisonment can be inflicted. It is clear that proceedings ought not to be taken under the Statute of Edward III. A more flagrant and disgraceful misuse of the statute has never been proved, nor has any clearer proof been given of a criminal conspiracy between the Government and the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman spoke repeatedly of the violent conduct of the people arrested, but I ask, in what did the violence consist? Was there any violence in Father Kinsella's act of sawing a piece of timber? From beginning to end of the affair there was no trace of violence on the part of the accused, and the Attorney-General for Ireland ought to withdraw his imputation of violence, in order not to prejudice the case of the people before the magistrates. I appeal to him to do so. These people will come before Petty Sessions next week, and the magistrates will have the opinion of the Attorney-General that they have been guilty of violent conduct, and, I say, looking at that expression of opinion, and from whom it comes, the magistrates will feel coerced in their decision, unless the expression is withdrawn. But if the Attorney General has made an unwarrantable use of his position to-night, the action of the Chief Secretary in the matter has been simply disgraceful. He has used the words, "It will not be denied that these men are guilty," and after that what chance have the people when they come up for trial in a week's time? This is the most disgraceful utterance ever made in the House of Commons, though perhaps not unparalleled in the case of the Chief Secretary. We know when it was that month sentences began to be imposed under the Coercion Act, after the right hon. Gentleman's speech at Birmingham, in which he hinted at the inconvenience of appeals. This is not the only thing. The House will recollect that a funeral procession has been declared to-night to have marched along a public highway in Ireland only by favour of the Crown. I suppose the Chief Secretary's desire was that after the corpse had been buried the mourners should also bury themselves, as that would be a convenient way of getting rid of them. The policy of the right hon. Gentleman has been to exterminate—in conjunction with his allies the landlords of Ireland—all his opponents—political or otherwise. And now I have some information to give as to the Glongorey dispute. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the Plan of Campaign was started on the estate by some friends of the hon. Member for West Belfast. The hon. Member for Cork and myself were the first to attend a Plan of Campaign meeting there. That was in 1887, and the meeting was not held till after the tenants had themselves resolved on adopting the Plan of Campaign, in consequence of the landlords' refusal to accept their terms. Everything had been arranged when we went down to the meeting, which was held in the presence of 200 armed policemen and half-a-dozen reporters. Why

proceedings were never taken against my hon. Friend and myself for it has ever since been a standing mystery. On the second occasion on which the Plan of Campaign was brought into operation I went down before it was started, and I attended the meeting, at which it was resolved to again have recourse to it. The advice I gave to the tenants on that occasion was a warning to beware of what they were doing, and to be sure that they were in the right, because their conduct would be closely scrutinised in England, but when once they adopted the Plan they must stick to it. They must be sure that they had justice on their side. So much then for the charge that the Irish Members wanted the tenants to join the Plan of Campaign. But I may add in reference to my action with regard to the Clongorey estate that I regret nothing I have said or done; on the contrary, I am proud of it, because there never was a clearer case in which the tenants were right and the landlords wrong. The House has already been informed of the statement of a County Court Judge that this was a case in which the arrears ought to be entirely wiped out, and when the Chief Secretary told us to-night that the agent of the landlord offered to take one year's rent in settlement, he gave a complete misrepresentation of the nature of the offer, which was really to take a year's rent on account, leaving the arrears still standing, and the tenants in perpetual dread of eviction. The offer was not merely illusory; it was an insult and a mockery, and I should have been surprised if any body of tenants, however crushed or humiliated, could have been found to accept such terms. And to show how fairly the tenants on this estate treated the landlords, I may mention that not only did they pay this exorbitant rent as long as they were able, not only did they keep clear of combinations—criminal or otherwise—until they were forced into them by the action of the landlord himself, but it was their custom every year when the landlord had some work to be done on his land either to do it themselves or to pay men to do it. Their conduct towards the landlord was most generous; on the other hand the conduct of the landlord was marked by the grossest ingratitude on record. It was stated by the Chief Secretary, on the authority of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that the tenants refused to pay even the reduced rent until Mr. William O'Brien was released from prison. But is that authority worth accepting? I will give an example of the untrustworthiness of the hon. Member's statements. The hon. Member wrote to the *Times* that the valuation of the property on this estate was £800, while the rental was only £600; but the fact is the valuation is £555, while the rental is £1,009. The Attorney General has given the go-by to more than one of the statements made by the hon. Member for West Belfast. My hon. Friend in the first place referred to the brutality of the police on several occasions last week, and to the attacks made on the people in the county of Kildare, on many occasions since the beginning of the struggle on the Clongorey estate, attacks unparalleled for their wantonness and brutality. I will give but one instance, but I think it will suffice to show the nature of the attacks. As a brother of Mrs. Kelly was being marched to gaol, a sister walked by his side conversing with him, until one of the constables knocked her down. The district inspector gave the order to his men "If any one will not move on give them a dig in the ribs." The chairman of the Town Commissioners of Newbridge, a gentleman highly respected, was thus greeted by the inspector, "Go on now, you know what I gave you before." He was threatened not only with personal assault, but with a repetition of the month's imprisonment imposed on him on a previous occasion. The spirit which actuates this district inspector is the one which prompted Capt. Plunket's telegram "Do not hesitate to shoot," and which prompts the watchword of the Irish police of to-day "do not hesitate to swear." It is the spirit which induces the Chief Secretary to condone and defend every act of the police, however unjustifiable, and so long as he shows a willingness to do that we may be sure he will find willing instruments to carry out his orders. Now, I deliberately assert that these attempts to deprive evicted tenants of shelter constitute an abuse of a statute framed for a very different purpose, and if we could suppose that these things were to go on

for an indefinite period, if these assaults and batonings were to continue, if we had no remedy in Constitutional agitation, then the only thing we could have recourse to would be insurrection. But it is the hope that we shall eventually get justice from the English people, the knowledge that these things cannot go on for ever, and that Constitutional means will suffice for the attainment of our rights, that induce us to keep to Constitutional means, and when at last peace comes it will be no thanks to you, for the preservation of peace is not your object. Your aim is to promote acts of violence, and I am only surprised that the people of Kildare have thus kept themselves within the law. Mr. Fitzgerald, the resident magistrate, conducts himself in a manner worthy of a Cadi sitting under a palm tree in the East. He holds his Courts and administers the law, sometimes privately, sometimes in the police barracks, and at other times in the open air, reminding one of some of the revolutionary tribunals of '98. I say it presents to the Irish people a mockery of the British Constitution, and is a public scandal. Both the right hon. Gentlemen opposite this evening have endeavoured to obscure the real issue. The Irish Members do not wish to argue the matter on mere technicalities; they are content to leave it on the broad facts which prove that landlords and the Government have combined to prevent evicted tenants from obtaining shelter, preferring that they should be on the roadside and die of exposure to the wintry weather. We intend to inform the electors of the country that a person who erects a hut for those who are homeless through being evicted, is to be treated as a person of evil fame, even though he be the clergyman of the district, and that he must give bail or go to prison. Men are now being prosecuted for performing the commonest duties of humanity, and they are being treated as felons. This is a simple fact which the people of England will be made acquainted with, and it will not be our fault if the authors of this policy are not made to rue the day when they adopted it. Finally, let me point out that in enforcing this misuse of the law the Government are employing agents who are distinguishing themselves in brutal fashion.

(6.52.) MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S): I think I should not be doing my duty if I did not point out a very remarkable admission made by the Chief Secretary this evening. He has practically admitted that the reason for denying shelter to the evicted tenants is that they have been tenants under the Plan of Campaign which he has for three years been trying to crush. We are now seeing the commencement on his part of a new crusade against the men whom he has hitherto failed to crush—that henceforth they are to be denied the shelter of a roof. The Attorney General has quoted a decision of the Vice-Chancellor in regard to a similar case to this. I have still another quotation to give him. County Court Judge Darley had a case before him in reference to the erection of certain huts on the Clongorey estate, but he decided that he could not interfere, as the building of the huts could not be looked on as "waste to the farm." His decision was, however, reversed by the Vice-Chancellor, and the County Court Judge in announcing that fact to his Court the other day, said—

"On the equity side of the Court I was asked to grant an injunction, and to order the levelling of a hut or building into possession of which an individual had been put who was evicted from a neighbouring farm. I had serious difficulty in carrying out that strong power, because to my mind there was no charge that the thing which was done amounted to waste or to such an injury to the property as to call for the interference of a Court of Law. But my decision was found fault with and brought to the notice of the Vice-Chancellor, who took a different view, and directed the case to go back in order that I should order the hut in question to be removed. I take it the Vice-Chancellor took a general view of the proceedings, and held that they were in furtherance of the combination known as the Plan of Campaign. I am bound to act according to the view of the Vice-Chancellor, and if any case comes before me in which the proceeding is of the nature of putting up a building for the purpose of housing persons evicted from other farms—although it may not amount to waste or injury to the farm—I shall consider it a proceeding in furtherance of the Plan of Campaign, and it will be my duty to order the building to be levelled to the ground."

Therefore, Sir, we have it in clear and unmistakable language that the crime in this case is not doing waste to the farm, or doing any acts which are technically considered to justify the interference of the law, but simply and solely the erection of the shelter for persons evicted from another farm. We are going back to the

days of penal laws, and the only parallel I can call to mind is the law, which once prevailed in the Southern States of America, making it a crime to shelter a runaway slave. Just remember how these tenants are being treated. They are unjustly hunted out of the houses which they have themselves built; emergency men, supplied with hatchets and paraffin oil and protected by armed Constabulary, burn or level the buildings to the ground, and then it is made a crime to shelter the people who have thus been deprived of their homes. And all this is done because they have been members of a combination which every test applied to it proves to be just. It is the combination against which the Chief Secretary has hurled all the forces of his Coercion Act, but he has been humiliated and baffled by it, for he has not been able to-day to tell us of one single crime which has stained its history from the time of its starting in this very county of Kildare, nor has the Attorney General been able to point to a single act in the nature of a crime, according to moral law. I think we have arrived at a most extraordinary stage of the administration of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary began by discussing a series of new crimes, and now in the fourth year of his administration, he is enabled to add another crime to his previous list, namely, the crime of sheltering tenants who have been evicted because they have adopted the Plan of Campaign. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, before sitting down, if, having embarked in this course of procedure—if pinning his position to the judgment of the Vice Chancellor in the case of these huts, he intends to go on in the same way, and, in that case, where he thinks he is likely to stop? If it be a crime to enlarge an out-house in order to give shelter to evicted tenants, simply because they have been evicted under the Plan of Campaign—if it be a crime to aid such persons, where is the right hon. Gentleman to pause in the administration of punishment for this class of offences? The Vice-Chancellor has laid it down that the sheltering of those persons is a crime, because it is an act in the furtherance of the conspiracy. And we know, from what has previously happened, that it is also held to be a crime to give bread to evicted tenants. This being so, we have here a new principle of boycotting laid down by the Coercion Act, and the Government will now find it necessary to boycott all tenants who have come under the Plan of Campaign, treating them as pariahs in the land, and, consequently, refusing to give them either shelter or food. But I would tell the right hon. Gentleman that if he dreams he can by any such procedure intimidate the Irish people into abandoning these evicted tenants and leaving them without shelter or the means of existence, he must have learned very little from his three years active coercion. If there be one fact which more than another his experience ought to have impressed upon his mind, it is this, that so long as there exists, either here or in any other part of the world, Irishmen who have a single dollar or shilling in their pockets, so long will they assist in providing the necessary food and shelter for their evicted compatriots. The more the right hon. Gentleman brings his Coercion Act to bear upon these unfortunate people, the more will he find they are not to be intimidated from the performance of their patriotic duties by all the terrors of the Coercion Act. As he finds it now, so will the right hon. Gentleman find it to the end of the chapter, and although he may have to confess the deep humiliation occasioned by the defeats the tenantry have inflicted upon him, he will at length become convinced that he must go even still further in his iniquities before he will be able to strike terror into the hearts of the Irish people or induce them to abandon the Plan of Campaign.

(7.5.) The House divided:—Ayes 154; Noes 196.—(Div. List, No. 8.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [12th February.]—[See page 128.]

Main Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

(7.18.) MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): Mr. Speaker, the people of Wales are dissatisfied with the condition of their affairs, and I do not think I shall have much difficulty in showing that they have cause for dissatisfaction. Ever since the annexation of Wales to England, it has been the policy of English Governments to Anglicise the Welsh people, and treat the country generally as if it were a corner of England, but after 350 years the people of the Principality are still distinct in race, language, and custom. Out of the 1,700,000 inhabitants of Wales over a million speak only the Welsh language; at the same time, I believe, above half the Welsh people are not capable of understanding conversation in English. Twenty years ago, when the Education Act was passed, I thought it would sound the death-knell of the Welsh language. I have lived to know better, and I say that, thanks to the enlightened policy of the present Vice-President of Education, not only English but Welsh is taught. I can very well remember that some 30 years ago, to use somewhat of a slang phrase, it was not thought by Welsh people in position the "correct thing" to speak in Welsh. Now, if a claim is to be established on popular consideration, one of the readiest ways is to speak in Welsh. The most successful men in the Principality, and the most eloquent, can speak with equal facility the English and Welsh languages. One of my principal reasons for bringing this question before the House is that great difficulty has arisen in the Courts of Justice because of many of the people of Wales not understanding the English language. I have here the Statute of 27th Henry VIII., cap. 36, enacted in 1536. It commences thus:—

"Albeit the dominion, principality, and country of Wales justly and righteously is, and ever hath been, incorporated, annexed, united, and subject to and under the Imperial crown of this realm, as a very member and joint of the same, whereof the King's most royal Majesty, of mere droite and very right, is very head, King, lord, and ruler; yet, notwithstanding by cause that in the same country, principality, and dominion, divers rights, usages, laws, and customs be far discrepant from the laws and customs of this realm; and also because that the people of the same dominion have and do daily use a speech nothing like consonant to the natural mother tongue used within this realm; some rude and ignorant people have made distinction and diversity between the King's subjects of this realm and his subjects of the said dominion and principality of Wales; whereby great discord, variance, debate, division, murmur, and sedition have grown between his said subjects; his Highness, therefore, of a singular, zeal, love, and fervour that he beareth towards his subjects of his said dominion of Wales, minding and intending to reduce them to the perfect order, notice, and knowledge of the laws of this his realm, and utterly to extirpe all and singular, the sinister usages, and customs differing from the same, and to bring about an amicable concord and amity between English and Welsh."

It was further enacted that only the English language be used in all Courts of Justice, &c., and to interdict the enjoyment of every kind of office throughout the King's dominions to persons using the Welsh tongue on pain of forfeiture unless they adopted the English speech. Of course the latter part of this statute is a dead letter, but as far as concerns the language used in the Courts of Justice it is still the law of the land. Well, Sir, on many occasions we find great difficulties arise. Men are charged with high crimes and they do not know what transpires at their trial because of their inability to understand the English tongue. On the 19th March, 1889, Richard Evans, of Merthyr, was tried on a charge of wilful murder, and he was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment. The prisoner did not know what his sentence was, and, in his ignorance, he turned round in Court and said, "Am I to be hanged?" I will give one more case; it is rather long ago, it is true—the 24th January, 1888. I received a letter from the solicitor who was in the Court at the time. The case lasted for three days. The writer says—

"I was present at Carmarthen Assize Court on the 24th February, 1888, when David Rees was sentenced to death by Mr. Justice Stephen for the murder of Thomas Davies on the 12th November, 1887. Every one in Court was simply amazed at the apparently indifferent demeanour of the prisoner when the dread sentence was pronounced. He was taken down, and then it was discovered that he had not understood that he was a doomed man. He asked the jailor in Welsh (he was a Welshman and understood scarcely a word of English) what was to be done with him. The jailor replied by asking him if he had not understood what the Judge said, and the prisoner said '*No.*' The jailor thereupon hurriedly sent word to the Sheriff, who informed the Judge that the prisoner being a Welshman did not understand he had been sentenced to death. His Lordship at once returned into Court (he

was about getting into his carriage, it being about 8.30 at night) and then was witnessed the most painful and heartrending scene it is possible to imagine. The Judge again repeated prisoner's the solemn words which sealed the doom, and they were translated."

I have given these two cases, but of course there are many more recurring daily in the smaller Courts. It may be said—"Why do you not have interpreters?" We certainly have interpreters, and some of them work very well. I have a case which has been sent up to me by a friend, and I will give the House the details of it as a further illustration of my point. It seems that a Welsh farmer borrowed a sum of money from a bank on a note-of-hand, the arrangement being that he was to repay the money in three instalments. Well, when the last was paid the bill was passed to the farmer over the counter, and he went out of the bank. Subsequently, when the cashier made up his accounts, being so much short, he concluded that the mistake lay between himself and the farmer, and the latter was arrested. When the trial came off, the farmer was afraid to trust himself in the English language and asked for an interpreter, and now comes the curious part of the incident. The farmer said he paid the money and the bill was passed over the counter to him, but the interpreter translated it "snatched" across the counter. The foreman of the jury, who understood Welsh, objected to the interpretation, saying it was not correct. The case turned on that, and the farmer was acquitted. We are constantly hearing a great deal about interpreters in Wales, and there is much feeling on the point to-day, the present system in many parts of the Principality being strongly complained of. At the meeting of the Montgomeryshire Joint Standing Police Committee, Mr. A. C. Humphreys-Owen called attention to the necessity of securing the attendance of a competent interpreter at Quarter Sessions, and moved the appointment of a Committee to consider and Report on the best means of securing that object. He said everybody must have noticed the difficulty often experienced at Quarter Sessions and Assizes in the matter of interpretation of evidence given in the Welsh language. It was wrong in principle, he continued, that the police, who were more or less always regarded as connected with the prosecution, should be employed for the purpose. It appears that a rev. gentleman, named Ambrose Jones, in a certain case refused to be sworn as a witness unless he could give his evidence in Welsh, and he was threatened with prosecution for contempt of Court for his refusal. And here I would allude to a pronouncement which must have weight with hon. Gentlemen opposite. I do not say whether the rev. gentleman was right or wrong, but this is how a highly respectable Conservative journal—the *North Wales Guardian*—commented on the case:—

"Although much abuse has been heaped upon the head of the Rev. Ambrose Jones, of Ruthl on, nothing more monstrous can be conceived than that magistrates speaking no Welsh should have at their disposal the persons and property of Welshmen who speak no English. In very many cases heard in Courts in some parts of Wales, the Court is completely at the mercy of the interpreter, and Welshmen ought not to rest content until this shameful scandal is remedied."

I submit that this case discloses the existence of that which is nothing short of a national scandal. I hold that it is rank injustice that where three-fourths of the people speak Welsh, the business of the Courts should invariably be transacted in English. I know there are Judges who could hear cases in Welsh if required; indeed, some of them have already done so. It might not be right for me to give names, but I could do so if necessary, and show that when both parties had been agreed, the whole of the proceedings in a case had taken place in Welsh. We certainly ought to have Welsh-speaking Judges. Prisoners have a right to be tried in the language of their country. I would now refer, very shortly, to another aspect of this case, namely, the question of distress for tithes, and I maintain that the mode of distress is oppressive, while the amount of goods distrained upon is frequently greatly in excess of the amount of tithe due. Hon. Members opposite may find it difficult to accept this, but they are in the habit of forming their conclusions as to the condition of Wales, from reports they see in the English newspapers, and I must confess that if I had no other source of information than the English Press, I should also be inclined to look upon the Welsh

as a lawless race. There have been certain tithe riots in Denbighshire, but in the very district where the disturbances have occurred, it has been the pleasing duty of the foreman of the Grand Jury at the Sessions to hand the Chairman a pair of white gloves. That I consider a good reply to people who complain at the lawlessness of the Welsh people. As to the manner in which tithe distraint is conducted, in the first place a summons is issued, then the sheriff's officer appears on the scene, and generally attaches all the crops of the farmer. Supposing there are four or five ricks, he goes and attaches them, and nothing more is heard of the case until some months afterwards—it may be five months afterwards—when the sheriff again appears. The farmer, in the meantime, has found it necessary to live, and to feed his cattle, and very rightly has used some of the hay. Action is then taken for pound breach. The Report of an Investigation Committee on this point says that distraints have been levied by agents of clerical tithe-owners, and that the cattle and goods distrained upon have been left an unreasonable time upon the farms; that action for pound breach has been taken against many farmers, and treble the original amount thus extracted from them; and that costs have been run up to an enormous extent—in one case over £98 having been paid in respect of a tithe claim which originally was £10 15s., in another case execution having been levied for £71 in respect of a tithe claim which originally was £6 17s. 6d. Other instances of exorbitant imposts and oppressive exactions are given. In one case, a farmer was sued for pound breach, whereas he had done nothing, and had never been distrained upon. In one case, that of John Thomas, Tyrhos, Cardigan, distraint was effected in March for a sum of £7 18s. 3d. due for tithe, two stacks of hay and one of barley being seized. In June, four and a half tons of prime hay, valued at £6 10s. per ton, were taken away, and no account of it has yet been received. The barley is still on the premises, and the farmer has, since the spring, been obliged to purchase fodder for his cattle. In the case of Mr. David Griffiths, Penlan, Cardiganshire, the farmer concerned appeared personally to set forth his grievances. The amount due from him as tithe was £10 15s. 7d., and the goods seized consisted of one rick of hay, value £5; stack of hay, £10; and three stacks of corn, £24. The farmer put into consumption all the corn and part of the hay, nothing having been removed by the bailiffs. A writ was served on June 20th for £32 (that being treble the value of the original amount), under an allegation of "pound breach." The farmer consulted a solicitor, who wrote to the bailiff, and forwarded a cheque for the £10 15s. 7d., this being forwarded "in full discharge" of the original claim and costs. The cheque was accepted, and a receipt returned, and the cheque came back through the Clearing House in ordinary course, duly endorsed. The date of the receipt was June 26th. This money was paid before judgment could have been legally signed against the defendant in respect of the claim for £32. On August 18th, notwithstanding what had been done, the Sheriff entered upon the premises with a warrant for £81, and left a man in possession. The defendant, who has a large family, paid £88—the £81, with £7 costs—to pay out the execution, which he did under protest. So that he has paid £98 15s. 7d. in respect of a tithe liability of £10 15s. 7d. In another case, that of Mr. Evan Davies, Rhydwen, Crymmych Station, the sum due as tithe was £6 17s. 6d.; and, in February, distraint was levied on two cows. On the 21st May the farmer was served with a writ for £21 1s. 6d.; and because of the manner in which service was effected he considered that he was not duly served; therefore, did not consult a solicitor and take the necessary steps to resist the claim. Subsequently execution was issued against his goods for £71 7s. The Sheriff was in possession, but could not sell; and the defendant was most anxious to sell, for he wished to leave the farm, but was unable to do so because of the Sheriff being in possession. To show the amount of tithes due, and the amount of the distraint in this case generally, it will be sufficient to mention the following:—One year's tithes: David Evans, Brynllewelyn, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes claimed, £6 15s. 8d.; goods distrained, £60. David Jones, Esgergarn, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes, £1 14s. 6d.; dis

traint, £38. Timothy Evans, Esgerfynwent, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes, £3 8s.; distraint, £100. D. T. Gilbert, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes, 8s. 5d.; distraint, £13 10s. Two years' tithes: Daniel Evans, Brithder, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes, £4 to £5; distraint, £15; distrained three times. Daniel Davis, Ffynonygog, Gwernogle, Carmarthen, tithes, £3 15s. 6d.; distraint, £40.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that it is not competent for him to dwell on the Tithe Question, as it is the subject of a Bill in Parliament. Of course he can call attention to it in general terms as one of the grievanecs that Wales suffers from.

*MR. A. THOMAS: I will only add that if there is to be any change in the present law relating to tithes it can only be satisfactory so long as it is accompanied by a measure for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church. I regard my Amendment as a most moderate one, as, indeed, all proposals which emanate from Welsh Members are. We find that Ireland has in this House one law officer, and would possibly have two if the Government could find a seat for the second. Besides that, there is the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, and not even his worst enemy can say that the right hon. gentleman's post is a sinecure. The case of Scotland is almost more analogous to that of Wales, for she has a Lord Advocate, another law officer, and a Secretary for Scotland. The right hon. the Member for Mid Lothian, in his then capacity of Prime Minister, in 1884, speaking in reply to a deputation urging the necessity for the creation of a State Department for Scotland, said—

"Although Wales has no separate Administration or representation of any kind in the administrative system of the country, it has many of the features and feelings of a distinct nationality, and within the last two or three years the claims of Wales for certain arrangements for its own benefit have been recognised both in laws and in administrative Acts."

And the present Secretary for Ireland, speaking in reference to the same matter at Edinburgh, on January 16th, 1884, said—

"It is not the measures that are most important that are passed, but the measures entrusted to the most important Minister."

Mr. A. Thomas

Hence, by similar reasoning, if we had a Minister for Wales we might reasonably expect better legislation, adapted to the wants of the Principality. Justice demands that some such plan as I suggest should be adopted in regard to Wales. Wales has always been loyal and law-abiding, and has ever stood by England in her weakness and in her strength. Whatever may be the fate of my proposal, certain I am of this, that sooner or later—I hope sooner—a proposal similar in terms to mine will be accepted.

Amendment proposed, at the end of paragraph 16, to insert the words,—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that more satisfactory arrangements for the administration of the affairs of Wales are imperatively required, and that a separate and independent Department of State should be created for the conduct of distinctly Welsh affairs, presided over by a Minister acquainted with the national characteristics of Wales."—(*Mr. Alfred Thomas.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(7.55.) MR. P. MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil): In seconding the Motion, I will confine my remarks to the first part of the Amendment, namely, "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that more satisfactory arrangements for the administration of the affairs of Wales are imperatively required," and then I will endeavour to show that unless we get some such earnest of our individuality as we seek to obtain we shall have no alternative but to devise some other method by which our desires and aspirations can be realised. My hon. Friend has truly said that Wales has always been loyal. I trust it always will be loyal; but there are occasions when the angry passions of men rise to such an extent as to bring about disasters regretted by all classes of the community. I am told that the time was when an Irish Member getting up in this House found the Benches empty, as they are this evening; but now, if an Irish subject is before the House, it commands the whole attention of the House. That is what Irishmen have done for their country by agitation. I hope, as a loyal Welshman, that the Government will consider the very modest request that Wales has made. It seems to me that Wales has been the Cinderella of the

sisters. She has been neglected in every conceivable way; but perhaps the fairy may come along, and Wales will take the lead, as Wales has done before, in the affairs of the Empire. [*A laugh.*] Well, Wales has taken a prominent part in the affairs of the Empire before, and I hope she will do so again. Wales is nearly unanimous in her desire for recognition. Of the 30 Members, 26 belong to the Party which at least claims to be the Party of Progress. I think the time has arrived when there should be some re-construction of our Constitution. Wales has claims for recognition beyond Ireland or Scotland, for there is no Irish Member and no Scotch Member who can get up and address the House in his native language; at least they cannot carry on a debate or address their constituents in their native tongue, as many Welshmen can. Ireland has a Chief Secretary, and if it had not it might be in a far more disastrous condition than it is to-day. It is because I respect law and order that I sympathise with the Irish people, who have been the victims of this and every other Government. The Empire has grown too large. There are already 29 Parliaments sitting in the British Empire, which do the legislative work which this House, in my opinion, is unable to perform. We have no one to appeal to in such a case as the disaster which happened in Wales the other day. No doubt the Home Secretary gives all the attention to such matters he can, but still it would be more satisfactory if there were a representative of Wales seated on the Treasury Bench. There would then be someone to whom we could appeal in regard to the questions of the Disestablishment of the Church, the Tithes, and other matters with reference to the feelings that prevail in the Principality, and in order to bring about legislation beneficial to the country. England has five Universities, Scotland four, Ireland two, but Wales has no University. Degrees can be obtained in all the faculties in the other countries, but no degree can be obtained in Wales. Again, in Wales there are no learned societies which have a legal standing or which can give to the people degrees and other honours. Wales is certainly entitled to such a mark of recognition. Then there is no royal palace in Wales. In all the other parts of the Kingdom, even in Ireland, there is a royal palace The fact of the Local Government Bill being printed in the Welsh language by the Government is evidence of the necessity of some recognition of the Welsh nation. As special legislation for Wales we have had the Sunday Closing Act, and an Intermediate Education Act, which are also recognitions of Wales, and now we are asking for the Disestablishment of the Church, for a Tithes Bill, and other measures. Having this special legislation already granted, and desiring, as the Welsh do, further legislation, I maintain it is a very moderate request to ask that we should be recognised not as a separate nation, but as a part of the English nation having peculiar characteristics and peculiar aspirations. In asking for a Welsh Minister, we have a precedent in the recent appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. That Minister has been appointed just when the country has practically given up growing wheat, and about all he can do is to induce people to eat a few more vegetables in the shape of Brussels sprouts or something of that kind. I could have understood a combined Minister of Agriculture and Mines, who would have looked after everything relating to the land. Then we would have had someone to appeal to in reference to the sad disaster the other day, and in reference to all the mining difficulties which exist in this country; at all events we should have had some person who would advise the Government upon matters of far more importance than the mere growing of Brussels sprouts, and that sort of thing. What is the feeling in the Principality as to the point raised by the Amendment? It is that out of 30 Members, 26 sit upon this side of the House, and these 26 Members must necessarily be of one opinion. I take it that they are all of opinion that the country is entitled to recognition in the shape either of a Minister or a Separate Legislature. Let the Conservative Members too, reflect before they vote against the Motion, what may be the consequences if they vote against the Motion and determine that Wales should have no recognition either in the shape proposed by the Motion or by Home Rule which may be asked for hereafter if the request made in this Motion is not granted.

*(8.8.) MR. KENYON (Denbigh District): I do not think the two speeches to which we have listened can be seriously meant. I regard them very much in the light of fishing inquiries, to find how far their colleagues and the people of Wales will go in the direction of what is called Home Rule. To use a vulgar expression, the hon. Gentlemen are waiting to see how the cat will jump. If my hon. Friends had exercised a little patience and waited another week they would have found that their speeches would have been more singularly appropriate to the festivities of St. David's Day than to the present occasion. I am rather curious to see how the Colleagues of my hon. Friends on the other side of the House will receive the Motion. I fancy they will, like a certain character, "smell the cheese but not put their noses into the rat trap." I admire the courage of my hon. Friend rather more than I admire his discretion, because I do not think there was any necessity for him to come to the House to ascertain what the feelings of the Welsh are upon this subject. He might have ascertained it easily enough if he had taken the trouble to be present at the meeting of the North and South Wales Federation, which I believe was held in Carnarvon this year. Upon that occasion there were great searchings of heart. I have not got a report of the meeting with me, but I remember that threats were thrown out upon the great Denbigh leader (Mr. Gee), and that the delegates were implored not to show their differences to the outside world, and the hon. Member for East Glamorgan was called in to pour oil on the troubled waters. My hon. Friend might, without coming to the House of Commons, have ascertained sufficiently the feelings of the Welsh people upon the question of Home Rule; that is to say, he might have ascertained it as far as this, that at any rate, whatever the opinions of some may be upon the subject, the opinions of Welshmen in the aggregate are not made up upon the matter. I thought we should have had from my hon. Friends an exposition of several national characteristics to justify the Amendment of my hon. Friend, but the deficiency of arguments in support of the Motion reminds one of the heading to a celebrated chapter on snakes in Hooker's work on Iceland:—"There are no snakes in Iceland." There are no national characteristics in Wales so distinct as to justify such a proposal as that made by my hon. Friend. The principal arguments relied on relate to the difference of language. That is, no doubt, a difficulty—particularly in regard to the interpretation of evidence in Court. But it is an exceedingly partial difficulty. Many parts of Wales are as English as England. In Radnorshire, for instance, you cannot find a man who can say "Dim Saesnag." In the mining districts of Denbighshire, and in a large area of Flintshire, the prevailing language is English, and the same may be said of Pembrokeshire, and of some parts of Breconshire and Montgomeryshire. The difficulty is, therefore, a partial one, and affords no reason for the sweeping suggestion made by my hon. Friend. In the matter of land tenure there is hardly any difference between England and Wales. I recently visited Derbyshire, and the Highlands of Scotland, and I would rather farm in any county in Wales than in the bleak and arid districts of Chatsworth. There is bad land in England and in Wales; there are bad farms in Wales as well as in England. I am told that 26 Members out of the 30 who represent Wales are in favour of this Motion, but I should like to see how many of them will follow my hon. Friend into the Lobby on this question. There is only one reason which might entitle the Welsh people to a different treatment and consideration from that bestowed on other parts of the Empire. The largest number of them are Nonconformists, and they think, and I think not altogether without some plausibility, that their difference of religion shuts them out from employment and possibly from consideration at Westminster. Well, I own that the Welsh may have some reason to think that their interests have not been sufficiently considered in some matters, such, for instance, as the Tithes Question. But still I hardly think that the Motion my hon. Friend has made, and the remedy he proposes, will give satisfaction to the Welsh Nonconformists, or promote the prosperity of Wales. I sympathise with national sentiment; it is a noble sentiment; but the proposition be-

fore us is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring. It is marked by a narrow provincialism which may develop into Bumbledom or something worse. The hon. Mover can ascertain the real wants and wishes of Wales, and also the remedies which may best be applied to them. He can encourage the influx of English capital and intellect to assist the hard sound common sense of the Welsh, of which he is himself so good an example. If, instead of launching out into these vagaries, he would endeavour by these means within the pale of the Constitution to promote the prosperity of our common country, he will find both Englishmen and Welshmen on both sides of the House ready to assist him in his effort. I hope the hon. Gentleman will take what I have said in good part, and I will conclude by asking him, as an earnest of his repentance and the commencement of a better life, to at once withdraw his Amendment.

*(8.50.) MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I had hoped before rising to find some expression of opinion forthcoming from the Treasury Bench, but as no right hon. Gentleman rose I feel compelled to intervene to elicit that expression of opinion. My two hon. Friends have made very interesting speeches, and have said a great many things that are perfectly true as, for example, that there are constant miscarriages of justice occurring in the High Courts from the ignorance of the Welsh language, and that the claims of Wales have not received that recognition which, as a distinct nationality, it deserves. As to the Amendment, I should like to see it cut in two. I am ready to adopt the premises of my hon. Friend without his conclusions. I do not suppose it will be denied that the affairs of Wales, with one single exception, have been neglected. On that exception I am willing to lay all stress. I refer to Welsh intermediate education. I wish to give the Vice-President of the Council full credit for having done his best with this important and, on the whole, exceedingly beneficial Act for Wales. But having done this I am afraid I must stop. Take one of the questions upon which Welshmen feel most keenly, the Disestablishment of the Church. On this question —as the hon. Member for Denbigh has admitted—there is practical unanimity among Welsh Members. Look at the Division List on the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea last year, and you will find that out of 30 Members for Wales 25 voted in favour of, and only three against the Motion; and if that is not practical unanimity I do not know what is. If there is any strong feeling the other way there was a splendid opportunity for displaying it in the Mid Glamorgan election, occasioned by the lamented death of my late friend Mr. Talbot. The Conservatives had six weeks to select a candidate and they scoured the country for the purpose. At last they chose a certain Mr. Mortimer, but he ran away as soon as he got to the constituency, and no doubt showed his wisdom, for if he had stood the result would have disclosed the nakedness of the land. For two years my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillwyn) ballotted to get a day for this most important subject—this burning question for Wales, and not only did he fail to get facilities from the Government, but they actually took away from him the day which the chances of the ballot had given him, and he could only avail himself of the fag-end of a Tuesday evening. And now the Government meet our demand for a Disestablishment discussion by the promise of a Tithes Bill. That seems to me very much like asking for bread and getting a stone. But when I come to the second part of the Amendment I must part company with my hon. Friend. We have heard a good deal about Home Rule for Wales lately, and I am afraid we shall hear a good deal more of it if a deaf ear is turned to Welsh claims. Now, Home Rule may mean a great many things, but it does not mean this Amendment. The hon. Member for Denbigh was quite wrong when he said this movement was in the direction of Home Rule; it is quite in an opposite direction. As regards Home Rule, this Amendment is a distinctly retrograde movement ["No, no"]. I am speaking only as regards the question of Home Rule, and I will show my hon. Friend who says "No" why it is retrograde. It is not in the direction of decentralisation but of centralisation. Of course it has been said there is a precedent for the establishment of such a Department of State. We are reminded that for five years the Scotch have had a Secretary of State; we know that for a considerably longer

period, for 90 years, Ireland has had its Secretary of State. It is said, and I admit with perfect truth, that on the whole the claim for nationality on the part of Wales is at least as strong as that of Scotland or Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: It is more so.] More so. In one respect our claim is stronger than that of Scotland, we have a separate language, while Scotland has only an accent. As regards the claim of distinct nationality then we have as good ground as Scotland or Ireland; but I should like to ask hon. Members from Ireland what benefit their country has derived from the establishment of an Irish Secretary? In the event of this Motion being carried, and a Secretary of Wales appointed, there is only one gentleman whom the Government would think of appointing, and that is the Postmaster General. I have the greatest possible respect for the administrative abilities of the right hon. Gentleman, but I cannot help thinking that the same qualities and the same opinions which entitle the right hon. Gentleman to the confidence of the University of Cambridge would not entitle him to the confidence of the Principality of Wales. The right hon. Gentleman is as strong a Party man as there is in this House—I do not object to that, I like a good strong Party man—but we are bound to look at the matter from all sides, and I cannot help thinking that if the right hon. Gentleman was appointed principal Secretary of State for Wales his efforts would be directed to setting the Church of England on its legs and doing all he could to depress and discourage Dissent. Would my hon. Friends be satisfied with that sort of recognition of the rights of Wales? For my part, I am bound to say—while wishing to avoid anything personal—that so long as Government is carried on upon Party lines we must have for the moment a Party man, who will do the best for his Party, and we are face to face with the fact that the Party opposite is represented among Welsh Members by four Members as against 26 on this side. Though I do not yield to my hon. Friends in the desire to see the just claims of Wales recognised I should prefer something like the proposal made two years ago by my hon. Friend the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon, that Welsh measures and Welsh questions should be referred to a Standing Committee mainly composed of Welsh Members. Still more should I desire that the County Councils, which are thoroughly patriotic and representative popular Bodies, should be formed into a sort of Grand Council for Wales, with legislative or quasi-legislative and administrative powers in regard to exclusively Welsh questions. I cannot help hoping that my hon. Friend will not press his Motion to a Division. It has produced a very interesting discussion, and I should be sorry to see the Welsh Members, who upon most questions are so united, present a divided front on this subject. Therefore, I venture to hope my hon. Friend will be satisfied with what has taken place, and withdraw the Amendment.

(9.2.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): The speech which has just been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman brings out very plainly the contrast there is between the Resolution on the Paper and the arguments we have heard advanced by the Mover and Seconder. I do not think that any of the arguments advanced by either the Mover or the Seconder of the Amendment really support the creation of a fresh Administrative Department for Wales; and the right hon. Gentleman has just stated that the creation of such a Department, presided over by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, and conducted on principles consonant with the views of the present majority of the House of Commons, would give no satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Welsh people want the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales, the foundation of a Welsh University, and changes of that sort, but these are matters of policy and not of administration, and it is quite obvious that the remedy for the grievances of hon. Members opposite is a change in the majority of the House. You cannot expect to get from the present majority changes which they regard as mischievous in the highest degree. The interesting facts laid before the House by the Mover and Seconder really did not touch the question of admistration. The hon. Member for East Glamorgan animadverted in no unfriendly

sense upon the administration of justice; he thought it was not satisfactory because it was not conducted in the Welsh tongue. I hope I have not misunderstood the hon. Member. [Mr. THOMAS expressed dissent. Then I was wrong; but I understood him to say, at all events, that two men had been sentenced to death, and did not know the nature of the sentence until they were informed by a friendly Welsh attorney. I understood him also that there had been bad mistakes in interpretation, and especially in one case, in which the difference was between the snatching and the voluntary handing over of a Bill, which might have seriously affected the result of a particular action. Again, I understood him to complain that it was sometimes necessary to have recourse to the police to interpret. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer that complaint; but I have known of cases in which both parties have desired that the police should interpret, as they were most reliable and faithful.

*MR. A. THOMAS: I took no exception personally to the police acting as interpreters. In my own experience, for many years as a magistrate, they have done so very satisfactorily. But I mentioned cases which had come to my knowledge where mistakes were made.

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member, then, was stating not his own opinions, but the opinion of anonymous prisoners. At any rate, the only inference we can draw is that he desires that proceedings in the Courts of Justice should be in Welsh.

*MR. A. THOMAS: Not totally so. I say I think it is a great injustice that a man should be tried in his own country in a language which is not his native tongue. I do not wish the proceedings in Courts of Justice to be conducted wholly in Welsh; but I say the prisoner should have the option of being tried in his native tongue.

MR. MATTHEWS: The substitution of Welsh for English in the proceedings of Courts would require consideration on grounds which have not been named, for the change would exclude from Welsh trials English Judges and nine-tenths of the English Bar. The present Lord Chancellor, when at the Bar, for a good many years assisted justice in Wales to the universal satisfaction of the inhabitants, and he appeared to possess the confidence of Welsh suitors, who availed themselves of his services, although he could not speak Welsh. Therefore, the suggested change would involve disadvantages to suitors as well as advantages. In Welsh causes and cases there must be many English witnesses, and their evidence would have to be interpreted, possibly by the police. Again, there might be complaints of imperfect interpretation. Another topic which the hon. Member dwelt upon was that of tithe distraints, and he complained of various matters arising out of excessive distraints; but I do not think I need go into details, because the arguments obviously led up to the declaration that the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church in Wales could alone give peace and satisfaction to the country. As to the allegations of excessive distraints, the law provides a perfectly good and sufficient remedy without setting up a Welsh Minister. The case of Scotland has been referred to; but there is no analogy between the position of Wales and that of Scotland. I cannot say that, personally, I viewed with any particular enthusiasm the creation of the office of Secretary for Scotland; but still there was a good deal to be said for a Secretary for Scotland, a country which has different laws and institutions from those of England. There are differences in law and administration affecting Poor Law, lunacy, education, and fisheries, and a separate administration was convenient; but no such differences exist in Wales, which on these points is in complete identity with England. The administrative work of a Secretary for Wales would practically be *nil*. I have inquired what amount of correspondence relating to Wales takes place in the Home Office. The year 1889 was one of feverish activity in Welsh affairs by reason of the tithe disturbances, and yet the number of letters received at the Home Office from county and borough officials in Wales was only 209, while the communications at the Scotch Office amounted to 50,000, so that the volume of business was a sufficient justification for administrative division. The hon. Gentleman suggests that the creation of a Welsh Secretary would gratify national feeling; but I do not see how Welsh national feeling is to be gratified by the creation of a useless institution, or how

Welsh Members are aggrieved by the fact that they have an equal right of appeal with all English Members to all the Ministers in the House. The Home Secretary is as much a Minister for Wales as for Sussex or Hampshire. It can hardly be expected that a Welsh Minister could have a seat in the Cabinet, and therefore Wales would hardly gain in this respect by having a Minister of her own. They must not expect the present Ministry to go with them in their views about Disestablishment, or on the tithe question, because these, as I said before, are matters of policy. But every Member of the Cabinet is as much bound to attend to Welsh affairs as he is to English affairs, and speaking for the Home Office, I am not conscious of the slightest difference in the mode of dealing with Welsh and English affairs. No one could desire more than I do that the traditions and the literature of Wales should be cherished; but why should that lead to an administrative change which would be awkward and clumsy? I submit that no reason whatever has been adduced for setting up a method of administration which is reactionary, which would be of no good to anybody in Wales, and which nobody in Wales really wants. If the friends of the hon. Member get into power they will be able to pass those legislative changes which they so much desire, and the want of a Welsh Secretary will not prevent their doing so; while, on the other hand, if hon. Gentlemen opposite do not succeed in turning out the Party now in office, the fact of having a Welsh Secretary would in no way help them to get what they desire. There is really nothing in the absence of a Secretary for Wales which ought to aggrieve or cause any pain to sound sensible Welsh feeling, and therefore, I think that this Motion ought to be rejected.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

(9.21.) MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I wish in——

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid.): I beg to call attention to the fact that there are not 40 Members present.

*MR. SPEAKER: There are 40 Members present now.

Mr. Matthews

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I wish, in moving the Amendment which I have put on the Paper, to call the attention of the House to the fact that this is not, in my opinion, a Party question. It is one which will meet with as much opposition from a section of the Liberal Members of the House as it can possibly do from the Conservative side of the House, and the reason is not very far to seek. These legislative restrictions, which I hope will shortly be imposed on labour by international effort, will place political parties on their proper basis—a position they are rapidly assuming in Germany; they will divide them into two parties—the workers being on one side and the middle classes on the other. Whether that is a consummation devoutly to be wished for is a point on which I will not trouble the House. You, Sir, have rightly no doubt confined the discussion within narrow limits, and consequently I am precluded from entering on certain aspects of the case, while a Bill brought in by an hon. Member dealing with an important branch of the question also prevents me touching upon that particular subject. But the limitation, I am thankful to say, enables me to make out the strongest possible case for legislative interference with adult labour, for that case is to be found in the aspect of internationalism. I suppose it is incumbent on me to show that there is some demand for legislative interference not only in this country but in the colonies as well as in Europe and America. It is often said that there is no real demand for it from the working classes in Great Britain; and hon. Members will get up and say that they have conversed with the most intelligent of the working classes among their constituents, and have found that they are opposed not only to the measure, but even to the discussion of it. And that is not to be wondered at when one knows how these conversations are conducted. Enthusiastic meetings are held on the Irish Question, at the end of which a few words are said on the Labour Question by hon. Members who themselves stand in opposition to the interests of labour because they are themselves employers. One can easily imagine the nature of the conversation on the exposition of the eight hours question from an employer's point of view.

The hon. Member says to the intelligent workman—"My good man, there is a fellow called Cuninghame Graham, and there are others also, who wish to restrict the hours of labour and to prevent you making good terms for yourself. If you wish these restrictions to be imposed on your labour, I suppose that I, as your Member, must vote for the Bill; but if we reduce the hours of labour you cannot reasonably expect to receive the same wages for eight hours as for ten." And the working man, who perhaps has worked for the Member ever since his boyhood, and who fears he may be thrown out of work if he expresses a different view, says, in reply—"Well, no; if my wages are going to be reduced I not think I am in favour of it." And then when he leaves the men and meets his pal, the latter says—"Well, Jack, what did he say?" the reply being, "Oh, the same old game. The Irish Question first; and we don't want to enter into any question of interfering in the relations between capital and labour." A proof that there is a demand in the country for legislative interference with adult labour is to be found in the increased support the movement is receiving in this House. Many more hon. Members are now pledged to the principle than there were a year ago, and this change is alone due to the pressure of their constituents. At every bye-election, too, we find both the candidates rushing forward to support the principle; for political honesty after all is an undetermined quantity. The growth of the demand is equally apparent abroad, for foreign delegates at foreign Congresses vote for legislative interference. It is well-known that when the question was first brought before the Trades Union Congress at Swansea three years ago the delegates of the working class expressed many of them marked disapproval of it. When it was put to the vote only eight delegates were found to have the courage to record their opinion in favour of it. But at the Congress at Dundee last year, in spite of the fact that there had been a delicate and skilful manipulation of the votes when a *plébiscite* was taken, it was found that the votes in favour had increased to 68, and there was only a small majority against the Motion. Surely this affords some slight indication of the increased demand for legislative interference with adult labour. I am pretty certain I shall get the votes to-day of many hon. Members, not because they approve the principles I am advocating, but because they know their constituents will withdraw their confidence from them if they place political questions higher than social ones. Some of the trades were represented at the Conference, and some of them were not able to send delegates. It is, however, a matter of notoriety that the battle of the dockers, in which some 60,000 or 70,000 were more or less engaged, was fought primarily on this question of hours; and it ensued in this: that 62,000 men had their hours of labour reduced from 10½, and in some instances 11½, to eight hours. It is the opinion of the men who conducted that agitation, that in order to enable them to maintain an eight hours day the restriction should have the confirmation of Parliament. I think we may take it as a tolerably conclusive fact that there is a deep-seated desire on the part of the workmen generally for a restriction of the hours of labour, and that this demand is one which is not got up by agitators, and those who speak at street corners, but has been enforced by the accredited delegates of the great Trade Unions, who have represented it to be the wish of the men on whose behalf they spoke that their case should be laid before Parliament with a view to legislative action. Let me now turn to the case of the bakers, among whom there has lately been a severe agitation, not only on the part of those employed in this trade in London, but also on the part of those employed in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and other places; and what has been the result? Why, that their hours of labour generally have been reduced to the extent of some 30 per cent. They were united and almost unanimous, although perhaps not quite so unanimous as the gas stokers, in desiring to see that the practical outcome of their agitation, obtained by their own unaided efforts, should be confirmed by legislation. Within the last four or five months another agitation has been going on by the railway men in favour of a general restriction of the hours of labour. The right hon. Gentleman below me (Mr. J. Morley) seems to differ from me, and to think that it is not the wish of the Executive of the

railway men that the 10 hours a day which they are asking should be confirmed by Act of Parliament. I am informed that their wish is as I have expressed it; but it is a question, on which it is easy to satisfy oneself, and if on further information I find I am in the wrong, I will tender an apology to the right hon. Gentleman. We have also had the tramway men uniting and agitating for a reduction in the hours of labour, and responsible men at the head of their Union tell me that they would not object to seeing the 10 hours a day, which they are claiming, confirmed by Act of Parliament. It may be argued that this is only a 10 hours question; but surely the principle remains in both cases; and if the Legislature makes up its mind to granting a 10 hours day, it may also on the same ground pass a measure adopting a day of eight hours. It has been objected that this sort of legislative interference would have the effect of driving trade from the country, of reducing the national output, and destroying the profits and capital of the employers. I have always held, both in this House and out of it, that the employers take far too great a share of the national means, and that a larger portion of the wealth created by the men, whether in railways, mines, factories, or any of the other industries, might equitably be given to labour, and that if this were the case trade would not be driven from the country, but a fair margin of profit might still be left to the employers. But if it be argued that by restricting the hours of labour we shall drive trade away from the country, I think I shall be able to show that in some industries at least this would not be the case. It will also be incumbent on me to try and show that the demand for legislative interference is as great in other countries as it is in this. It is often said, and with some show of reason, that it would be impossible for us in this country to maintain our commercial superiority if we were to shorten our hours of labour, because some foreigners are in the habit of working longer hours and are in receipt of smaller wages. All I have to say on that point is that if we are to engage in a mere race of production—if we are to urge our workmen into a sort of universal sweating struggle with other nations as to which can produce articles cheaper than the others, simply in order that the employers may realise great fortunes, I, for one, have no hesitation in stating that I am not greatly concerned in the result, whether the proposed reduction enables us to maintain our commercial superiority or whether it does not. But I think I shall be able to show that not only are we not the country in which most has been done to shorten the hours of labour, but we are a country in which, if we do not bestir ourselves, longer hours will be worked than in any other European country; certainly much longer hours than are now worked in America, Australia, and most of our colonies. If I succeed in making out a case on this point I think I shall have gone some distance in removing the scruples hon. Gentlemen now entertain in regard to this, to me, very plain, but to them most tortuous and difficult question. Now, what is it I am going to ask the House to do? I am not asking the House to pledge itself now and for ever to a cast-iron Eight Hours Bill, rendering it impossible for any man in any trade whatever to work more than eight hours a day. That, I admit, would be a most unreasonable proposition, and one for which I do not think the great bulk of the working men in this country are prepared. What I am putting before the House is a proposition of very different import. I am merely asking the Government, for the honour of this country and the welfare of the working classes, as well as for the national credit as a community of national reformers — because, let an Englishman be a Conservative or Liberal he always claims to be an international reformer—not to place the British representatives either at the Berne or the Berlin Conference in a different position from that of the representatives who will attend to speak on behalf of other Powers. I put it to every man in this House as an Englishman, as a man who respects and loves his own country, whether he can calmly contemplate the idea of the representatives of this country, which hitherto has constantly been showing the way in every reform, social, and political, having to take a back seat among the representatives of the other European nations? I think

hon. Gentlemen can easily imagine the sneers that would be indulged in by the foreign representatives when, having entered upon the discussion of the important question of an International restriction of working hours, the British representatives felt called upon to retire and leave the foreign delegates to carry on the discussion by themselves. It is for this reason that I have placed my Amendment on the Paper; it is because I hope to show the House there is not only a demand in this country, but a similar demand in America, and in all our Colonies, for International legislation on the subject that I desire Her Majesty's Government to take some cognizance of the invitation addressed both by the Swiss Republic and the Emperor of Germany to Great Britain to unite with the other Powers in considering this important question. It is a fact, which I think is corroborative of my argument, that we are now finding municipality after municipality, Town Council after Town Council, inserting eight hours' provisions in their projected local legislation. What, I ask, is the action of the London County Council on this matter? I believe there are Members of this House who have the honour of holding seats in that assembly, and I ask them whether on every occasion on which questions such as these have come under their discussion strong expressions of opinion have not been given in favour of the insertion of eight hours' provisions in the different local Acts springing from that Body? Gentlemen who have studied the question know that the largest Trades Union in the world is that of the Amalgamated Engineers. That Society has ramifications throughout the three Kingdoms, and if there is any combination that can do anything for the men belonging to it it may well be supposed to be that combination. Well, what do we find to be the case? That Trades Union, which comprises some 655,000 members, sent to Paris last July two delegates, in the persons of Mr. John Burns and Mr. Evelyn, who were instructed to vote for the eight hours day. Those delegates carried out their instructions in the same manner as the other delegates, and it must be remembered that they represented a class engaged in what is well known as skilled labour, and quite as capable of knowing their own wants and wishes as any Member of this House. I believe, Sir, I should be precluded by your ruling from even alluding to the vote of the Trades Council at Dundee with reference to the Bill introduced in the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lanarkshire, and, therefore, I will not trench on that ground; but may be permitted to say that the Resolution was voted without one dissentient voice by the delegates present, and was subsequently confirmed by the 365,000 miners whom they represented on that occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley) grounds his objections to this proposal, more than anything else, upon the difficulty of regulating labour in this country when there is no demand for it in other countries, and the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has busied himself with some observations in the same sense, a similar attitude having been adopted by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) who is not now in his place. I will endeavour to deal with the question in an International sense, and to some extent I am able, from personal observation, to afford information on this matter to the House. I was myself sent as a delegate to the International Labour Conference in Paris last year; there were practically two Conferences there. But taking the two Congresses as one they formed a complete body of nearly 1,000 working men. The discussions which took place led one day to the passing of Resolutions in favour of the International limitation of the hours of labour, and those Resolutions were practically passed unanimously. It is often said that our working classes do not wish to join the foreign working classes because their modes of procedure are different. I naturally expected that I should hear some blood and thunder and terrible speeches when I attended the Conference, but Spaniard, Italian, German, Frenchman, and American, made precisely the same class of speech that you listen to in your Trades Union hall or Radical Club on Saturday evening. They complained of the long hours of labour, and of the women of their various countries being engaged in occupations unfit for them.

They said—"Our employers grow rich and we remain poor; we are half-starved; we work long hours; we come to this Congress to get an expression of the opinion of the working classes of Europe and America upon the most important and vital of any questions with regard to which we can assemble together." While this Conference was sitting, an International Congress of Miners was being held. There was not one dissentient voice in that large representative Congress when the proposition was put that the question of an eight hours day of labour should be made the subject of legislative interference, and we find that during the last few months there has been an extensive strike of miners, and their first demand has been legislative interference in favour of the eight hours day; and similarly in the Austrian Dominions, and in the Belgian coalfields. Surely, these men know their own affairs better than any Member of any Parliament. I find I have received an ally where I least expected to find one—the German Emperor, whom no one will accuse of being revolutionary or Socialistic. His Majesty, for reasons which I do not presume to analyse, has chosen to make a most remarkable pronouncement; it may be for an ulterior motive, but I am quite content to take it on trust, and be thankful for assistance from an unexpected quarter. Far more significant is the return of 21 Socialist Members to the German Reichstag—men who belong to the Socialist Party, to which I belong myself. The first plank in the platform of these representatives is that the working day should be ristricted to eight hours. The increase in the Social-democratic vote shows that the demand for legislative interference in the question of an eight hours day is assuming proportions far greater than perhaps hon. Members are aware. I find in a Return of three years ago that the total democratic vote was 93,000. I find last week it had risen to 116,000. In 1887, the total social-democratic vote throughout the German Empire was 774,000. I find that last week it had risen to almost a million—an increase which my colleagues and friends, Messrs. Bebel and Liebnechf, attribute almost entirely to their advocacy of the restriction of the hours of labour, because they have by so doing placed before the German people a tangible plank on which men of many sections can unite, instead of losing themselves amidst vague vapourings and talk of hypothetical revolutions. I wish to bring before hon. Gentlemen, and especially the Members of Her Majesty's Government, that other Legislatures have also been called upon to deal with this question. It is not two months ago that the subject of an Eight Hours' Law was introduced into the French Chamber, I need hardly say it was negatived, though it received a modicum of support, clearly showing that it shadowed the minds of the electorate of the country. In the Legislative Chamber of Holland, too, an Eight Hours Bill was introduced, though it met with a fate similar to that of the French Bill. I have received a letter from a friend in the Belgian Chamber this afternoon enclosing his speech on the introduction of a Ten Hours' Bill, which met with the fate of the Dutch and French Bills; but I presume my friend would not be deterred from introducing an Eight Hours Bill, if it was conclusively proved to him that it was desired by the working classes of the country that such a law should be introduced. I wish now, Sir, to turn to the aspect of the question in America and in our Colonies. In some of the States of America Eight Hours' and Nine Hours' Bills have been passed. In Connecticut and Pennsylvania there are special agitations in the State Legislatures to introduce the eight hours' day into those States. In those States the hours are 8½ and 9. [An hon. MEMBER: And 10 and 12 hours.] That does not in any respect affect my argument. I have received letters from the leaders of the trades in those States, saying that they were applying to the Legislature to have the eight hours day confirmed, because they feel that the frequent occurrence of strikes was driving away trade and deteriorating their own social position. It is precisely because I agree with these men as to the extreme undesirability of strikes, and because of the enormous waste of energy and capital which they entail, together with the danger of social turmoil, that I advocate this International legislative restriction of the hours of labour, by which these consequences would be avoided. Turn

ing to our own Colonies, I find that in Canada, a Royal Commission has recently been appointed; and it has sat and delivered its Report upon the relations between capital and labour. The Commission has unanimously reported in favour of a nine hours day. I do not know whether the Canadian Government intends to take up their recommendations, but I do know that there is a keen agitation amongst the workers of Quebec for an eight hours day, and there is an equally keen agitation amongst the workmen who already work eight hours to have a confirmation of the system by the Dominion of Canada. By the authority of Sir C. Dilke I find that the workers in Cape Town, Grahamstown, and other towns of the colony are forming eight hours leagues. They are instructing their Members to introduce Bills into the Colonial Parliament, asking for the same for the working classes in South Africa as has been asked for in Germany and France. In the Australian Colonies it is a matter of public notoriety that eight hours is the normal day. In Queensland, a Bill was passed through the Lower House of the Legislature to fix the normal working day at eight hours. It was rejected, naturally, by the vote of the Upper House, just as if we passed a Bill in this House it would be met by the factious opposition of the hon. Member for Northampton, and also by noble Lords who sit in another place. I have what I consider to be much stronger evidence than this in the Colony of Victoria. I find it has become the practice in that colony for Local Authorities to insert an eight hours provision in all the contracts which they enter into. In January of last year, in passing a Tramways Act, the Parliament restricted the hours of work to eight per day. And these are not rash assertions. Anyone can verify them who chooses to do so; and if I have been wrongly informed in what I have stated I shall be in the position of Hamlet—I shall receive my shame and the odd bit. But if I am right I think I have proved conclusively that the foolish terror which exists in this country with regard to the legislative restriction of the hours of labour does not exist in Germany or France or America, and certainly not in our Australian Colonies. In New Zealand eight hours is recognised as the normal day; but the workers of that colony are not satisfied, any more than those in the other colonies, with this general recognition, and are beginning to instruct their representatives to bring before their Parliament propositions for the restriction of the hours of work. If, therefore, concurrently with the agitation which I have endeavoured to show exists in this country there is one going on in Australia and America, surely all honourable and fair-minded men who wish to do justice to their fellow-countrymen will do what they can to remove the load of toil which is crushing our working classes in many instances to the ground. They will, I think, see that this international movement affords ample opportunity for meeting the wishes of the working classes. By coming to the aid of the large class who are overstrained and overworked the House will atone for many injustices in the past; and I plead on behalf of those who provide us with our hats, our hosen, our food, and even our seats in Parliament, that we may adopt the principle of restricting the hours of labour by international agreement or at least authorise our delegates to be empowered to discuss it. I beg to move the Amendment standing on the Paper.

(10.5.) MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): In seconding the Amendment, I desire to say that, in consequence of the protracted length to which the debate on the Address has extended, I shall confine my remarks to a narrow compass. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Well, if the debate has been protracted it is because the administration of right hon. Gentlemen opposite offers so many points of criticism. But in justice to myself and my constituents I must say that though I accept implicitly the terms of the Amendment I by no means concur in the general terms in which my hon. Friend has supported it. I am by no means satisfied that there does exist a sufficiently large demand on the part of our working population for an eight hours day, or any other limit, to justify Parliamentary interference. I have made inquiries in well-informed quarters, and this is the result. Among the Lancashire cotton-spinners the preponderance of opinion is against the eight hours movement. Among the

engineers there is a great difference of opinion.

*MR. GRAHAM: My hon. Friend will not deny that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers gave instructions to their delegates at the Paris Conference on the subject. Those delegates were Messrs. John Burns and Evelyn.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I am not drawing my inferences from what took place at that Conference, but from entirely independent sources of investigation. At the same time, I am decidedly of opinion that the main objections which are urged against legislation for the limitation of the hours of labour, and notably the objections urged by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), are not at all sufficient or conclusive. The stock argument used is that combination among the working classes is able to produce the desired result. Certainly, I have heard that in my hon. Friend's own constituency in Lanark the miners, who are in a much less organised condition in Scotland than in this country, have been able by combination to obtain—certainly in the neighbourhood of Hamilton—a reduction of the working days. It seems to me that it is quite open to the Trades Unions throughout the country to combine to secure an Eight Hours Bill if they please. I would like to observe, however, that in certain trades combination is an absolute impossibility. In small isolated industries, or branches of industries, combination is impossible; and I know of one case recently where an attempted combination af the kind ended in disastrous results to the persons employed. It has been urged as a very serious objection to the proposal that the margin of profit secured by capital at the present time is very small in certain trades where the foreign competition is very marked. I think there is great force in that argument. If you take the cotton trade in Lancashire at the present time you find the margin of profit is very small; and if you were by a compulsory law to reduce the hours of labour there the result would apparently be that the manufacturers would be unable to carry on their production in competition with foreign countries. The object of the Amendment is to see whether we cannot by some international movement reduce the hours of labour so that a particular industry shall not be injured thereby. It is not an unreasonable request to make of the Government. It has received, in principle at least, the co-operation of the great German Empire. It has received the friendly recognition of, I think, most, if not all, of the great Powers of Europe; and there is no doubt a growing feeling among the working classes of this country that it is desirable to establish some more legitimate and fair apportionment of the hours of toil than at present exists among our principal industrial trades. I notice that the noble Lord opposite (Lord R. Churchill) has dealt with this question. I unfortunately did not receive from his speech on the subject the light and leading which I had a right to expect. He intimated that he was inclined to entertain the question favourably. What we want is not empty rhapsodies in favour of this proposition, but solid argument to show what we can accept and what we cannot.

Amendment proposed, at the end of paragraph 16, to insert the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the increasing desire of the working classes in Europe for legislative restriction of the hours of labour renders it desirable that this subject should be discussed by the representatives of this Country who are to be appointed to attend the International Conference on Labour Legislation at Berne or Berlin."—(*Mr. Cuninghame Graham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(10.15.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The Amendment moved by my hon. Friend has the inconvenience which attaches to all Amendments to the Address, which are not intended to challenge by a direct Vote of Censure the existence of the Government. It forces discussion upon the House under exceedingly inconvenient conditions. The Mover of the Amendment more than once intimated that he was confined in his remarks because important parts of the question were fixed for discussion in this House. That was a reason for not moving it at all at a time when it cannot be properly discussed. I have been a little puzzled since I listened to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who so ably did not second the Amendment. Had I not known that he would be perfectly inca-

pable of any such artifice of the Bar, I should have thought he had risen for the purpose of damaging the case of the Amendment as much as possible at the very earliest stage of the discussion. I would point out to the House that we do not know at present—or I do not think we do—that there is to be any Conference at all at Berlin which will deal with the question of the hours of adult labour. No doubt the Mover of the Amendment is much better acquainted with facts that have not happened than I am; but he must pardon me if I express a doubt as to the accuracy of his information respecting what the German Emperor meant by the language he used.

LORD R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): The limitation of the hours of labour was one of the first subjects in the programme of the Berlin Conference put before the public by the newspapers.

*MR BRADLAUGH: I am afraid the noble Lord has not given the subject that attention which he usually bestows upon matters, for though the rescript is hardly capable of that construction, there are limiting words addressed by the Emperor to his State Council which are capable of an absolutely opposite construction. Until I have some official information on the subject I prefer not to commit the House to a declaration as to something which is to happen at the Conference at Berlin—a Conference as to which I understand no official invitation has yet been addressed to Her Majesty's Government, and certainly none has been communicated to the House. The matter is now, according to the newspapers, before the Council of State on the invitation of the Emperor, and some of the questions to be considered will, if they are considered, prevent any dealing with the hours of adult labour at all. As to the Conference at Berne, I understand from the usual sources of information that the Swiss Government, in the declarations they have issued respecting the hours of labour, have not dealt with anything but the labour of women and children. I notice that the world "adult" is omitted from the Amendment, and I am not sure what the Mover of the Amendment means by that omission. Indeed, I am not sure that he knows what he means himself, because on a previous occasion he said he would not be so unreasonable as to prevent any man working more than eight hours a day.

*MR. GRAHAM: What I said was that I did not propose at present to come before this House and ask for a cast-iron Eight Hours Bill, and that I merely asked the House to empower the delegates sent to the Conference to discuss the question.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Of course, I should not press on the hon. Member words which he did not mean to use; but I thought I heard him say—and I took it down at the time—that he would not be so unreasonable as to prevent any man working more than eight hours. As the hon. Member did not mean that——

*MR. GRAHAM: Or say it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Or say it, I must apologise for the defectiveness of my memory. But I do not understand the phrase "cast-iron" Bill. Either it means eight hours or it does not. If it is more, then it is not eight hours; and if it is eight hours, why then it is eight hours. I object to language being used to people up and down the country which means one thing, and when the speaker is tackled about it is found to mean something else.

*MR. GRAHAM: I will explain to the House what I did mean.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I must really object to the hon. Member's interruptions.

*MR. GRAHAM: I have been accused with using language which means one thing at one time and another at another.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Speaker——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Mr. Cuninghame Graham.

*MR. GRAHAM: What I meant was this: I did not wish now, even if I had the power, to pass a Bill which would prevent people working more than eight hours. I wished to apply a Bill of the kind, by steps, to miners and workers in Government workshops, and then to trades and industries throughout the Kingdom which should declare themselves in favour of it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am afraid that we are now much in the same place. Miners and Government workmen are shut out of the discussion to-night, because of other notices standing on the Order Book, and I do not know what is meant by proceeding

by steps in the restriction of the hours of labour to trades and industries throughout the Kingdom. I would ask the House to note how excessively necessary it is to be careful on matters of detail. The hon. Member said that of the delegates who attended Paris one represented a Trades Union which numbers 650,000 members. The number of members of all the Trades Unions registered in the country—and the majority are registered—is nothing like that. The Trades Union of which he spoke is a very powerful one, and I think it has some 46,000 members. If you have to knock 600,000 odd off such a number, it shows that it is possible to have some carelessness of statement. Now, Sir, I trust that I have the interests of working men of this country at least as much at heart as any other Member. I have always been in favour of shortening their hours; but I have never been in favour of ruining their industries. The hon. Member said that one of the delegates at Paris was sent to represent that powerful Union, the Amalgamated Engineers. Well, he only claimed to be sent by one branch of the Union, namely, the London branch.

*Mr. GRAHAM: I wish to explain. I am aware that there is no Trade Union that has 600,000 members. I must frankly confess that I made an error in the figures. I took one figure for another, and read 600,000 for 60,000; and I apologise to the House for making the mistake. As to my statement about the representation of the Amalgamated Engineers at the Conference, all I can say is that Mr. J. Burns, whom I have seen this evening, was my authority, and Mr. Burns distinctly told me that the delegates represented the entire engineering trade.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: I will leave it there, only saying that, as far as my information goes, the delegate just mentioned represented his own branch, and his own branch alone. These, however, are matters of detail so trifling that one would not deal with them in this House were it not that they form part of the general exaggeration which characterises the statements made on this subject. With regard to the wording of the Amendment, I do not think it is, or ought to be, the duty of any Government to send representatives of this country to a Conference to discuss possible law-making in which they have no intention of taking part, and which they may intend to oppose. I thoroughly and heartily approve of the position taken up by Lord Salisbury last year: that, while willing that a discussion should take place on various topics expressly stated in which representatives of this country should join, there were two matters to which only vague reference had been made—the restriction of adult labour and the question of output—which our representatives should not be empowered to discuss. Unless the Government wilfully means to fetter this country in its industry, it would never be mad enough to give our representatives any power of discussing the restriction of that marvellous output which has carried this country so far in advance of all other nations. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment said that there were countries, such as the United States, where such laws as he proposes are already in force. For my own part, I think it would have been fairer to the House if the hon. Member had utilized the Parliamentary paper laid on the table last year on my Motion and had told us that there are several States in which eight hours is the normal day except, when otherwise agreed, and others where overtime work is to be paid for as extra. But there is overwhelming evidence in the Report of the Commissioners of Labour that in none of the States have these laws been enforced, and the percentage of eight-hour day labour is less than it was 50 years ago.

*Mr. GRAHAM: Quite true.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: The hon. Member says quite true. If so, he should have told it to the House, instead of referring to matters which instead of telling for the Amendment, as he wished the House to believe, told against it. What does eight hours mean? Take the textile trade. The hours in that are about 56½ per week. Are you going to reduce them to 48 hours, giving the same pay for 48 as for 56½ hours? [Mr. Graham was understood to dissent.] I wish you could be restricted now, if you will permit me to say so. I feel the need of asking some indulgence of the House, and I hope I may ask the indulgence of my hon. Friend. I hope he

will permit me to complete my poor argument in my own way, because it is a subject on which I neither wish to make jokes or to administer rebukes. We owe something to the Labour Statistical Department of the Board of Trade for the information given by it; and I hope that in future all Returns will give the number of hours worked in different trades in this as compared with other countries. The hon. Member did not say whether the men whose hours were restricted to 48 were to receive only 48 hours' wages, nor did he explain how the margin of profit would enable anything else to be done, especially as in the textile trades there is said to be no sufficient margin to bear this increase. The hon. Member who seconded the Amendment suggested that we should negotiate with other countries to keep ourselves in the same position of advantage as that in which we now are. This show a confidence in the generosity of other nations which we have not always shown to them. Do you think that the men will consent to have their pay reduced? The case of the Mover of the Amendment is that the working men are so badly paid now that life is unendurable. Are you going to take an eighth or a sixth off their wages so as to make their life still less endurable? The hon. Member said that there was, or ought to be, a margin, and that if not it did not concern him, even though the manufacturers were driven away. But if the manufacturers go the manufactures go to. It is a question of giving enough employment to a population which, crowded in big centres, sometimes becomes unmanageable when misled by thoughtless enthusiasts, who tell them that the Government should find them food and clothes. I do not know that it would be at all needful to address the House at any length on this subject, because the Mover of the Amendment has been demolished by his Seconder, were it not that I have some suspicion there are statesmen who look with favour on the hon. Member's proposal. The noble Lord (Lord R. Churchill) is entitled to rank among the statesmen of this country, and he is looking with a sympathetic eye, and perhaps with some slight favour, on the movement. In Germany the looking at the question with some slight favour has led to playing with it on the one hand, and repressing the movement on the other. The poor wages, the long hours and the terrific burdens of the great populations of Europe, seem to me to be due more than anything else to the pressure upon them of exaggerated armaments, which diminish the purchasing power of the wages earned by the working men, and take away a large number of men from the circle of producers, making them only consumers. One of the best courses we could adopt, if it were possible—which I am afraid not—would be to preach to the nations of Europe not to have their peace establishments higher than their war establishments used to be. It is said that in Great Britain there is a demand among working men for the restriction of the hours of labour by law. I deny it. I do not deny that there is some demand; there are demands for everything. I deny, however, that there is a general demand. I regret that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment has alleged that there has been skilful manipulation of figures at the Dundee Conference. The hon. Member is well aware that out of more than 300 Trades Unions making returns to the Registrar—and there are some that are not registered—only a very small minority took any pains to vote at all, showing that the bulk of them were indifferent to the expression of any opinion upon the subject. Although Circulars were sent out to every Trade Union, only a very few replied; certainly 250 did not reply. I think that in fairness this should have been stated to the House. My own means of judging the opinion of working men has not been limited to conversations with my constituents after speeches on the Irish Question. I hear the hon. Member say that he did not specify me; but certainly there were certain allusions to factious opposition on the part of the junior Member for Northampton. I know they were kindly meant, or not meant at all. Well, both internationally and nationally for the last 25 years of my life, outside the Trades Unions—for having, I am sorry to say, never learnt a trade, I never had the right to belong to any Trade Union—I have mixed in these questions at least as much as any living man in this country;

and I say that, even if the Trades Unions were unanimous on this subject, which they are not, you must remember that the bulk of the labourers, skilled and unskilled—I am sorry for it—do not belong to any Union. Although I cannot speak in the same familiar way as the hon. Member of the leaders of popular movements abroad, I have come across a good many of them, and amongst them M. Yves Guyot, the French Minister of Public Works, and he has given me an entirely different view from that stated by the hon. Member of the feeling in France on this question. I would ask the House to judge of the accuracy of the hon. Member's statements by one little instance. He told us that last year there were in Paris two Congresses on trade matters, but that they were practically one. Well, that is practically just what they were not. They were practically two. They would not work together, or do anything together. They both voted, for what?

*MR. GRAHAM: For an eight hours day.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: For an eight hours day for everyone? Well, that would put an end at once to the textile industries of this country. It would close at once some of our best foundries; it would close the bulk of those great works that have placed England in advance amongst the workshops of the world. It is not friendliness to the poor man to propose what you are proposing. His wickedest enemy could not do worse, for you are proposing to render impossible the industries in which many men gain their livelihood. Nor is it true that the working man's lot is unendurable, or is becoming more unendurable. There is distress, too much distress; long hours, too many long hours; but the hours are far shorter than they were when I was a lad—far shorter than they were when I commenced to be active amongst the people. The people's homes are better in the majority of instances. It is perfectly true—and I admit the great difficulty surrounding the fact—that in a huge collection of population such as you have in London you get extremes of poverty and misery that are appalling. But your eight hours will not touch that. It has nothing whatever to do with it. You talk of hypothetical revolution, and you tell us accurately enough that in the Marxist Party, to which you belong, this Eight Hours Question is one of the first planks. One of the features of the Marxist policy approved by the hon. Mover was the destruction of the *bourgiosie*. But these are vain words, or wicked words, if they are words which really mean that you can destroy one class in the interest of another in any civilised community at all, much less that you can do it here. I know more both of the workmen and their employers than the hon. Member. It has been my good fortune to hear many men of different trades speak well of their employers, and to hear them speak sympathetically of the difficulty in trade crises of carrying on large industries in which large amounts of capital are sunk. It is perfectly true that by some happy accident, or by some skilful enterprise, an employer occasionally amasses an enormous fortune; but that is the exception and not the rule, and many an owner of mills, or an employer who is engaged in some other great branch of manufacture, has to watch with the greatest care the narrow margin which enables him to conduct his business. If Parliament were to sanction such a proposal as this, it would mean that we can regulate the conditions of labour, and regulate them better than they can be regulated between employer and employed. I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Atherley-Jones) to suggest that whatever in combination the men may be able to effect between themselves it is open to Parliament to secure by process of law. My hon. and learned Friend is a good lawyer, but he is a bad legislator if that is his view. It has been urged that sanction of this kind given by Parliament helps to form public opinion. It is no part of the duty of Parliament to form public opinion on this question. It is the duty of Parliament to legislate for the prevention of crime, to prevent frauds of all kinds, to protect the weak, where they needed protection, against injury from the strong. It is the duty of Parliament to legislate where the conditions are such as to endanger life or limb. It is not the duty of Parliament to interfere between employer and employed in the conduct of their own

business. Neither is it true that this proposal involves an international question capable of decision by an international law. The standard of comfort differs in various countries; the wages are not the same, and values are not the same. I am in favour of shorter hours of labour; but I do not believe that any Statute Parliament can pass will have the effect of shortening those hours. The hon. Member (Mr. Cuninghame Graham) referred to the Returns relating to this subject in America; but he did not quote from it, and very wisely so, because he would have had to quote exactly the opposite to what he told the House, and the test is easy, the Return is on the Table. In the Library there is that magnificent volume on *Work and Wages*, which forms part of the last Census Return of the United States of America; and in the Reports of the Commissioners of Labour published by the most advanced and most settled States, there is evidence, over and over again, from the men themselves that the law has failed to shorten their hours of labour that combination has done it. In one case—in the Federal Law—and in several of the State laws there has been an enactment that men should only work for a certain number of hours a day. The men themselves have rebelled against that because it shortens their wage by one-fifth per day, and they absolutely made arrangements to break the laws by making enactments for hour labour instead of day labour. They engaged to work for periods of hours at so much per hour, with special stipulations to evade the law which it is said they are so anxious for. I do not think the hon. Member dealt quite fairly with the House. He talked about eight and eight and a half and nine and nine and a half hours of labour in European countries. He surely must know, if he has taken the pains to read the Return laid on the Table of the House to which I have referred, that there is no country in Europe in which the average hours of labour are as short as those he has quoted. He must know that even if there are compulsory laws, as there are in one or two countries, those laws are evaded with the connivance of the working men. This proposal will, in my opinion, have a most demoralising effect upon the labouring classes. Let the working men encourage a spirit of self-reliance, and settle their hours of labour for themselves. Parliament cannot make backbones for men who have not got them, and to legislate for the weakest and most helpless would discourage the strongest and most vigorous in the continuance of their efforts they have hitherto made, and which have advanced this country before the other nations of the world. What is the real object of these plans for the restriction of the hours of adult labour? Restriction of output. What does that mean? It means that we shall stimulate foreign endeavour in every case where foreign nations have access to raw material—and I know no case in which we have a monopoly of it—we shall stimulate them to drive us out of every foreign market in the world. If that is what the hon. Member is contending for it may be one of the weapons of the Marxist Party of social revolution; but even if I am to be denounced as factious and to be told that the whole of my constituents will vote against me, which I do not believe, I will vote for what I believe to be the benefit of the people and I will not allow any illusionary will o'-the-wisp to be danced before their eyes, which will only lead them in a quagmire from which the Marxist Party would not rescue them. I was astounded at one phrase that fell from the Mover of the Amendment. I understood him to say that on purely economical grounds the workmen have been agitating in their Trades Unions and their clubs. I have heard that some of the advocates of an Eight Hours Bill are rather hard on those who stand on economical grounds. I am inclined to traverse the hon. Gentleman's suggestion. I do not mean to say the hon. Member has been purposely incorrect, but I think he has been most unfortunate in misunderstanding the expressions of opinions of those he comes in contact with. It is true there is a Party which had its origin in Germany and which was driven to this country by the brutal coercion of some of its members some 30 or 40 years ago. It is true that that Party of social revolutionists exists; but I do not believe that its methods have taken deep root in the hearts of our people. It is perfectly true that if you go to men and say—

"Would you like the 5s. you receive now to be paid for working half the time," you would get a vote "Yes"; and one of the advanced members of the Marxist Party, in a book sent to me this week for review, says that the hours of labour are to be reduced to a minimum of two and a maximum of five. Let the working men in their organisations, without our help, settle for themselves what they want. Our duty as legislators is, when they are unfairly treated. to speak for them here; when we find them cheated, to bring in laws for their protection; when we find their lives endangered, to legislate if we can to diminish the danger, although we can do very little in that way, and we should do very much more if we can to make them more sensible of the danger they run, and more impressed with the necessity of combining to protect themselves from the consequences of danger. It is certainly no part of our duty to regulate the conditions of labour. The Mover of the Amendment said this is no Party question. I hope it will not be. Social questions will grow fast enough in this country without their being made the battledore and shuttlecock of personal ambitions and Party exigencies. I appeal to Members on both sides of the House—do not give any hesitating vote, and do not, for fear of offending somebody at the moment, vote in favour of this Amendment unless you are prepared to go much further still, and put the clock of England back to the time when this Parliament or its predecessor did regulate the hours of labour, as was thought in the interest of employers, and failed, masters and men combining against it. If the feeling of the working classes is in favour of short hours, we shall have them; if the feeling is hostile to such, your laws ought not to go against that feeling. If you are going to shorten the hours of labour and restrict production, where will you find the new wealth that is to keep the ever-increasing millions of this country? I can understand those in favour of Revolution voting in favour of this Amendment, but I, always in favour of Reform and against Revolution, will give my vote in the Lobby against it.

*(11.2.) MR. BEAUFOY (Lambeth, Kennington): I shall not for a moment attempt to follow the hon. Member for Northampton through his very elaborate arguments, but perhaps I may be allowed to say a very few words from the point of view of practical experience which, from an Assembly of practical men, may claim attention. I disclaim the character of a thoughtless enthusiast, but I have given careful consideration to this subject upon which we are engaged, and, having put my opinion into practical operation and in position, to give some sort of judgment as to the result. First, we are told there is no general desire on the part of workmen throughout England for any restriction of the hours of labour. To this I can say that I represent a constituency which includes a large number of gas workers, railway *employés* and others with whom I am in constant communication, and I find there is a most anxious desire among those two classes I have mentioned that there should be a limitation of the hours of labour to eight hours a day. Then we are told that the result of such limitation would be a great decrease in the output of manufactures. Of course, I should be unwilling to say this might not be the case in some trades, but I may venture to give the practical result within my personal knowledge. For six months the hours of labour of my *employés* have been reduced from nine and three-quarter hours to eight hours, and the result, in this instance, has been to secure a larger output than before and to reduce the overtime by 75 per cent. I may safely say, in a general way, that the output has not been diminished, but has rather increased. I cannot say if this would hold good of all trades, but there is the result of my experience. We are told that it is no part of the duty of Parliament to stand between masters and men, and how far that may be so I am not prepared to say; but inasmuch as this Amendment only raises the question

whether it is possible and desirable to consider the hours of labour, it would be most unwise for Government to refuse such a discussion. Many working men must be dissatisfied with the present condition of things in England; on the one hand, we have hours of unusual length and low pay, and on the other hand, we have no work at all, and the only resource left—the workhouse. From the workmen's point of view this is a matter of the greatest importance, and it would ill become the friends of labour to set themselves against a full and fair discussion.

(11.7.) MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): I was rather sorry to hear the speech of the hon. Member for North-West Lanark (Mr. Graham), for while I agree with his Amendment I am in the unfortunate position of being unable to agree with his speech in support of it. The Amendment is in favour of the Government taking part in the Labour Conferences at Berne and Berlin—the speech was in favour of a general Eight Hours Bill. Now, what inclines me to vote for the Amendment is this: A Committee has taken a vast amount of evidence in regard to the Sweating System, and that evidence tends to show that there are trades in this country in which work is carried on for terribly long hours. A large number of persons in London work not for 10 or 12 hours, but for 16 and 20 hours out of the 24. We have not yet had the Report of that Committee on the Sweating System, and it is probable or possible that when we do get it, it will contain some recommendation for shortening hours of labour. But if this Committee appointed by the present Government should make such a proposal, and if the Government reject the proposition now made, their hands will be tied and they will be unable to give any effect to the recommendation in the Report of the Sweating Committee. Taken in connection with the possible recommendation of this Committee, it seems to me the proposal of my hon. Friend is an eminently practicable one. It is a proposal that we shall try to find out if foreign workmen will agree with our workmen to limit the hours of labour. The result of such a Conference may be attended with the greatest possible benefit for the working classes, although the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who, I am sorry to see has left his place after delivering his speech, says of the proposal that from the wickedest enemy of the working classes no proposal could be worse. That is what the hon. Member says of a proposal that the working men of this country should have the opportunity of knowing if foreign workmen will co-operate for limiting the hours of labour. The hon. Member made another astonishing statement. He said, as regards labour, the only duty of Government was to protect the lives and limbs of the workers. I should have thought the duty of the State went a little further than that, and included protection for the health of labourers. But the hon. Member in his desire, I suppose, to get cheers from the other side, which he is always doing now—I am glad to see him return to his place—says the only duty of the State is to protect the life and limbs of the labourer. Would he not include protection to health?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Certainly, from diseases that may be serious.

MR. PHILIPPS: I am glad to get that extension of the definition. Further, the hon. Member says, "You cannot supply backbone by law to the weaker members of the community." Can't you? I think the hon. Member supported the Ballot Act, which was to supply backbone to those who needed it, and nothing else. If the hon. Member is consistent in his desire to get cheers from hon. Gentlemen opposite he should move to repeal the

Ballot Act and similar legislation. Then the hon. Member said that if we reduce the hours of labour we stimulate foreign competition. Yes, but that was unworthy of the hon. Member, for he begs the whole question. We are debating an Amendment which embodies the proposal that we shall try and find out, if we reduce hours of labour here in England, whether foreign manufacturers and workmen would co-operate with us, and, by international agreement, make this reduction of hours general throughout Europe. That is in itself an important thing upon which to be satisfied, and it is a matter not disposed of by a few words from the hon. Member behind me. The hon. Member endeavours successfully to get cheers from the other side of the House; but in spite of anything he has said, there are many Members who will support this very moderate proposition, a proposition which commits nobody to anything, and which is, therefore, in our present state of information a very excellent proposition. It is a proposition to find out if there is any truth in the statement that if British workmen reduce their hours of labour foreign workmen will take advantage of that to take the bread out of their mouths. I do not believe that foreign workmen will do anything so stupid. Generally speaking, they work longer than our people do; and I believe if we reduced our hours foreigners would reduce theirs in proportion, still keeping the relative distance. At all events, there are doubts about the matter which this proposal is intended to solve, and I hope the Government may be able to tell us that they propose to accept the invitations sent out from Berlin and Berne.

*(11.15.) MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I will only intervene for a few moments, and that in reference only to one particular industry—the cotton trade of Lancashire. Several speakers have referred to the effect of shorter hours on this great industry. I have been connected with the trade all my life, and have taken considerable pains to discover the length of the hours of labour in the different countries engaged in this industry. I would call attention to one matter which has not been touched upon in the discussion to-night, and that is the growing competition this trade has to meet from Asiatic labour. The trade of Lancashire has suffered immensely in the last 10 or 15 years from the growing competition of the cotton factories of India. A large business has been wrested from us, and there have been occasions when both employer and employed have suffered loss and distress through this cause. The House will realise the nature of the competition when I mention that while the Indian mills work 80 hours a week—and I may call the attention of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) to this fact—it supports the argument in his speech, to which I listened with much interest—at the present moment the Indian factories work 80 hours a week, while in Lancashire we are restricted to 56½ hours. One result of this is that the Indian cotton trade has been growing by leaps and bounds, while our trade has been stationary in comparison. In the last 20 years the consumption of cotton in the factories of India has increased 1,000 per cent., while the increase in England has been 25 per cent. During the same period the increase in the Continental factories of Europe has been 120 per cent., and in America 130 per cent. Further, not only are the hours of labour so much longer in India, but the rate of wages is just a quarter of the rate in Lancashire. Cotton mills in India have, in several instances, paid dividends of 30 and 40 per cent., while the average rate of profit in Lancashire in the last few years

has not been more than 3 per cent. We have in the town of Oldham 90 co-operative concerns; their accounts are published and open to public inspection, and the works are largely owned by members of the working classes, and I can say, after having studied the accounts with some care, that if you take the figures for five years back, and take profit and loss together, you will find that these concerns have not paid, on an average, more than 3 per cent. Now I ask the House, would it be possible to put any additional burden on a trade already so heavily handicapped? Remember, the hours of labour are also longer in Germany, France, Switzerland, and even in America. I went through Central Europe two years ago, and I inquired specially in all the principal towns as to the hours of labour in factories, and I found that, as a rule, those hours were from 15 to 20 per cent. longer than the hours in England—while wages was 20 to 30 per cent. less. The great difficulty in compulsorily shortening the hours of labour would be that you would cripple our foreign trade. If we did not depend upon our foreign trade, you might make a good many experiments, perhaps without very much risk; but we have a total import and export trade of 2,700 millions sterling; the life of our people, in fact, depends upon it, and we cannot afford to make such experiments with it. It is carried on under the hottest and closest competition, and no country competes with us more severely than Germany. I have very little faith in any International agreement for shortening the hours of labour being carried out. No agreement has ever been carried out for reducing the armies of foreign nations. Mutual jealously prevents any such International agreement, and so long as you have France and Germany filled with hostility to each other you cannot expect any arrangement for shortening the hours of labour being honestly carried out. I believe, on the whole, the scheme is illusory and impracticable, but I hope and believe that the influence of public opinion and the higher moral sense of the community will steadily tend to a wholesome reduction of the hours of labour. I shall rejoice to see the hours of toil lessened and the toilers get more of the product of their labour. Though I cannot agree with the hon. Member's Motion I recognise the high motives that have actuated him in his endeavour to carry out a principle that is a credit to his humanity.

*(11.20.) THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Considering that the terms of the Motion contemplate particular action on the part of Her Majesty's Government abroad, it is perhaps desirable that some statement should be made on their behalf. From one point of view I think it will be conceded that this discussion will not be without its use. I would be the last to remark unfavourably on the differences of opinion which have been expressed on the other side of the House, as the question so nearly affects the welfare of large masses of the community in this country, and is one to which the attention of the deepest thinkers has been directed. It is, therefore, not surprising that men equally actuated by the most benevolent and patriotic motives should take different views. It cannot but be useful that on a question of this kind opinions should be expressed by gentlemen who have deeply studied the subject, and who have given materials for future thought and for careful consideration of this question when it comes before the House in a more concrete form. It is unfortunate that I shall be obliged to deal very restrictively in the reply which I make on the particular form of the Amendment, for Her Majesty's Government have received from the German and Swiss Governments invitations to Conferences on the laws affecting labour, and the replies to those messages cannot be communicated to Parliament until they have been received by the Govern-

ments to which they are addressed and the consent of those Governments has been obtained to the publication. It is in no narrow or technical spirit that such reserve is maintained. It must be evident that in negotiations on such momentous questions the invitation itself might be subject to modification in consequence of views expressed by other nations. The premature announcement of the intentions of one Government might thus prejudice the interest at stake, and consequently, I think I need not offer an apology for reserving a statement as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government until a fitting time. A question has been given notice of for to-morrow, and then I hope I may be able to state what reply has been made to the German Government. Her Majesty's Government have received information to-day that the Swiss Government, in view of the proposals of the German Emperor, and of the parallel lines on which their own proposals have moved, have resolved for the present to abandon the intention of holding a Conference at Berne. But as to the Conference at Berlin, it is impossible for me to state at present the purport of the reply made to the invitation, and I cannot but think that in these circumstances the House will not press on the Government an Amendment which would fetter their liberty of action. This I can say, that the German invitation has been replied to in no unsympathetic spirit. The questions involved deeply concern the welfare of our own population, as well as the populations of other countries, and the invitation has been considered by Her Majesty's Government in a spirit suitable to that in which it has been tendered.

(11.25.) LORD R. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, it has been my fortune to listen in this House to many statements and explanations made by Under Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs. I have always thought there was a great deal of unnecessary pomposity and secrecy about the attitude which the Foreign Office—no matter which Party is in power—adopts on these occasions. All my experiences, however, which have been varied and numerous, have been put into the shade by the performance of the right hon. Gentleman who now represents the Foreign Office in this House, for although the debate has been going on for some time, and notice was given of the Amendment more than 10 days ago, the right hon. Gentleman is only able to inform the House that in answer to a question which is to be put to him to-morrow he might be able to say what reply Her Majesty's Government have made to the Government of Berlin. The position of the right hon. Gentleman is this. The right hon. Gentleman intimates that one word said to-night indicating the tenour of the reply which Her Majesty's Government have made to the German Government might be of the greatest possible danger to the question at stake, but he added that to-morrow he might be able to reply without any danger accruing therefrom. I have heard many Foreign Office answers, but I never heard one to come near that. Then the right hon. Gentleman went further and said that Her Majesty's Government had received news to the effect that the Swiss Government have decided to abandon their project of holding a conference at Berne. The right hon. Gentleman was very candid, but that information was announced this very morning in every newspaper. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the reply to the Government of Berlin had not been unsympathetic. I really do not quite know what to make of that. I can quite understand that negotiations with Foreign Powers, or matters which might at any moment cause International disputes, ought not to be prematurely made public. But this is a matter of a totally different character. On social questions of this kind, on which diplomatic negotiations have taken place before, and a certain attitude has been taken up, it does seem ridiculous that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs is not instructed by the

Foreign Secretary to tell the House frankly and plainly what has been the upshot of the invitation which has been sent by the Government of Berlin. Everyone must think that there is not the slightest rhyme or reason in concealing from the House whether the Government has adopted, with regard to the Berlin invitation, the same attitude as they adopted with reference to the Conference at Berne. From the answer of the Under Secretary, I suppose there has been a modification in the terms of the answer. I thought there would have been, and I think that this declaration might as well be made in this debate as at question time in the House. I cannot, of course, vote for the Amendment, as it is an Amendment to the Address. I regret the practice of bringing forward on the Address Motions which have no legitimate connection whatever with it, but which ought to take their chance with private Members' Motions. But, as the subject has been raised, I will put in a plea for discussion of the matter. If the eight hours movement, or a movement for some restriction of the hours of labour, is an unsound one, nothing could demonstrate its unsoundness better than Parliamentary discussion, and in a great manufacturing country like this for the Government to say they will not discuss such a subject appears to me to be the most foolish and most short-sighted attitude they could take up. I could understand the Government sending a delegate to a foreign country and instructing him to argue against such a proposal. At any rate, then, by taking such a course full information on the subject would be at the disposal of Members of Parliament and everyone else. The speech of the hon. Member for Northhampton has been a mixture of banter, rhetoric, and assertion The banter was not first class, but so far as the hon. Member himself is concerned it was effective. The rhetoric, too, was not first class, and the assertions were very loud and strong, and more or less appealed to the emotions. The speech called forth loud manifestations of feeling on the Government side of the House. In fact, while the hon. Member was speaking, and as I took the part of a philosophic observer, the interesting problem passed through my mind—which would be the first Member of the House to take his seat on the Treasury Bench, the hon. Member for Northampton or the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The hon. Member for Northampton said that the Government had no right to take part in any foreign Conference on social questions unless they were prepared to legislate upon those questions. That seems to me a most untenable proposition. If they will not discuss those questions in a Conference at Berlin, they will have to do so in the House of Commons. The hon. Member has alluded to the state of affairs in America, and has said that laws regulating adult labour in that country have either been evaded or been futile, but the fact that such laws have been passed proves, at least, that they were adopted with popular assent and approval. Therefore to take up the dogmatic position that there is no demand is both childish and unsound. The hon. Member has carefully omitted all reference to Australia, to which we are bound by nearer and closer ties than we are to America, where the people are not inferior to us in ability, resource, education, or knowledge, and yet where the eight hours system has for a long time been adopted. In that very valuable work by Sir C. Dilke, *Greater Britain*, this passage occurs :—

> "In the Australian Colonies the eight hours day prevails and is all but universal, as in the towns of South Africa the nine hours day is as far as European labour is concerned. . . . The eight hours day of labour has the full approbation of the whole community."

It may be said, perhaps, that the eight hours day has been obtained by custom and

not by law, but a further passage from the same book shows that in the Australian Colonies it is customary to insert in public Bills dealing with work carried out by Government a provision relating to the hours of labour, and that in some private Bills clauses fixing the day's work at eight hours have been inserted. Sir C. Dilke said with reference to the result of this eight hours system:—

"In Australia the effect of the eight hours and at the Cape of the nine hours day is socially conservative—that is to say, the comfort conferred by it on the working classes prevents agitation and revolutionary tendencies."

This was written by a student of modern history and society who did not attempt to excite public opinion for any object of his own, but wrote to demonstrate facts and facts alone. These references were worth infinitely more than the speech of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire and the fervid rhetoric of the hon. Member for Northampton.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I should like to inform the noble Lord that in my humble way I have already quoted the passages which he has read to the House.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I am glad to hear it, because a twice told tale is more likely to impress than a once told tale. Now, I will refer to the extraordinary position taken up by the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Member says it is not the duty of Parliament to form public opinion. How many Members of the Radical Party will support the hon. Member in that assertion? I have always thought that it was the proudest boast of that Party that the greatest reforms of the last century have all been owing to the way in which it has formed public opinion in this House. I shall be surprised if it is possible to find one Radical Member who does not express profound disagreement with that opinion. Then the hon. Member said that it was not the business of Parliament to interfere between employer and employed for the regulation of adult labour. Why, for the last quarter of a century the operation of the laws passed in thi House has been to restrict, modify, and control adult labour directly and indirectly. From the day when the first Factory Act was passed Parliament has been regulating the hours and time and operation of adult labour. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] I cannot argue with the hon. Member who dissents; I can only advise him to enlarge the scope of his studies and not to intervene rashly in the discussion of subjects of which he evidently has an imperfect knowledge. Then the hon. Member for Northampton said that it was the duty of Parliament to protect the weakest against the strongest. Have I quoted the hon. Member correctly?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: No, I said more than that; I stated what it was the duty of Parliament to protect the weakest against.

*LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I put down the words at the time. But is the hon. Gentleman prepared to assert positively at the present moment that labour is stronger than capital?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I made no such assertion at all. I will, if necessary, repeat what I did say.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I am not perfectly clear that the hon. Member did not say that capital and labour did not respectively represent the strongest and the weakest.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am sure the noble Lord does not intend to misrepresent what I said. Shall I repeat it?

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I prefer to rely on my own recollection. I listened with concentrated attention to everything which the hon. Member said, and I am not certain that labour with regard to capital is not occupying the relation of the weaker to the stronger. We have heard a great deal about the narrow margin of profit and the extreme danger

of doing anything that will cut down for the capitalist the margin of profit on which he conducts his enterprise. But I have not been able to detect lately where that narrow margin exists. The income-tax and revenue Returns certainly do not show a narrow margin of profit in trade, and we must also bear in mind the enormous number of limited companies started every day, and such matters as the dividends of railway companies, which are now very largely in excess of those of former years. Do these undertakings show a narrow margin of profit? This narrow margin of profit is a fine assertion when it is put forward, and I admit that the eight hours movement is a cutting of profits, but it does not mean a lowering of wages. I cannot, however, accept the narrow margin of profit on the assertion of the hon. Member or on the indignant assertions of the hon. Members behind me. In these social questions I believe in a sympathetic attitude. The hon. Member did not allude to the mass of unemployed in the country, and yet the mass of employed to unemployed is a feature of great social importance not paralleled abroad. Do not, therefore, let us adopt a dogmatic attitude in these social questions, but let us, for one party as well as for the other, adopt a sympathetic attitude; let us examine the demands of the labouring classes and look at the matter from their point of view, and, having done so, if we are obliged to disagree from them, let hon. Members endeavour to show their reasons for doing so by means of instructed and enlightened argument and by a total absence of anything like dogmatism.

(11.52.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I wish to make an appeal to the House on this question. There will be ample opportunity during the course of the Session for a renewal of the discussion on a much wider scale. The Government are anxious, but are unable, to take part in the discussion as freely as they would wish to to-night, and seeing that time is now so important to the interests of the country, and that it is also desirable, in the interests of the working classes, that fuller discussion should be allowed on this matter, I do trust that the House will agree at once to come to a decision upon this Amendment, and enable us to-night to dispose of the Address.

*(11.53.) MR. CREMER, (Haggerston): I do not propose to prolong the debate so as to prevent a Division being taken, but I wish just to say a few words before we go into the Lobbies, to explain the reasons why some hon. Members on this side of the House intend to vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend. I wish it to be clearly understood that they are going to vote for it because it simply proposes that an inquiry should take place, and that by voting for the Amendment they are not necessarily pledging themselves to the principle involved in the Eight Hours Bill. I regret that so much time has been taken up in discussing the Eight Hours Bill rather than the principle involved in the Amendment of my hon. Friend. I hope the Government will accede to the principle in the Amendment, because while I have very little faith in the good likely to result from such a Conference, it shows that we are getting on when a Monarch of a first-class power steps down from his throne into the popular arena and practically says to his subjects:

"I admit your grievances, and I am prepared to discuss them with you; I will do more, I will invite other Governments to assist me in the discussion of your grievances with a view, if possible, of mitigating the evils from which you suffer,"

I think the Government ought to assent to the invitation and to reject the advice

of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, by accepting the principle of the Amendment. The noble Lord made some extraordinary assertions. He said that the Government of this country were in a better position than any other Government to dispel any illusions on the question of shortening the hours of labour, and then he wound up with the extraordinary declaration that he should vote against the Amendment of my hon. Friend. It seems to me that the position taken up by the noble Lord on the question is utterly illogical, and I hope that the Government will not take his advice, but will accept the principle embodied in the Amendment. I admit that personally I have not much faith in the inquiry which will take place at the Conference because of the quarter from which the proposal comes. I have no particular faith in monarchs or in the prescriptions which they, from time to time, propound for the social and economic grievances of the mass of the people. But, seeing that machinery has multiplied the power of production to such extent as to render unnecessary prolonged hours of labour, I hope that the Government, will agree to take part in the inquiry which it is proposed to hold at the instigation of the Emperor of Germany.

*(11.59.) MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: Are we to clearly understand that the Government during the Session will give us a further opportunity for discussing this subject?

*(12.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 87; Noes 198.—(Div. List, No. 9.)

Main Question put, and agreed to; the humble Address to be presented to Her Majesty by Privy Councillors.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will to-morrow resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Mr. Cremer

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present Session be referred to the Committee of Supply.—*(Mr. Jackson.)*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will to-morrow resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.—*(Mr. Jackson.)*

TREES (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 70.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday, 3rd March.

MOTIONS.

COMPANIES ACT (1862) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir William Houldsworth, Bill for the amendment of "The Companies Act, 1862," ordered to be brought in by Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 161.]

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK BILL.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill to amend the Law relating to Trustee Savings Banks, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Viscount Curzon, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Sir John Puleston, and Mr. Haldane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 162.]

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill to amend the Law relating to Deeds of Arrangement, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Chance.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 163.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 25th February, 1890.

COLONIAL COURTS OF ADMIRALTY BILL.

A Bill to amend the law respecting the exercise of Admiralty jurisdiction in Her Majesty's dominions and elsewhere out of the United Kingdom—Was presented by the Lord Knutsford; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 29.)

HARES PRESERVATION BILL (No. 6.)

Read 3ª (according to order); Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

CROWN OFFICE BILL (No. 20.)

THIRD READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: With regard to the question which was asked me last night by the noble Earl Kimberley, I am not quite certain that I properly heard or understood the discussion which occurred between him and the noble Lord Selborne, who also referred to the matter. However, I have now got the figures, which are already familiar to those who take part in the Black Rod Committee, and I can state them exactly. The actual saving which has been made on the occasion of the new arrangement involving the appointment at the Table of your Lordships' House is £1,400; and the amount is arrived at thus: the reduction in the salary of the office, in accordance with the Committee's Report, accounts for £600 per annum; the transfer of Mr. Thesiger from the list of Parliament Clerks, where his salary was £600, rising to £1,000, accounts for £600 more; and the abolition of the office of Secretary of Presentations accounts for another £500. That makes a total of £1,700. On the other hand has to be taken into account, as I am now informed, the appointment of a new Clerk in the Parliament Office, with a salary beginning at £100. An allowance has also to be made for the officer by whom the large personal correspondence of the Lord Chancellor must be carried on in relation to ecclesiastical matters, and that correspondence will not cease or diminish merely because the formalities of presentations are transferred by the Bill to the Clerk of the Crown. I may mention, for the information of the noble Lord who put the question, that this matter was not arranged by me, but was recommended in 1874 by a Royal Commission, and was agreed to in a correspondence which occurred in 1884, before I was in office. What has taken place will not diminish or alter the character of the arrangement by the fact of the transfer of the duties from one person to another. The amount of the allowance was fixed at £200 by the Commissioners, who recommended the abolition of the Presentation Office—an office which, I need hardly say, was far from being a sinecure. So that the noble Lord will see there has been a considerable saving effected. There has been some question as to the saving effected by the recommendation of the Black Rod Committee, acquiesced in by me, and carried out, though it was competent to me under the Statute to have appointed somebody else, had I not considered myself bound by the undertaking, as far as it was an undertaking, of my predecessors. But I think there has been a saving effected by the new arrangements, which include the appointment of Mr. Thesiger. The House, of course, understands that reductions, corresponding more or less to the two largest items in the calculation, would have followed the appointment of any other gentleman from the Parliament Office to the vacant place at the Table; but the particular appointment which I took the opportunity of making carried with it two further advantages which could not have been otherwise obtained—the rejection of an engagement to abolish the Presentation Office, and the consequent saving of £300 per annum. As I have said, the saving is £1,400, and by the appointment of Mr. Thesiger the saving has been £300 less than it might have been had I not taken him. That, I believe, is how the figures are arrived at, though I confess I did not quite understand them the other night, nor indeed do I now entirely, as neither set of figures appears to be quite accurate.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am obliged to the noble and learned Lord for the answer he has given.

Bill read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL.—(No. 14).

SECOND READING.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE: My Lords, the Bill for which I have to ask a Second Reading this evening is, I believe, identically the same as that which was passed by your Lordships two Sessions ago, and therefore it might seem that I should best discharge the duty I have to perform by simply asking for the Second Reading. But I bear in mind that a great deal has passed during these two years, and also that in all probability—I may say, certainly—many of your Lordships are not as familiar with the subject of cathedrals and cathedral churches as I am myself. I may tell your Lordships that, as Dean of Ely, I served a long apprenticeship in matters affecting cathedrals, and it was in the course of that apprenticeship that I learned the details of the governing rules and regulations under the Cathedral Statutes. The fact is that a large number of our cathedrals—I will not say all of them, but certainly a large number of them—are placed in the position of having Statutes of considerable antiquity, which, like many other antiquated things, are totally unfit for present-day use. For example, the Statutes of the Cathedral of Ely date from the reign of Charles II., and those of the Cathedral of Carlisle, with which I am now connected, date from the time of King Henry VIII. I need not say that many things have happened since even the later of those two dates, and that it is probable changes will be required in the rules and regulations with regard to those cathedrals, as in reference to others similarly constituted; but the cathedrals are in the unfortunate position that they have stereotyped Statutes which nothing shortof an Act of Parliament can change. I brought the subject before this House more than 10 years ago; and on that occasion the late Lord Beaconsfield, who had had his mind independently directed to the subject, proposed that a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose of going into the whole subject of cathedrals and their government. Her Majesty was pleased, at the recommendation of Lord Beaconsfield, to appoint such a Commission, and I had the honour to serve upon it. The late Archbishop and a number of gentlemen, including the present Lord President of the Council, worked very hard upon it for a number of years. We took a great deal of evidence with regard to the different cathedrals; we made a Report as instructed by the Commission upon each cathedral separately; and we presented a General Report as to what we thought ought to be done upon this subject. This Bill is the outcome of the recommendations of Her Majesty's then Commissioners. It was discussed, though not exactly in its present form, two years ago in your Lordships' House, and after being considerably discussed it was modified in Committee, and it has now got into such a condition that I am able to say it is approved of by all those who are intimately connected with these matters—that is to say, all the Cathedral Bodies, I believe, without exception, are desirous that this Bill should pass, and there is no substantial opposition to it in any quarter whatever. Now, what has been the history of this Bill? I had the honour of introducing it two Sessions ago into this House, and, as I have said, it was then carefully discussed and modified and brought into its present form. It went then to the House of Commons, and there, like a great many other Bills, was altogether lost—it went in, but it never came out. Last year it was thought desirable to try the opposite course of introducing the Bill first into the House of Commons, in the hope that if we had a favourable ballot it might stand a chance of being read a second time. Well, my Lords, we had a most unfavourable ballot—I think the number we drew was about 289, or some such comfortable number, and the result was, as might have been expected, that it never came on at all. It was blocked by one Member, and I cannot find that there was any other Member who sympathised with him. At all events, that delightful process of blocking, which is so great an institution in another place, entirely defeated this Bill, and it never came on for a Second Reading at all. It is no use complaining in this House of what takes place in the other; but it is, at all events, a relief to my feelings to say that I think it is a hard case that a Bill which has practically met with no opposition, simply owing to certain rules and regulations of the House of Commons, has never had an opportunity given to it of

any opinion being expressed upon it at all. I know positively that the leaders in the House of Commons are in favour of it; and I know, certainly, that if it had a chance of coming to a Second Reading it would pass without difficulty; and yet, owing, as I have said, to certain technical rules, the Bill could not come before the House; and last year it accordingly died what may be called a natural death. This year I do not know what the success of the Bill may be, but it has been thought wise to begin the process the other way; to ask your Lordships to be kind enough to give it a Second Reading in this House, and then to send it down to the other House, in the hope that it may possibly get a Second Reading there. It is very difficult to prophecy what may happen; at all events, it is very difficult to prophecy at present with regard to the Bill; but I cannot help thinking that seeing the importance of the subject with which it deals, and the fact that it is the result of the hard work of those who sat on the Royal Commission, there must be sufficient freedom and wisdom in the House of Commons to give it a Second Reading. My Lords, I can only conclude by saying that having worked upon this subject for a number of years, and having given to it a great deal of time and attention, the day will certainly be one of the happiest of my life in which this Bill having been passed Her Majesty shall be pleased to give her assent to it.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next.

COUNTY COUNCILS AND LOCAL RATES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the financial engagements which were made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Local Government Board when the Local Government Act was passed in 1888; and to inquire whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to consider the possibility of making provision during the present Session for the fulfilment of those engagements, so that the County Councils of England and Wales may receive, without further delay, the additional sum of not less than £700,000 per annum in relief of local rates which was promised to the ratepayers? I do not think it is necessary that I should make any apology for asking your Lordships' attention for a short time to a matter which greatly affects the County Councils throughout England and Wales. For I am well aware that many of your Lordships have taken a very keen and active part in these new and important Bodies having been elected to them by the new popular constituencies established by the Act of 1888. I feel it is a matter of importance that Her Majesty's Government, and others outside this House, should be aware that on these matters of finance a very deep interest is taken by all the County Councils of the United Kingdom. Now is the time when we ought to make our voices heard in regard to local taxation, because, doubtless, the financial proposals of the year are now being finally arranged. I think it is best that I should, in the first place, recall to your Lordships' recollection what the financial engagements were to which I allude, which were finally made in connection with the Local Government Act, 1888. Those financial engagements were stated by Mr. Ritchie very fully at the time of his introduction of the Bill. I will shortly recapitulate what they were, and I beg your Lordships to remember that upon the financial proposals of the Government with regard to this great measure the favour with which it was received largely depended. The proposals were the following: All grants in aid of rates formerly made to the County Authorities were to cease. The effect of that was at once to knock off £2,600,000 per annum. Instead of that grant in aid the County Authorities were to receive in future from the liquor licenses, £1,378,000; from other existing licenses, £1,590,000. Beyond this, from personalty in some form or shape, Mr. Ritchie stated they were to receive £1,800,000, and from new licenses they were to receive £826,000, making a total grant from the Imperial Exchequer to local taxation of about £5,600,000 per annum. At to both these latter grants he declined to state from what special source they would be drawn: throwing the responsibility of this upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Deducting, therefore, the old grants-in-aid, which were to the amount of £2,600,000, there was what was called by Mr. Ritchie throughout the discussions in the House of Commons, a round sum of £3,000,000 per annum to be furnished in aid of local taxation from Imperial sources, in addition to the £2,600,000 formerly given by the abandoned grants in aid. That, I hold, was the key to the whole of the Government proposal with regard to the Bill of 1888. Personalty, the Chancellor of the Exchequer afterwards told us, was to be made to contribute to local taxation by means of making over to the Local Authorities about half the Probate Duty; the new licences were to be what were called the Wheel and Van Tax and the Horse Licenses. But your Lordships will observe that in all the early discussions upon this great measure the details of these new grants in aid were left entirely out of the discussion by the President of the Local Government Board. He simply adhered to the one great principle that it was necessary and fair to give an additional subvention of £3,000,000 sterling per annum to the Local Authorities in relief of local taxation. That was the constant burden of every speech that he made. I will go on to consider a little further, if your Lordships will allow me, what was the tone which was adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to this great matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer went into this question of Imperial and local taxation most carefully, and he put this question to the House. He said he thought he ought to ask to what extent the ratepayers were entitled to the relief which was to be given to them—this additional and new relief of £3,000,000 sterling per annum; and he then went on to protest strongly against this relief being considered simply a relief to what he called the squirearchy, and he impressed upon the House of Commons that a very large portion of that amount would go "to the relief of the poorest class of ratepayers in the poorest towns of the Kingdom." I quote his words. He then proceeded to point out that of late years there had been an enormous increase in the rates levied on houses and lands, and stated that in the 20 years from 1868 to 1888, the local rates had risen from £16,000,000 to £26,000,000 per annum—a total increase of £10,000,000 per annum in 20 years. And he reminded the House that the case was worse even than it looked, because that increase in local rates had taken place at a period of very depressed trade, and when the value of land had enormously decreased. Then he summed up the position, by saying he thought he had fully proved the case that the ratepayers were entitled to the relief (that is the £3,000,000 sterling per annum), which the Government proposed in that Session to give them. He then went on further to claim for his proposals that they were conceived in a just spirit; that it was an act of justice, and not an act of mercy, which he was proposing towards the oppressed ratepayers of the United Kingdom. He concluded his statement of the financial arrangements proposed by the Government by saying that the financial adjustment which he now proposed was to be a final settlement between the local ratepayer and the Imperial taxpayer; that he had felt great difficulty in making the adjustment between Imperial and local taxation; and that the circumstances of the time were such that they had been obliged, once for all, to settle the contributions to local expenditure, and so to place them upon a firmer basis. Now, my Lords, what was this final settlement? It was that this £3,000,000 sterling per annum was to be paid over in addition to the grants hitherto received by the Local and County Authorities. We must always remember the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that this was a thing to which the ratepayers were entitled, and that this grant was by no means equal to the heavy growth of rates, but he was afraid it was all that Parliament could give. It was stated to be a final settlement between the local and Imperial taxpayers, not a gift or an act of mercy, but an act of justice towards the local ratepayers, something to which they were entitled. Now, what is the result at present after that careful treatment of the matter, and final pronouncement as to what was just, by the greatest financial authority of the day? It comes to this: that instead of there being £3,000,000 per annum to the good at the disposal of the Local County Authorities, they have only about £2,200,000 per annum—that is to say, almost a third less than was

stated to be what was due to the ratepayers. My Lords, I think I have made out a case showing that this matter is one requiring the gravest consideration, and one which we may very properly press upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government. I would remind your Lordships that during all the debates in the House of Commons there was no hint whatever given that if the Wheel or Cart Tax and the Horse Duty were not accepted by Parliament, this subvention of £3,000,000 a year would be reduced. I have very carefully studied the debates, and I do not find that that was ever held out; on the contrary, it was always considered that that sum represented what was fair and just to the Local Authorities, and that the Government would have to find the £3,000,000 somehow or other. The first hint of danger was given in this House. My noble Friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in his able statement of the case, certainly did throw out a doubt on the subject when he said that—

"The relief to local taxation would be not less than 5d. in the £1 if the Wheel Tax, &c., were authorised, but that it would only be 3½d. in the £1 if those taxes dropped."

But that was only in allusion to the chances of House of Commons procedure at the close of the Session. My Lords, this is no light matter. I have the honour to be Chairman of the Staffordshire County Council, and as far as I can make out from the statements of our experts, the loss we have sustained by the reduction of the £3,000,000 to £2,200,000 is something like £20,000 a year, which is a serious loss to the ratepayers. Well, the Bill passed into an Act in August, 1888, and it passed with the general understanding that £3,000,000 was to be the amount given. There was to be an Autumn Session, and it was supposed that the final arrangements would then be made. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was besieged by questions upon the subject of the Wheel Tax and the Horse Duty. His answers were all in the same vein: he scorned the idea of their not passing. Up to the 29th of November his answers were hopeful and buoyant. Then, at last, the fatal 29th November came, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer adopted a different tone. He said the condition of public business was such that it was impossible to go on with the Wheel and Cart Tax and the Horse Duty that Session. They had to be abandoned owing to the state of business in the House of Commons, and he threw out, apparently, merely a suggestion that it might be better thereafter to ascertain what the County Councils themselves thought about those taxes, so that the Government might be guided somewhat by their opinion. That was the first sign of the new policy which was adopted on this subject. Well, the Session closed, and Parliament met again in 1889, and the first real discussion upon this important financial question took place when the Budget was brought before the House of Commons. I am afraid we must come to the conclusion that though the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been most ardent in favour of the ratepayers in 1888, and could find no words too serious in which to speak of their injuries in the past, and to express his intention of setting those injuries right, other people had wooed the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the Recess. The words which I will read to your Lordships from his Budget speech were alarming. He spoke of the advocates of local taxation reform as Cormorants who were dipping their hands in his pockets, and then he said—

"It belongs entirely to the Municipal and County Authorities to say whether there will be a revival of this tax;"

and then—

"It is rather the President of the Local Government Board who has to do with these matters than the Chancellor of the Exchequer"

—a very different tone indeed from the sympathetic language of 1888. The tone of sympathy and compassion for the local taxpayer had vanished, and that individual was now represented as appearing in the form of a pauper at the gates of the Imperial Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman doubtless allowed that the Government would still continue to give the subject their serious attention; but he said that it would be for the Local Boards to take the initiative in regard to any fresh taxation; and that, if their local resources proved to be insufficient through not having these taxes, they might move in the matter. The right of the ratepayers which was before acknowledged in every way, to receive this sum was now apparently

dropped. Their right to this distinct sum was entirely put aside, and I am afraid we cannot conceal from ourselves that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's mind on the subject was altogether altered. There is one point which must not be overlooked, to which will particularly call your Lordships' attention. It was said when the subvention of £3,000,000 was first made over to the Local Authorities, that the taxes were increasing taxes, so that the receipts from them would increase with the growth of the wealth of the country, and would meet the growing local expenses. Therefore if we are now told that as the receipts from the Probate Duty and the old licences have increased there is not the same claim for the £700,000 or £800,000 promised from new sources, that is no answer to us, because that very increase was promised and considered when the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised the £3,000,000. So much for that subject. Now with regard to the Wheel and Cart Tax and the Horse Duty. When it is said that the Local Authorities should themselves decide whether they desire them or not, I beg your Lordships to observe that the Government could not more successfully have thrown an apple of discord between town and country than by asking them to express an opinion upon these measures. It is exactly a matter which would separate town and country, and I think it was rather an unfair act to throw this responsibility upon them. With regard to the taxes themselves, I hope your Lordships will understand that I am not arguing in favour of the Wheel and Cart Tax or the Horse Duty or anything of the kind. I do not think it would be right for your Lordships in this House to express any distinct opinion with regard to imposing fresh taxation. And for myself, I entirely decline giving an opinion upon the merits of that tax, and I do not think it is the business of the Councils to do so. It is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to decide what is the fairest tax to be imposed, taking everything into consideration, as to the relative burdens of different classes of ratepayers and taxpayers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was the most difficult thing to adjust the balance between local and Imperial taxation, and he announced that this £3,000,000 per annum might be considered as the final determination of the matter. I would once more most emphatically deny that it is the business of your Lordships' House or of the County Councils to express any opinion upon this subject whatever; while I hold that the Government, having committed themselves most strongly upon this grave subject, and Parliament also having expressed itself most strongly upon the question of this subvention, we have a right to claim this sum from some source or other from Her Majesty's Government. I do not believe that these great popularly-elected Local Bodies will ever give up the subvention of £800,000 a year now that it has been once promised them, and I cannot think that any Government can decline for long to give this large portion of the subvention upon which the Act of 1888 was based. And why should they decline to give it now? Surely they should not do so at this moment when, in all the counties of England, we want all the aid we can get. The first starting is necessarily costly, and it is at first starting that the counties specially require all possible financial assistance. I need only allude to the heavy cost of putting in order the whole roads of the country—disorganised by the House of Commons' action in sweeping away turnpikes without supplying proper and fair means for their maintenance—to show the pressing need at present for aid to local resources. Then I would venture to remind the House and the Government that all over our counties leading men of business—in all the various and very different walks of life—have come forward heartily and warmly to give their time and thought and trouble to the starting of these great County Councils. If it is found at the end of the three years that, owing to the lack of this £800,000 a year, there is bitter disappointment felt at the results and at the financial condition of the Councils, those people who have come forward and taken the chief part in them will be the first to be blamed by the local constituencies. So that I venture to appeal to Her Majesty's Government on behalf of those who have come forward to promote the success of these important new institutions to make their path in futnre as easy as possible,

and to enable them to manage successfully the finances of the Councils by giving them this subvention as promised. I claim it, however, not only as a matter of policy but of right, and I take my stand upon those distinct assertions of the greatest financial authority of the day,—the Chancellor of the Exchequer—when he said his proposal was fair and just, that he proposed to make a final settlement of the matter by this subvention of £3,000,000, and that his scheme which he then brought before Parliament and the nation was the relief which was due to the ratepayers of this country. My Lords, I ask Her Majesty's Government the question which stands in my name.

*EARL STANHOPE: My Lords, I trust I may be permitted to say a few words in support of my noble Friend's speech: He has very clearly and ably traced the origin of the promise of Her Majesty's Government to assist County Councils at their first starting. I may say that the County of Kent, with which I am connected, is deeply interested in this question. Not only the Chambers of Agriculture, but our County Councils have passed resolutions in favour of this proposal. My noble Friend has quoted opinions expressed, and statements made, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not only in propounding his Budget, but also in answer to various questions which were put to him; but I may say that I have a later quotation, which seems to me to be rather more encouraging than those made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply to a question put to him in May last by Mr. Swetenham, Member for Carnarvon. His answer was this—

"Besides the Wheel Tax, the Bill in question proposes the introduction of a Horse Duty, and I may say the President of the Local Government Board contemplates the re-introduction of that proposal; but it is for the County Councils to realise that it is only a strong and general opinion on their part, that would justify us in taking up the question."

Now that is exactly what the County Councils have done. They have passed resolutions asking Her Majesty's Government for assistance in reference to local affairs. The subject has been treated so exhaustively by my noble Friend that I would only say in addition, undoubtedly at starting these County Councils the local expenses are largely increased. In my own county there have been a great many contested elections, and they are paid for out of the county rates. Then there is no doubt that the keeping in order of the county roads will be an increased burden. I cannot say what it will be in our county as regards the exact financial results; but I know that instead of there being a saving there has been an increase; and I foresee, though I believe our County Council is doing the business exceedingly well, a still larger increase. I do not expect that an answer will be given to-day; but I hope that the speech of my noble Friend will draw the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the matter when he is in a week or two, if he is not even now, considering his Budget proposals. I earnestly hope that the forcible way in which he has brought the matter before the House will lead to its being considered in another place.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, the noble Earl has, undoubtedly, drawn attention to this subject in an exhaustive manner. I only wish that my noble Friend could have done so in the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the subject is one to which my attention has only lately been directed. Of course, I am not so well acquainted with the matter as my noble Friend, who has looked thoroughly into it; but there is one thing which I am bound to notice and emphasise from the beginning, and that is that the system of direct grants from the Exchequer for local purposes has ceased. Direct grants were taken away and resources were to be found from local means, as well as from particular sources; those from personal property to a certain amount were alluded to in the Budget of my right hon. Friend. But with regard to what was undertaken, I am instructed wholly to deny that there was any financial engagement as to the special sum, or as to the special means to be taken, except that they were to come from local resources. Your Lordships are quite as well aware as I am of the history of the Wheel and Van Tax, and of the Horse Duty. As soon as the Wheel Tax was proposed exemptions were claimed from all parts of the country: it was asked whether a cart taking such and such things, or used for such and such pur-

poses, would be exempt, and so it went on, so that with one thing and another the Van Tax would practically have been exhausted by the exemptions. With regard to the Horse Tax also, it was so far from being accepted by the agricultural body that it became almost impossible to proceed with it, and the two taxes proposed were attacked in such a manner that they had to be abandoned. With regard to the future, all I can say in respect of this matter is that though it may still be desirable that additional means should be found, they must not be looked for from direct Imperial taxation, but in some way or other from what I may call local resources. That is really all I can say at present upon this question. I am told that practically a similar question to this which my noble Friend has asked has been or is about to be asked in the House of Commons, where it will naturally receive a more exhaustive and fuller answer than I can possibly give. I can only say that I have given as satisfactory an answer as I am able upon the present occasion, and I must leave the matter for the reply of my right hon. Friend elsewhere.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, the noble Viscount can hardly expect that his reply will be very satisfactory to those who are interested in the question of the finances of the County Councils. I quite feel the difficulty in which my noble Friend the Viscount is placed, particularly at the present moment, and I trust that the answer he has given is not to be taken as a final answer and an end to all our hopes, because, as the House will see, the case is a very strong one indeed. When the Act of 1888 was passed one of its most important portions was the financial portion. No one is better acquainted than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer with all the questions which have been debated for so long with respect to local finances; and when he told us in 1888, as the noble Earl has pointed out, that he was making a proposal which he thought was a just one, offering a subvention to the County Councils, to which he admitted the ratepayers were entitled, in the form of an additional grant of £3,000,000, I think those who are interested in the County Councils were entitled to suppose that the Government would fulfil that expectation, and would give in aid of the local rates a sum of at least £3,000,000. Now, what happened, as your Lordships are aware, was that, in consequence of the failure of a particular proposal of taxation, that sum was reduced by some £800,000—that is to say, by more than one fourth. It appears now to be the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer towards the County Councils to say that it is for them to devise the taxes, by and out of which their funds are to be supplied; but I contend, with the noble Earl opposite, that that is in no respect a proper duty for County Councils; it is doubtless for them to say that they are entitled to grants if they feel they are entitled to them, but as long as those grants are to be made on the authority of Her Majesty's Government it is surely for Her Majesty's Government to say from what source those grants are to be derived; it is for them to make their proposals to Parliament, and for Parliament to determine upon them. If Parliament does not choose to have the Van and Wheel Tax and the Horse Duty, I contend it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to fulfil the expectations they held out, and to provide by some other means this £800,000. I think, my Lords, the Earl of Harrowby did not quite state the case for the immediate consideration of this question as strongly as he might have done. It is not only on account of the special expenses which fall upon these Councils at their initiation and at the commencement of their work that this money is now particularly required; but it is also because the County Councils have had expenses thrown upon them by the action of the Government which they did not at all anticipate. Government grants in aid ceased at an earlier period than was expected by the County Councils. It was supposed that those grants would cease on the 31st March, 1889, that they would be paid up to that date, and that then the County Councils would enter upon the receipt of their funds, and would be able to carry on their work without further grants; whereas those grants have in most cases ceased several months before the 31st March. In the case of the West Riding of Yorkshire, of the County Council for which I have the honour to be chairman, the additional cost of maintaining the main roads for the financial year preceding

that in which their financial operations began was no less than £40,000. That sum was not covered by the Government grant; and in the course of the current financial year we have had to pay that £40,000, in addition to the usual sum of £90,000, for the maintenance of our main roads. The same thing has occurred again in respect of other grants for medical officers and other officials. There is great doubt entertained in that case as to whether the course taken by Her Majesty's Government is legal. The question has been raised by the West Riding County Council, and an action is soon to be tried before the High Court. But I do contend that when, by the action of the Government, these extra charges over and above those which belong to the first twelve months of the existence of the County Councils have been thrown upon them, it is of special urgency that the question raised by the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby) should be dealt with without delay, and that the deficit in the means which it was promised to the County Councils they should enjoy — should be made up without further delay. The responsibility for doing so appears to me to rest upon Her Majesty's Government. A Resolution on the subject was passed in the County Council with which I am connected with absolute unanimity, and I believe similar Resolutions have been passed in almost all the other County Councils of the country. I venture to assure Her Majesty's Government that if they do not do something to fulfil what I have no hesitation in saying are the just expectations of the County Council, they will find themselves troubled a good deal with many and loud outcries from the important Public Bodies which they themselves have created.

*LORD BASING: My Lords, I cannot help expressing my satisfaction that your Lordships have devoted this portion of your time to the consideration of what is certainly a very important, and may become a very burning subject. There can be no question that the County Councils throughout England have been very much dissatisfied by the failure of Parliament to provide something to fill the gap occasioned by the dropping of the Wheel and Van Tax. It is easy to pick faults in any proposal which may be made, and I am far from saying that the Wheel and Van Tax, as originally proposed, would have been popular. In fact, no new tax is popular—it would be true to say that all new taxes are unpopular and perhaps difficult of collection. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having proposed this tax for the purpose of giving aid to the County Councils, or of enabling that aid to be granted, allowed so many and so considerable exemptions to be made in regard to the different classes of persons that the tax was frittered away, and people considered that it would have been no longer a fair or equal tax. That having been the result of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal it would be rather hard on the County Councils to impose upon them, that which it was not their business to give, the expression of an opinion in favour of the re-introduction of that tax, or the responsibility of finding a substitute for it. The Government tied themselves to a plan; that plan failed, for what reason I do not care to inquire more closely; and I think they are bound to find some substitute for that which they proposed in order to provide the subvention which they admitted it was their duty to grant.

EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I will not again travel over the ground which has been already so ably traversed by the speakers who have preceded me; but I wish to supplement the statements of my noble Friend who introduced this subject, and my noble Friend who followed him, by calling attention to the more than probability of the expenses of the main roads going on in an accelerated ratio. Parliament has decided that turnpike tolls should never be renewed, at least as far as the word "never" applies to anything in legislation — it has set its face decidedly against the renewal of turnpike tolls. Now, the consequence of the lapse of the old Turnpike Acts and the absence of any new legislation with regard to one subject which they dealt with very effectually, namely, the width of the wheels of vehicles carrying very heavy loads, has been a saving of shillings to those who provide timber trucks, and heavy waggons for carrying beer, flour, stones, and so on. There has been a small economy possible in the construction of those vehicles, but it has cost pounds to the ratepayers for the

additional repairs to the roads which have been rendered necessary by the use of those vehicles. As one broad-wheeled waggon or timber-truck after another wears out, or becomes disused, my experience has been (and I speak as one who from the commencement of the Highway Act has occupied the chair of a Highway Board) that they will invariably be replaced by others having cheaper and narrower wheels, which do enormous damage to the roads in all directions. A very large proportion of those vehicles issue from the towns. Timber, of course, is generally not cut in the middle of a town, and at all events it has to be transported from the place where it grows on trucks or waggons. But heavy brewers' drays and millers' waggons are very likely to issue from the towns, and the increasing damage done to the roads of the country by the transport of enormous weights on very narrow wheels since the lapse of the Turnpike Acts, and in the absence of any corresponding provision of a like nature to ensure some protection to the roads, is becoming a more and more serious matter. I think that gives the County Councils who are now charged with the repair of the main roads an additional claim upon the Government for the fulfilment of, what I consider, something very like a promise on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, at any rate, to some general legislation with regard to wheels which will renew some of the protection and safeguard to the roads of the country which existed under the old Turnpike Acts, but which subsists no longer in the absence, as far as I am aware, of any provisions in any legislation passed since the expiration of the Turnpike Acts.

*LORD DENMAN: My Lords, I think it is perfectly clear, from the words of the Lord President of the Council, that this is entirely a question for the House of Commons. My noble Friend behind me said, as I understood, that some of the functions of the County Councils could not be performed by the magistrates; but their small numbers in comparison with the number of magistrates would not be sufficient to carry out the business of the country. I assure your Lordships there is a great dissatisfaction at the way in which this Act is being carried out. There are enormous grants already given to the County Councils, and they should be content with those grants. In the last Money Bill that was before the House, I believe, in the Local Government Bill there is a clause providing that the County Councils cannot originate Bills for the ratepayers; they can only defend Bllls. Almost every County Council has petitioned for new taxes to be granted to them; but they have already the Probate Duties and the Licensing Duties, and I am satisfied that the hasty legislation which was carried on in a most unusual manner through both Houses of Parliament is bearing no good fruit. My Lords, I am an old man, and I did not think I might live to see this day, but I have felt it my duty to remonstrate against the hasty passing of such a measure as you have passed. You must remember that every extra grant you propose has to pass through the House of Commons. Consequently you are initiating legislation, but you have done very little. Speaking of the County Councils, one of their own Body said rather irreverently perhaps, that it was a case of "much jaw and little wool." My Lords, I do not think it is possible these small Bodies, meeting a few times at a distance from their homes, can ever get through the business of the counties in the way that the magistrates of each county did. The system of election is entirely faulty; it is founded upon the course of the Municipal Elections in Ireland, by which there is cumulative voting for owners provided for. In fact, it is faulty in principle, and I am quite sure that until you have what was proposed in this House on the County Electorates Bill, that every householder shall have a vote, you will do no good. Instead of that, they are only £10 occupiers or owners. That, my Lords, was a very retrograde movement. In 1881, upon the Enfranchisement Bill, it was proposed to take a £10 rental. That system was opposed by many eminent authorities, who said that the principle of scot-and-lot voting was safer than the system of rental. In 1866 a Bill was thrown out because it was based on rental. Rating is the true principle, and you will find that the system is one that cannot work. You cannot expect 60 people to do the work of 200, and of several other Bodies besides. I felt

fully justified in moving the rejection of the Local Government Bill on the First Reading, but my Bill was not allowed even to lie on the Table. That was the first instance I ever knew of such discourteous conduct towards any Member of this House, and nearly the oldest Member. I trust this question will receive attention, and if any attempt is made to repeal the Local Government Act of Scotland, which abolishes several most useful Bodies, I hope it will meet with more support than the Motion which I made the Session before last, when my Bill disclosing the irregularities in both Houses of Parliament was thrown out on a First Reading, and not allowed to be printed.

House adjourned at half-past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday 25th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE CORK UNION.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the refusal of the Vice Guardians of the Cork Union to the request of Mr. William D'Esterre Parker, who has been an elected Guardian for the past 30 years, as expressed in the following letter:—

"Sir,—In consequence of the numerous complaints which have been made to me by the poor people in receipt of outdoor relief in the Monkstown Division whose weekly stipends have been reduced, I will thank the Vice Guardians to allow the relieving officer to let me see the application and outdoor relief book on Saturday for the purpose of ascertaining the correctness of their complaints, with the view of bringing the question under the consideration of the Vice Guardians, in the hope that, when the individual cases are fully inquired into by them, they will be good enough, at this particularly inclement season, to discontinue the reduced scale, and allow the poor what they were in the habit of getting, except in any cases where the circumstances had since altered. — Faithfully yours, W. D'Esterre Parker;"

and why this request was refused this gentleman?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Vice Guardians of Cork Union did not see any reason to direct the relieving officer to produce his books for the examination proposed. To permit such a practice on the part of individuals would tend not only to an unnecessary waste of time of relieving officers, but also to an undue interference with the discharge of their duties; but the Vice Guardians informed Mr. Parker that they would carefully consider any case he might bring before them. It is the case that Mr. Parker has been a Guardian for many years.

*MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): May I ask whether, in the present extraordinary administration of the Poor Law in Cork, any facilities will be given to the ratepayers or their representatives to supervise or ascertain how outdoor relief is granted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not believe that anything contrary to law is going on in Cork.

*MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what is the amount of the expenditure per head in Cork Workhouse, including establishment charges?

*MR. A. J BALFOUR: I have no information.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS IN BRADFORD.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to a memorial from inhabitants of Bradford, praying for the re-opening of the postal receiving office in Market Street, Bradford, which was closed some months ago by official orders; whether he is aware that great local inconvenience has resulted from this closing of a post office in an important thoroughfare; and whether he will now be prepared to give instructions for the re-opening of the office?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the postal receiving office in Market Street, Bradford, was closed after the branch office in the next street, Tyrrel Street, had been opened for postal busi-

ness, it being considered better to distribute the Post Office accommodation more equally by opening another receiving office in Thornton Road, a little further from the branch office than Market Street; especially as there are already two letter boxes in this street, one at each end of the Town Hall. This has accordingly been done; and, as I informed the hon. Member by letter on the 23rd ultimo, I should prefer to wait and see how far the result is satisfactory before making a further change. But I shall be anxious, above all things, to meet the convenience of the locality.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the Report of the Select Committee to whom the City of London Police Bill, 1889, was referred, urging the desirability of dealing with the whole question of police superannuation throughout England, including the Metropolis; and if he now sees his way to introduce a Superannuation Bill for the Metropolitan Police, and one for the Constabulary Forces, upon the lines of the Acts obtained by Lincolnshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, or otherwise to redeem the promises held out to the Constabulary by many of his predecessors for some 20 years, or otherwise to take action upon the recommendations of the Police Superannuation Committee which reported in 1877?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have had my attention called to the Report and the Statutes referred to in the question. The subject of police superannuation is now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and I hope before long to be able to inform my hon. Friend what course the Government will take with regard to it.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS AND POLITICAL SPEECHES.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that on the 13th of February, at the National School at Aldeburgh, Suffolk, which is in receipt of a Government grant, the schoolmaster, who acts as secretary to the local branch of the Primrose League, distributed a number of copies of political speeches of a highly controversial character, printed under the auspices of the Woodbridge Division Conservative Association, among the boys of his own standard, and among the monitors of the other standards, for circulation, expressing at the same time the wish that the parents should read the publications in question; whether practices of that kind meet with the sanction of the Education Department; and whether any steps will be taken to prevent their recurrence?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): It would, of course, be very wrong for teachers to utilise their position in school for Party objects; but I am informed that the schoolmaster in question is not secretary of the local branch of the Primrose League, and that he handed the speeches to the boys after school hours upon his own responsibility.

THE ALLOTMENTS ACT.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith (Mr. J. W. Lowther) whether application was made two years ago by the labourers of Dinder, in Somerset, to have the poor's land of that parish let as allotments under "The Allotments Extension Act, 1882"; and whether the Trustees have taken any steps to carry out the above Act; and, if not, what action the Charity Commissioners propose to take to enforce the law?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Commissioners are without information as to the application mentioned in the first paragraph. They have repeatedly urged the Trustees to give the notices required by the Act, and, in the result, notice of letting a portion of the land amounting to 11 acres was given on December 25th last, directing applications to be sent in before February 15 instant. The Commissioners are informed by the Trustees that up to that date no applications have been received.

*SIR W. FOSTER: I should like to ask whether the land belonging to the

Trustees offered for allotments is not at a considerable distance from the village?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I believe that 21 acres out of 24 are at a considerable distance from the village. The Commissioners have been pressing upon the Trustees, and will continue to press upon them, the desirability of effecting an exchange of the land.

DISTRIBUTION OF PAMPHLETS BY RURAL POSTMEN.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether complaints have reached him that John Henry Gregory, a rural postman, attached to the Deddington Post Office, in or since October last, at a time when he was delivering post letters, and was in uniform, distributed in North Aston prints of letters addressed to the *Banbury Guardian*, and signed "Lion," and "Justice," which had not come by post, nor bore any postal address, and which reflected on the conduct of Mr. William Churchill, of Deddington, and defended the conduct of Police-Constable England, with regard to a charge against Mr. Churchill, which was heard before the Deddington Bench on 27th September last; whether the distribution of such prints by a postman on duty is permitted by the Regulations of the Post Office; and whether such distribution was with the knowledge or approval of the Postmaster of Deddington?

*MR. RAIKES: Complaints to the effect mentioned by the hon. Member have reached the Post Office. The postman Gregory gives his assurance that he was not on duty when he distributed the prints or leaflets in question; but, be that as it may, their distribution by a postman at any time, or under any circumstances, constituted a clear breach of Regulations, and he has been seriously admonished and cautioned as to his future behaviour. The distribution of the leaflets was without the knowledge or approval of the Postmaster of Deddington.

THE BERLIN LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to give the House any information as to what course the Government is likely to adopt with regard to the proposed International Conference on the condition of Labour in Foreign Countries?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to take part in a Conference proposed by the German Emperor to examine into grave questions with respect to the welfare of the working classes, the solution of which may be facilitated by international co-operation, in accordance with the principles of legislation accepted in this country.

THE PRIMROSE LEAGUE.

MR. BROADHURST: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the national schools at Baston, Lincolnshire, were closed on Friday afternoon the 14th inst. to allow of preparations being made for a Primrose League entertainment in the schoolroom that evening; and, if so, whether it is within the right of managers of national schools to close such institutions to facilitate the holding of political meetings?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I know nothing of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. Every public elementary school must be open 400 times in the course of the year in order to obtain a grant; but if that requirement is observed, there is nothing, so far as I am aware, to limit the discretion of the managers in granting an occasional holiday.

IRELAND—RAILWAY AT ARDGLASS.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government have received the Report of the inquiry, held on the 24th January, in Ardglass, by Mr. John G. Barton, C.E., into the desirability of constructing a Railway from Ardglass, *viâ* Killough, to Downpatrick, there to join the Belfast and County Down Railway; whether he is aware that last season herrings were often sold in the morning, when they could be carted to Downpatrick, as high as £1 per mease of 635, and in the evening of the same day as low as 2s. 6d. per mease, from want of facilities for their carriage, while they have even

sometimes been left to rot on the shore, and that as much as £68,000 worth of herrings have been taken in a season at Ardglass by English, Scotch, Irish, and Manx boats: whether his attention has been called to the recommendation contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Railways, 1888, that

"A line should be constructed from Downpatrick to the important fishing harbour of Ardglass;"

and whether, considering the very great value of this short proposed Railway for the development of the fishing industry of Ireland, the Government will grant the assistance required for its construction?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it would be premature for Her Majesty's Government to make any statement at present in regard to light railways.

THE LONDONDERRY POLICE.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to a report in the *Derry Journal* of a case before the Derry Magistrates, on the 5th of last December, in which two boys were charged with throwing stones at the police, and in which one boy, named M'Daid, was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment, and the other, named Clifford, to 14 days' imprisonment, and also to five years' confinement in a reformatory; whether the charge against Clifford was merely that he had aided and abetted M'Daid; whether the police constable who made the charges said that he saw Clifford among the other boys, but he did not see him throwing any stone; and whether, under the circumstances, he will take steps to have that part of the sentence on Clifford which relates to confinement in the reformatory remitted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Having regard to the previous convictions of Clifford, one of which also involved detention in a reformatory in 1886, remitted subsequently on memorial, it would not appear to be for the young offender's benefit that he should now be discharged.

LE CARON.

MR. COBB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Anderson handed to Le Caron a considerable number of documents, in addition to those which were produced before the Special Commission; whether, with regard to his answer to a question on the 15th of March last, that he knew nothing of any documents other than those which were used by Le Caron in Court, he can state whether he now knows if Mr. Anderson kept any list of the documents handed by him to Le Caron; whether all the documents, whether used in Court or not, have been returned to Mr. Anderson; and whether the Home Office will allow Mr. Anderson to have the custody in the future of these and other confidential documents?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have given to the House from time to time all the information which I consider that I ought to give consistently with my public duty with regard to the documents in question. In obedience to what has been the tradition of this House with respect to the secret service, I must respectfully decline to answer the question of the hon. Member.

MR. COBB: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has any more knowledge on this subject now than he had on the 15th of March last?

MR. MATTHEWS: I informed the House a short time ago—I forget the date—that all the documents had been returned. That is the only answer I can give to the hon. Gentleman.

THE ROYAL YACHTS.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will be good enough to inform the House of the result of the recent surveys held upon the Royal yachts *Osborne* and *Alberta;* whether it is correct that the hulls of both vessels are in a large measure unsound; and if he can state the amounts necessary to be expended upon the hulls, outfits, engines, and boilers of each vessel for the purpose of making them seaworthy?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Some of the timber and inner planking of the *Alberta* amidships above the turn of bilge are decayed. The stern and some of the timber and planking at the bow, and some of the timber and planking right aft, are also more or less

decayed. These are the principal defects. The *Osborne* has not been found unsound. A little of the outside woodwork at the bow is rotten. It is proposed to expend £9,000 on the *Alberta*, including cost of annual outfit, and about £5,000 similarly upon the *Osborne*.

MR. GOURLEY: Does that include the cost of the machinery?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes — the repairs.

NORTH AMERICAN FISHERIES.

MR. GOURLEY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary for State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have recommended, or intend recommending, the Government of Canada to extend the *modus vivendi* of the Chamberlain Treaty of Washington relative to the North Atlantic Anglo-American fishery disputes; whether they will recommend that the *modus vivendi* arrangement shall continue, pending a final interpretation and adjustment of the Treaty of 1818; and, when he expects to be able to place upon the Table of the House all correspondence relative to this and the Behring Sea fisheries?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The *modus vivendi* in regard to the Canadian fisheries can only be renewed by an enactment of the Parliament of the Dominion, which is now sitting, and which it is understood will consider the question during the present Session. Negotiations are proceeding in regard to the Behring Sea fisheries. Under the circumstances, no pledge can be given as to the date of the presentation of Papers.

SCOTLAND—THE DEATH DUTIES.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the case that, in the case of transference of property from the dead to the living, personalty in Scotland pays a Probate Duty of 3 per cent on the capital sum bequeathed, whilst Feu Duties and Ground Annuals pay only a Succession Duty of 1½ per cent on the capital sum, and that based on a life interest of the party succeeding; whether Feu Duties and Ground Annuals pay any local taxes; and whether any good reason exists for this difference of Government duty on the two classes of property?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Personalty in Scotland, as in the rest of the United Kingdom, pays 1½ per cent Probate Duty to Imperial Taxation, while Feu Duties and Ground Annuals also pay 1½ per cent irrespective of rates of consanguinity. There is no direct charge for local rates in respect of Feu Duties and Ground Annuals; the Feu Duties and Ground Annuals being included in the valuation of the property, upon which valuation local taxes are paid. I may remind the hon. Member that I explained the reasons for the difference of the duty on real and personal property in the Budget Debates of 1888 and 1889.

*MR. CALDWELL: Is it not the fact that personalty pays to the Exchequer 3 per cent, in whatever way the amount is ultimately divided, whilst realty pays only 1½ per cent?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; but I do not think the hon. Member has studied the history of the question. Only 1½ per cent is paid to the Exchequer, and the other 1½ to local funds.

*MR. CALDWELL: But Feu Duties and Ground Annuals contribute nothing to local funds.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I must refer the hon. Member to other Members of the Government, who are far better versed in these matters than I am.

ALLEGED HARSH SENTENCE—CASE OF C. J. GAY.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State of the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on Friday, Mr. Cooke, Metropolitan Police Magistrate, sitting at Marylebone, sentenced Charles John Gay to one month's imprisonment with hard labour for stealing two oranges; whether Gay had 14 years' good character; whether it was his first offence; whether his employer declined to prosecute; and whether, in this case, any portion of the sentence can be remitted?

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I would also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, having regard to the fact that this was Gay's first offence, and that he had 14 years' good character, he will advise that the remainder of the sentence be remitted?

MR. MATTHEWS: My attention has been called to this case. Gay had been five weeks in the service of the employers whose goods were under his charge. He had 14 years' good character from former employers. It was his first offence. He was prosecuted by a detective in the employment of the London and North-Western Railway Company. I am informed by the learned magistrate that he was satisfied that Gay had broken open two boxes, from one of which he took oranges and from the other sweets, and that for this reason the learned magistrate thought it necessary to pass a sentence of imprisonment. Having regard to all the circumstances I have determined to recommend the remission of half the sentence.

INDIAN SUBJECTS CLASSED AS "ALIENS" BY THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether it is the case, as reported in August last, the Transvaal Government has classed Her Majesty's Indian subjects as "Aliens," and forbidden them to reside within the Transvaal; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to redress this grievance?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): At the request of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India I will answer the question. It is the case that the Government of the South African Republic decided that traders from British India should be subject to the laws and regulations of the Republic affecting Chinese, Arabs, and other Oriental aliens. These Indians have not been forbidden to reside within the South African Republic; but are at present subject to serious restrictions under a law which was passed in 1886, for the removal or mitigation of which Her Majesty's High Commissioner is now in communication with the Government of the Republic.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Bill to improve the working of the Trustee Savings Banks will be introduced?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The introduction of this Bill, which I hope to introduce at an early date, has been deferred, pending the settlement of an important action which may tend to define the liabilities of Trustees.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS—THE ASBESTOS COMPANY.

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the recent case of Bell's Asbestos Company *v.* Davis and Selfe, and to the report which appeared in the *Financial News* of the 21st instant of the meeting of the Company; and whether, considering that the practice of bribing subordinates in the employment of users of asbestos was defended by the Chairman of the Company, and that an amendment directed against the practice was defeated by a large majority of the shareholders present, the Admiralty will give directions that no person connected with this firm shall be admitted into Her Majesty's Dockyards, and that no more orders shall be given to the Company?

LORD G. HAMILTON: My attention has been directed to the report of the meeting of this company, and to the defence by the chairman of the company of the practice of obtaining the goodwill of the *employés* of users of asbestos by the payment of moneys, the vouchers for which were excluded from the auditors' scrutiny. A practice so reprehensible and demoralising requires prompt repudiation on the part of those dealing with the company. The Admiralty contracts with this company terminate on the 30th of June. I have directed a letter to be written to the company informing them that after that date they will not be on the list of Admiralty contractors.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS—TWYFORD.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, on the 5th January, 1889, the Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority passed a Resolution to put into force the compulsory clauses of "The Allotments

Act, 1887," in order to provide allotments for labourers of the Parish of Twyford; that, on the 31st of August last, this Resolution was rescinded; and that the labourers of the Parish of Twyford were by published placard, on the 10th of October last, the day before the polling day in North Bucks, answered that the required land was granted for the purpose; and whether the Twyford labourers have now got the allotments demanded under the Act of 1887; and, if not, whether there is any reasonable prospect of their obtaining them under that Act?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): From the correspondence which has passed between the Rural Sanitary Authority of the Buckingham Union and the Board it appears that on the 5th of January, 1889, the Authority passed a Resolution to the effect that the compulsory clauses of the Allotments Act, 1887, should be put in force in order to provide allotments for labourers in the Parish of Twyford, and that on the 31st of August last, this Resolution was rescinded. I have no information as to the placard which is stated to have been published on the 10th of October last. The Board have been informed that the Sanitary Authority have been in communication with the rector of Lincoln College with a view to acquiring suitable land for the purpose of allotments. The sum asked for the land (£850, free from any tenants' compensation) is said, and certainly appears to be, a prohibitive price, and on the 21st of this month the Authority informed the Board that there is no other suitable land in the parish that would be convenient for the purpose of allotments. The Board regret this result, and that no allotments have as yet been provided. The Bill, however, which has been introduced providing for an appeal to the County Council will, if passed by the House, afford those interested an opportunity of obtaining further consideration of the matter.

TRIVIAL OFFENCES—CASE OF THOS. BARNES.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it has come to his notice that Thomas Barnes was committed by the magistrates of Cirencester, for stealing an almond cake on the 1st January, to take his trial at the Quarter Sessions which will be held some time in April, whilst the Gaol Delivery and Assizes will be held by Mr. Justice Hawkins on Monday next; and whether, as the youth in question has been already in prison for nearly two months for what is a trivial offence, if committed, and as he cannot be indicted at the Assizes, he will consider if he might now be released, and a *nolle prosequi* be entered?

MR. MATTHEWS: My attention has not been called to the case of Thomas Barnes except by the hon. Member's question. The Assizes Relief Act, 1889, enables Justices to commit to Quarter Sessions, even though Assizes intervene, prisoners whose offences are fit for trial at Quarter Sessions, but the Justices still retain discretionary power to commit prisoners for special reasons for trial at the Assizes, and it has been generally understood that Justices may regard as a special reason the fact that committal to Quarter Sessions would involve long detention in prison. I cannot adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member, but I will communicate with the committing Justices, with a view to the prisoner being let out on bail, should the circumstances prove to be as stated.

THE WHEEL AND VAN TAX.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the County Councils have replied to his circular inquiring their views as to the Wheel and Van Tax; whether the large majority of the Councils that have replied have declared in favour of the tax; and whether he has discovered a substitute for the tax; and, if not, will he re-introduce the measure?

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member's question has revived the memory of a most equitable and much reviled tax. I have issued no circular to the County Councils. I have received a large number of memorials certainly expressing strong views in favour of the tax, but those memorials generally deal only with the Van and Wheel Tax, and do not deal with the larger question, namely, as to the licensing in regard to pleasure

horses. On that point I have received no memorials. The hon. Gentleman asks whether I have discovered a substitute for the tax, and, if not, whether I will re-introduce the measure. I would remind him that the relations between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the ratepayers have now been closed, that it is for my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board to discover local taxes, and that he will be the hero or the victim of the next tax which is proposed.

PERJURY IN ENGLISH COUNTY COURTS.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his honour Judge Chalmers, in his reply affirming the prevalence of perjury in English County Courts, suggested any remedies; and, if so, will he state to the House the purport of such suggestion?

MR. MATTHEWS: Judge Chalmers expressed his opinion that it was difficult to know what remedy to suggest. He did, however, suggest that some good might be done if a small and summary punishment were provided for County Court perjury.

SUPPLY OF COAL TO BARRACKS.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the War Office if he is aware that a clause proposed to be added to the conditions of contract for the supply of coals to various barracks does not give any relief to the contractor in the event of a strike entirely beyond his control; and has the omission of such a strike clause received his sanction?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): By a circular issued on the 19th inst. a clause was added to all coal contracts to the effect that if the contractor were precluded from completing his contract by combination of workmen or strikes, the circumstances of each case would be specially considered by the Secretary of State for War.

IMPORTATION OF FROZEN MEAT.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is the case that "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," does not in any way affect the importation into this country of frozen meat, which may afterwards be passed off as being of home production; and whether Her Majesty's Government is disposed to consent to an inquiry into the question of how far the main principle and operation of "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," may be usefully amplified or extended?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): As I stated on a former occasion, I am not in a position to give an authoritative opinion upon the construction of an Act of Parliament, but it appears to me that if a butcher knowingly sold imported frozen meat as English meat he might make himself liable to a prosecution under the Merchandise Marks Act, and probably would under Section 6 of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875. I am not prepared to acquiesce in an inquiry of wider scope than is contemplated by the Motion in reference to the Merchandise Marks Act, of which notice has been given by the hon. Member for Central Sheffield.

TREASURY CLERKS.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view to obviating the anomalies likely to be created by the conversion, after the method indicated in the Treasury Minute of February 4th, 1890, of the triennial increments of the clerks of the lower division into annual increments, he would be prepared to adopt one by which such clerk would, on April 1st, 1890, be credited with so much (omitting any fraction of a pound sterling) as might then have accrued due to him, and be allowed on such date to draw his first annual increment of £7 10s., or £10, as the case might be?

MR. GOSCHEN: It is almost impossible to avoid some anomalies in applying new rules to existing establishments. We have admitted the existing lower division clerks without any conditions to the benefits of the new scale. Under the Minute every lower division clerk in the year ending 31st March next will have had his triennial increment converted into an annual increment, with immediate benefit, and I do not think that any further

change of the announced arrangements is necessary.

WRITERS' SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether, in reference to the favourable reply given by him on the 26th of last August, with regard to the Writers' Saturday half-holiday, it was his intention that such alternate Saturday half-holiday should commence from the date of his reply?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): No, Sir; the alternate Saturday half-holiday to copyists was not intended to be given until provision should have been made by order in Council for the grant of the same privilege to clerks of the second division.

IRELAND—CASE OF MR. JOHN M'ENERY.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the sentence of one month's imprisonment passed yesterday on Mr. John M'Enery, editor of the *Limerick Leader*, by Messrs. Hoddes and Robertson, in default of giving bail to be of good behaviour for 12 months, for publishing without comment proceedings of a meeting of a branch of the Local National League on the 3rd of February; whether the magistrates are correctly reported to have refused to state a case for superior Courts on this conviction; and if, having regard to sentences in similar cases being under review by superior Courts, he will take steps not to permit said sentence to take effect?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The magistrates did refuse to state a case for a superior Court of Law in the matter referred to in the Question. They so refused on the ground that the question of law submitted to them had been already decided by the Exchequer Division in the case of another prosecution. I have no power to take the steps suggested in the third paragraph of the Question, but I may point out that, whenever magistrates act erroneously in refusing to state a case, their error can be corrected on an application to the Court of Queen's Bench, under the provisions of 20 and 21 Vic., c. 43.

*MR. FLYNN: Has this prosecution been brought under the Criminal Law Procedure Act, or under the Statute of Edward III.?

*MR. MADDEN: The sentence appears to have been given under the Statute of Edward III. I believe the charge was under the Criminal Law Procedure Act.

MR. O'KEEFFE: The charge was that the defendant had published without comment the report of a meeting of a branch of a Local National League. Does not the decision of the magistrates amount to a breach of the decision of the County Court Judge at Waterford?

*MR. MADDEN: The question of the correctness of the decision of the County Court Judge at Waterford is now *sub judice*, and pending the ultimate decision of the superior Court I can give no opinion on the subject.

In reply to Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.),

*MR. MADDEN said: The Court of Queen's Bench has jurisdiction in the matter, and beyond that I can say nothing.

MR. CLANCY: Upon a former occasion when the Court of Queen's Bench was appealed to, the appeal was not opposed. Will the Government agree not to oppose an appeal in this case?

[No answer was given.]

THE CORK TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. LANE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the recent appointments to vacancies in the Cork telegraph offices have been made in accordance with Rule No 6, which vests the nomination in the Local Postmaster; and, if not, why were the nominations taken out of the hands of the Cork Postmaster; and will the course prescribed by the above rule be adhered to in connection with the two appointments now vacant in the Cork office?

*MR. RAIKES: It is the practice to let the local Postmaster nominate to junior appointments in his own office, but such practice is, of course, subject to the pleasure of the Postmaster General, who himself nominates when he thinks such a course con-

ducive to the public interest. The five male telegraphists who during the last four years have been transferred to Cork from other offices have been so transferred for the following reasons:—One for the sake of economy, in order that the situation he relinquished at Youghal might be abolished; two for purposes of discipline, that they might be under more efficient control; one on medical grounds, having suffered from illness at Limerick, where he was previously employed, and the fifth was transferred in order that he might be with his parents, who reside at Cork. Whether to the two appointments now vacant at Cork it will be left to the Postmaster to nominate or not I have not yet decided.

EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true, as reported in the *Academy* of the 8th of February, in a letter signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Rose, Inspector-General of Irrigation in Egypt, that some person unknown has this winter been systematically mutilating the tombs of Beni Hassan, in Egypt; that 25 Royal names have been erased, and the heads of the principal figures abstracted; and, if these facts prove to be true, whether Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the Government of His Highness the Khedive, so that immediate steps may be taken to ensure the safety of antiquities whose interest and scientific value is unique?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No such information has been received by Her Majesty's Government, but inquiry will be made of Sir E. Baring.

ONE POUND NOTES.

MR. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government intend to bring in a Bill this Session giving the Bank of England or other banks the privilege of issuing £1 bank notes; and whether he can state the conditions on which they will be issued?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have not heard of any Government Bill dealing with the subject-matter of this question being on the stocks. But the hon. Member must be aware that in no case are either Ministers or private Members in the habit of sketching out to the House the features of any Bills which they may contemplate.

THE EIGHT HOURS QUESTION.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he contemplates giving further facilities for the discussion of the Eight Hours Question; and, if so, when?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I freely recognise the importance of the subject, and I am anxious that it should be fully discussed; but I observe that the hon. Member has a Motion relating to this subject down on the Paper for March 18th, and that a Bill is also down for March 26th. Under those circumstances I am unable to give any pledge on a subject so far in advance.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope of a day being given for the discussion of the Eight Hours Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is obviously impossible at this moment to give any undertaking of the kind.

THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. EDWARD HARDCASTLE (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Suzerainty of the Transvaal was retained by the British Crown when the troops were withdrawn from that country; what is the nature and value of that Suzerainty; and whether under it British subjects, who are said already to outnumber the Boers, are entitled to the franchise?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Convention of London, made in 1884 between Her Majesty and the South African Republic, contains no express reservation of the Queen's right of Suzerainty, and, although Her Majesty retains under the Convention the power of refusing to sanction treaties made by the South African Republic with Foreign States and nations and with certain native tribes, it is a cardinal principle of that settlement that the internal government and legislation of the South African Republic shall not be interfered with. No persons, whether British subjects or otherwise, can at present obtain the franchise within the

South African Republic unless they make a declaration of allegiance to it, which involves, to a considerable extent, the renunciation within the Republic of their national rights and obligations as subjects of the Queen.

THE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

*MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what are the intentions of the Government regarding the Superannuation Bill which was withdrawn last Session; and whether it is proposed to re-introduce it during the present Session?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes; it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Superannuation Bill, as the recommendations of the Royal Commission make it our duty to proceed with the subject, difficult and complicated as it is.

IRELAND—BOYCOTTING RETURNS.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he is now able to place on the Table particulars with reference to the boycotting cases mentioned in his speech of last Tuesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understood that all that was desired was some means of identifying the cases. The Government have always resisted returns giving the names of cases of boycotting, for the obvious reason that it might endanger life. But as the cases to which I referred have already been made public, either in newspaper controversy or before Courts of Law, I have no objection to giving the names, with the dates and places. I presume that that will be adequate.

MR. J. MORLEY: And the circumstances?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that such a return as I have mentioned is already rather unusual, and I do not think I can undertake to add a narrative of the circumstances, which, however, are already well known.

MR. J. MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman has made use of the circumstances as arguments, and I wish to test those arguments, which I cannot do unless the circumstances are placed before me.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will undertake to give a sufficient statement of the circumstances to enable the right hon. Gentleman to identify the cases.

MR. CLANCY: With reference to the reason given by the Chief Secretary for Ireland for not giving the names, may I ask how can there possibly be boycotting without its being known?

[No answer was given.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That the Report of the Select Committee on Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply), of Session 1888, be referred to the Committee of Public Accounts.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MOTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

(4.10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Committee of Supply have precedence this day of Notices of Motion; that so much of Standing Order 11 as requires that the Question shall be proposed, 'That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair' be suspended next Friday; and that the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to this day and Friday next."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

(4.12.) MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the early zeal he has shown in taking private Members' days, and still more on the astuteness with which he has arranged business in this House in order to suit the exigencies of his position. For my own part I fully admit that the difficulties of the right hon. Gentleman's position are, to some extent, his excuse for the action he has taken. The right hon. Gentleman is at the head of a majority of this House, but of an exceedingly composite majority, with no constructive cohesion, the only desire being to keep out the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and to prevent Home Rule from taking place in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite, I see, agree with me in that. Perhaps they will go further, and agree with me that it is wise for the First Lord of the Treasury to limit the action of the House to discussing Government Bills, the details of which have been carefully arranged between the different

sections that support the right hon. Gentleman. I can see why the right hon. Gentleman objects to Private Members' days; there are so many rocks ahead for the vessel which the right hon. Gentleman navigates. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Provand) has a Motion on the Paper with reference to the obnoxious taxes on tea, coffee, and currants, which would have put the Liberal Unionists in a difficulty as to how they were to vote, and they naturally looked to the right hon. Gentleman as the pilot to get them clear of that difficulty. It cannot be said that the debate on the Address has been long. It has only occupied seven days, for I exclude the two Wednesdays, the first of which was occupied by the Gentlemen in uniform who usually perform on such occasions, and the second only began at two o'clock, owing to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite desiring to spend their morning in prayer. It is said that the Motions brought forward on the Address justify the Government in proposing to take away private Members' days. That is mistaking the cause for the effect; it is because hon. Members have had experience and know that their days will be taken away, that those Motions are brought forward on the Address. No sooner did the right hon. Gentleman hear that the House was willing to close the debate on the Address on Monday than he put down a wishy-washy Motion on the Report of the Special Commission for the following Monday. Next day the right hon. Gentleman said he must have a little money, and a day afterwards he said he must have Tuesday to get his money, and so the trick was done. Why the right hon. Gentleman should have added Friday it is impossible to say. Friday has always been sacred to private Members, even at the end of the Session, by means of morning sittings. I am sorry to say it appears to me that, to the right hon. Gentleman, there is nothing sacred. I know what the reply will be. The right hon Gentleman will get up and say that he owes a duty to his God, his Queen and his country, and that notice has been given in the Queen's Speech of very valuable Bills with which it is desirable to proceed. But what are those Bills? There are only two of any importance—one to get hold of a certain amount of money for the Irish landlords' and the other to facilitate the clergy in their marauding efforts to get hold of the tithes. After what happened last year about the Tithes Bill the right hon. Gentleman has no right to expect aid from the Opposition in passing that sort of predatory Bill, or in enabling the Liberal Unionists to avoid the embarrassment of voting against Liberal Motions. I hope I shall get the support of hon. Members below the Gangway opposite in the Division which I intend to take on the Motion.

(4.21.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): If the right hon. Gentleman is to conduct the business of the House in this manner I imagine that private Members will cease to be of any use, and all he will have to do will be to introduce a system of proxies, such as formerly prevailed in another place, but has now been abandoned, and allow us to go about our business. The right hon. Gentleman, when my hon. Friend below me (Mr. Labouchere) alluded to the brevity of the debate on the Address, smilingly shook his head with as near an approach to satire as was possible. Let me remind the right hon. Gentleman that of late years the debates on the Address have been necessarily very long. In 1887 the debate lasted 16 days—17 if the day occupied in considering the Report is included—and in 1888 11 days, and last year about the same time. I can find no precedent for a Minister, immediately after the Address has been voted, proposing to take away private Members' days. The fact is that the old practice of the House of Commons is being destroyed, and it is becoming an assembly of mere ciphers waiting on the dictation of the head of the Government. No serious debate takes place in this House, and the discussion of public affairs is transferred to the newspapers and the constituencies.

(4.30) MR. J. LOWTHER (Isle of Thanet): There are many hon. Members on this side of the House who would like to hear some good reason from the Government for the course they now propose to take, and who are inclined to protest against the principle of taking away the time belonging to private Members for the purpose of voting Supply. I would also say that it has been the practice of the House in times past willingly to afford

facilities to Her Majesty's Government when the necessities of Supply were pressing, or when any real emergency arose. Is there emergency now? No doubt the debate on the Address has not been unduly curtailed, to say the least of it, and we must also bear in mind that the Government have placed a considerable portion of their time next week at the disposal of the House. I recognise the situation, but I wish to elicit from the First Lord of the Treasury that this practice of taking the days of private Members is not going to be made a precedent. I also want to have an assurance that the application made by the Government to the House is founded upon *bonâ fide* public requirements, and that the time to be taken from private Members is to be devoted to the specific object of considering urgent Votes in Supply.

*(4.33.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I trust that hon. Members will feel it their duty to accept the Motion I have already submitted to the House. The only precedent which I could ask the House to lay down is a precedent declaring that the necessities of the public service must be provided for. It has been the practice in the last two or three years to discuss Supply at great length. In those years every Government day might have been devoted to the consideration of Supply, to the exclusion of other business. The hon. Member for Leicester says that the old practice of the House of Commons is being destroyed. I agree with the hon. Member. Hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House are destroying that practice, which was to vote the Address in one night, or in two nights at the most. This year the debate on the Address has occupied a fortnight, and we have arrived at the 25th of February, a date when it is usual for the Government to proceed with Supply. We can not expect the debate on the Report of the Special Commission to occupy less than the whole Government time next week, and in these circumstances it becomes imperative to devote this evening and Friday next to Supply. Friday, however, might be preserved to private Members if the House will grant previously all the Supply for which it is necessary to ask. The hon. Member for Northampton has given me credit for great astuteness. I do not claim to be astute; all I claim is this, that I pay regard to the business of the House and seek to render its transaction possible. If the consideration of that business excludes the consideration of Motions and Bills in which hon. Members are interested, I regret the fact, but I contend that the Government are not responsible. We are anxious that private Members should enjoy the opportunities which the rules of the House intended them to have, and if hon. Members would only revert to the ancient practices and customs which enabled them to enjoy those opportunities nobody would be more delighted than myself and my Colleagues. I am most anxious to revert to the Parliamentary practices which prevailed before the introduction of that extreme heat which now is manifested in political affairs. If we can but resume those practices the political interests of the country will be greatly advanced and also the interests of the different political parties in this House. I may point out, before sitting down, that the first notice of Motion on the Paper relates to a subject which can be discussed exhaustively on the Budget.

(4.38.) SIR W. HARCOURT, (Derby): I was very glad to hear the right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet maintain a doctrine which I have held ever since I have sat in this House. The right hon. Gentleman has not taken the best means to avoid heat in this discussion by casting an explosive bomb across the House and accusing the Opposition of being the cause of all the evils of which he complains. It is quite true that the practice of the House has very much changed, and that protracted debates on the Address are of comparatively recent date. The practice, as far as I know, began in the years between 1880 and 1885. There was a debate in one of those years which lasted 11 days, and the questions discussed, such as the affairs of Egypt, were raised by Gentlemen who then sat on the front Opposition Bench. I do not, however, want to indulge in recriminations. In this matter the right hon. Gentleman must take the responsibility of having introduced this topic to-night, but, comparatively speaking, in former years such occasions were very rare, although it has now become

almost a regular practice to debate the Address at very great length. Why? Because Members of this House know that if important questions are not debated on the Address, opportunities for discussing them will never be obtained. Let this be understood when charges of obstruction are brought. In old days the Government were content with the time appropriated to them by the Standing Orders of the House. In the present Parliament, the Government has thought it right, for one reason or another, to appropriate almost the whole time of the House from the very beginning of the Session. The result is that no question of general public interest can be discussed in the House, unless it is discussed on the Address. The consequence of this state of things is extremely injurious to the House of Commons, for, excepting the topics which the Government choose to select for consideration, all the discussion of matters in which the country is interested takes place outside the House instead of inside. This is a very serious evil. I think it is reasonable to expect, from what has happened during the last three years, that the Government will soon ask for all the time of the House. There is, therefore, no opportunity except upon the Address or upon Motions for Adjournment—which is also a new practice and an undesirable practice if it can be avoided—of bringing these matters under the consideration of the House. The time of private Members has, to a large extent, been taken away in recent years. It is urged that the Government have made a present of next week to the House. But the subject for next week is really Government business of the first importance. The Attorney General and the latest Member of the Cabinet have taken pains outside the House to explain that the Report is Government business. It is a Government Report and a Government Motion, and it is for the Government that this debate is to be held. The Attorney General posted off to Oxford, and he has been followed up by the new Minister of Agriculture, who backed him up in the ceremony. What are the next items of the bill of fare? We are to have the plan of Irish land purchase, on which from the nature of the case there will be a protracted discussion, and then there is the Tithe Bill. These are to exclude all other topics which Members of the House and people outside may desire to have discussed in Parliament. I do not believe it is for the advantage of the country that we should discuss nothing but the Commission Report, land purchase in Ireland, and tithes; and these constitute the programme of the Government. There are a great many other questions which ought to be discussed. But I venture to say, from what I have seen in recent years, that these subjects will use up the whole time of the House, and all other topics which interest the country will be excluded. I thought it necessary to make these observations because the new methods of raising discussions to which I have referred have been rendered necessary by the new claims of the Government. Take this question of the tea duties. The right hon. Gentleman opposite asks why my hon. Friend did not wait for the Budget. But everybody knows, who is acquainted with the practice of Parliament, that it is idle to wait for the Budget, because when once it is introduced, and the Government are pledged to their proposals, no discussion or Motion has any chance of success. The only way in which influence can be brought on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or a reform of this character can be promoted, is by a debate before the Budget is introduced. I agree with the right hon. Member for Thanet that the House ought to listen to Government claims of a financial character, to enable them to meet their statutory obligations; and Parliament has always given time, and always will give time, to the Government in order that they may discharge these requirements. But the right hon. Gentleman has no such case as that to-day. The right hon. Gentleman has said that discussions on Supply would probably be extremely protracted, and that he will therefore have to take the time of private Members. But it is not the time of private Members. It is the time for discussing public topics other than those introduced by the Government. I confess I have not heard any answer from the right hon. Gentleman to the appeal of the Member for Thanet in justification of so extraordinary a demand at so early a period of the Session. No urgent necessity has been

shown and no such case has been made out as is ordinarily made when a demand is preferred by a Government for taking from members the time assigned for the discussion of matters of public importance.

Question put.

(4.50.) The House divided :—Ayes 229 ; Noes 131.—(Div. List, No. 10.)

CHURCH BUILDING ACTS (COMPULSORY POWERS REPEAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Powell, Bill to repeal the provisions of the Church Building Acts relating to the Compulsory Purchase of Sites for Churches and Burial Grounds, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Addison.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 164.]

BUILDINGS (SANITARY REGISTRATION) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Farquharson, Bill for the Sanitary Registration of Buildings, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Farquharson, Lord Henry Bruce, Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Guyer Hunter, and Dr. Cameron.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 165.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1889-90.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

(5.6.) MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): In accordance with the notice I have placed on the Paper I beg to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £2,000, and my object in doing so is to elicit some explanation from my right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works, as to the alterations which have been carried out in connection with Westminster Hall. In order to inform myself on the subject I took the trouble to go to my right hon. Friend's office to ascertain whether or no the Committee which sat and reported on Westminster Hall had agreed on the sum of money to be spent; but I was not able to obtain the information I sought from the officials. I would ask my right hon. Friend to explain this expenditure. I have inspected the part of the Hall which I believe to be the subject of the outlay, and I must say I have not been very much impressed that any favourable result is likely to be arrived at. At the present moment there are no means whatever of ascertaining what are the intentions of the Board of Works. The area which has been dug out—unfortunately, as I think—below Westminster Hall is now occupied by a large number of workmen, and there is no indication as to the design of the work to be done. Moreover, the Report of the Committee, that very mysterious document, referred to so often last Session, contains, so far as I am able to see, no plans whatever of the intended works. I was shown in the office of my right hon. Friend two pictures in the Appendix of the Report, but I am not able to find out whether they represent the work for which we are asked to pay this £2,000. I do not think it satisfactory that we should be asked to vote this not inconsiderable sum of money without having before us a statement of what is intended to be done, and particularly after the lesson we have learnt from the other map with regard to the unfortunate griffins and staircase, as to which, I say again, the House was taken by surprise. I am anxious that in the present case we should know what we are going to obtain for this money, so that there should be no groping or leaping in the dark. In note "A" giving details of this sum we are informed that it is the money required for "increased accommodation at the disposal of Members and the necessary buildings and furniture." Well, I have examined the larger room, which is called "the Conference Room," and I find there a most extraordinary feature called "the chimney piece," and I should like to ask my right hon. Friend how that chimney piece came there, whether it was the creation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and how much it cost? Of course I cannot expect my right hon. Friend to answer that now, but perhaps he will take a note of my query, and let us know on some future occasion

how that singular piece of furniture came to the position it occupies. With regard to another matter, after the discussions which took place last year in both Houses of Parliament as to the alterations in Westminster Hall, I wrote a letter to my right hon. Friend asking him whether he would not at the eleventh hour remove the bastion or parapet which so much disfigures the southern end of Westminster Hall. My right hon. Friend was at that time absent from England and was not able to comply, and the answer I got was not of a very definite character. But I really must appeal to the right hon. Gentleman once more to take this matter into his consideration, and see whether he cannot remove this imitation of Spurgeon's pulpit and the other staircase, or, at all events, take some steps to render the southern end of the Hall symmetrical. When I was a boy at school at Westminster the place this bastion now occupies was an open doorway from which we used to pass out from Westminster Hall into Palace Yard, and there is no authority whatever for the door being placed half way up the wall. I am informed that the door is never used, that it neither opens nor shuts, and that nobody ever goes through it. If that be the case, why does not the right hon. Gentleman really take the matter into his own hands, and have this hideous, unsuitable bastion removed, and an iron gate put in its place as companion to that at the entrance which leads to the House of Commons, so that if any one did wish to go up there they could go in by the gate? I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not be led in a wrong direction by these so-called architects, but will endeavour to do something to restore one of the most beautiful fabrics in the world to its original condition.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That item B, £2,000, for the restoration of Westminster Hall, be omitted from the proposed Vote.—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*).

(5.17.) MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I rise to support the Motion of my right hon. Friend opposite. I do so because I feel sure that the opportunity should be availed of by everybody in this House who has any respect for the ordinary canons of good taste and utility of protesting against the way in which this restoration of Westminster Hall has been carried out. The interior of the Hall itself has been disfigured by the erection of that monstrous rostrum which is guarded by those still more monstrous heraldic beasts. That disfigurement has been alluded to on former occasions, and I will not allude to it now further than to say that I consider it a very great disfigurement, and that I have not seen anybody, whose taste is worthy of being called taste, who does not think the same. But there is another thing I wish to refer to, and that is the extraordinary pit which has been provided outside the House at the end of Westminster Hall for the reception of Members' carriages. This pit reminds one of what one has been accustomed to see in children's picture books, illustrative of the receptacle for lions in which Daniel was cast. It is a kind of *descensus Averni*, a decline down which no carriage could be driven with anything like safety, and inside the shed I would defy any one to turn a carriage round. The shed may be useful for any hon. Members who come to the House on bicycles or tricycles, or in wheelbarrows, but to say that it is of any use for receiving Members' carriages is a false representation of the case. In order to get a carriage in it would be necessary to back it down the declivity. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take steps to have the pillars inside the cloister removed, if the place is to remain a receptacle for carriages, and that he will have something like an accessible means of entrance provided. The old wooden shed was not beautiful but it was useful, whereas the present shed is neither beautiful nor useful.

*(5.20) MR. MORTON (Peterborough): I wish to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether this money has not been practically spent, and if so, whether there is any good in our discussing the question how the work has been carried out? I would also ask whether or not these works are put out to public tender?

(5.21.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I suppose we shall have to pay this money, but, at all events, I am glad it is not going to be done without a protest. I am not without hope that the

discussion which took place last year has had some little effect on the Chief Commissioner, and that public opinion has induced him to draw back a little from what he at first intended. I am glad to find that no more beasts have been put into Westminster Hall, and that £1,000 has been saved on those in the Hall, which sum it is proposed to spend outside. These beasts have been called "monstrous," but a friend of mine says he would not call them "monstrous," as they will be useful designs for illustrations for "Alice in Wonderland," and books of that kind. As to the whole of the restoration of Westminster Hall, the more we see of it the less we like it. The rooms that have been provided are miserable rooms. In the course of my peregrinations through the new building, the other day, I found the place deserted, except by "the Last Man." The only decent room there is is the one called the Grand Committee room, and as it is over the receptacle for horses, I should think the people using it will have to complain of a very unpleasant smell. Architecturally, the projecting room is the most miserable excrescence, and disfigures these great buildings as much as it is possible to disfigure them beyond the natural state of dirt and dilapidation into which they have lapsed. I have perfect confidence that some day or other, when our eyes are open, and we are in our right minds, we shall discover that a very shocking mistake was committed when the Law Courts were removed from Westminster in not reserving the space so secured for the Parliamentary buildings which will be required when we come to that system of devolution—by means of Grand Committees and otherwise—to which we may ultimately attain. I am confident that if we spend a few thousand pounds in railing in that space, the time will come when we shall be ready to pull down the jimcracks we have just erected, for the purpose of putting up useful buildings in their place. Westminster Hall could never be made a beautiful building externally. I am convinced that in Scotland there are 50 United Presbyterian Churches which are more creditable from an architectural point of view.

*(5.25.) THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I am grateful to the hon. Member for the qualified support I have on this occasion received from him. He has drawn from one of his peregrinations through the new buildings rather a sad picture of the condition of the rooms on the other side of Westminster Hall. He says he found them deserted. I can imagine the scene almost as it might have been described in Campbell's "Last Man." It must, indeed, have been a spectacle of desolation when the hon. Member stood there after the last clerk had departed, "as if the skeletons of nations were around that lonely man." The effect on his spirits was depressing, I am sure. But if the hon. Gentleman had visited the buildings at the time of day when the clerks by whom they are used are there at work, he would, I think, agree with me not only that the rooms are comfortable, but that their occupants think them pleasant rooms to look at and to live in. The large room the hon. Member has referred to is an extremely handsome one, the only drawback to its usefulness as a Committee room being its distance from this House. I do not know whether that disadvantage can be overcome. As to the observations the hon. Member has made in regard to the "unsightly heraldic animals," I would remind him that the Vote we are discussing has nothing whatever to do with them. Then with regard to the shed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire complains of, the shed was not intended to be a receptacle for carriages, but a stand for horses. If carriages were allowed in there it would be inconvenient. No doubt the shed is only to be approached by a precipitous descent, but that is not the fault of the Office of Works. It is the fault of the course of time and the progress of ages, which have raised a considerable hill just outside the entrance to Westminster Hall. If I could put back the finger of the dial so far as to get rid of that small mountain of course the difficulty would disappear, but I am not able to do that, and I cannot see how it is possible to avoid a rather precipitous descent, looking at the nature of the ground. As to the alterations outside Westminster Hall, I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman who moves the reduction of the Vote, that the designs for the building

and its whole cost were contemplated by the Committee that adopted the scheme. If the right hon. Gentleman will look at the plan he will see we have carried it out most faithfully. Then it is asked what we are going to do with the remainder of the space. We propose to carry the wall which at present ascends from the entrance to the horse stand to the gates of Palace Yard at a height of between four and five feet all along to the porch of St. Stephen's Hall. There will then be a good view obtained of the Palace of Westminster on that side, and the wall will be sufficiently high to prevent any accident. Inside the wall it is proposed to lay out the ground as a garden with walks through it. I venture to say again that the new buildings have not only added very considerably to the convenience of Members and officers of the House, by finding additional room for them, but has added very considerably to the beauty of the Palace.

(5.40.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury): The original estimate amounted to £7,854, and now we are asked for £2,000. That is an increase of the Vote by more than 25 per cent. I know the weakness in all these Estimates is that we are committed to them at a given sum, though somehow or other they have a great tendency to increase. But the increases seldom amount to more than 25 per cent. Can the right hon. Gentleman give us some reason why this Estimate has been so largely exceeded? What extra work has been undertaken to necessitate the increased expenditure? I find that the cost of fencing, levelling, and laying out the ground on the western side of Westminster is estimated at £6,000. That seems to me a large sum for the purpose. I should also like to know whether we are at the end of the expenditure in Westminster Hall, or whether, after we have voted this money, we shall be asked in the ordinary Estimates for another amount. Architecturally I think the new buildings are most unsightly.

*MR. PLUNKET: The difficulty in which the hon. Gentleman finds himself is easily explained. This is really not an addition to the sum of £7,854. The £2,000 is asked for additional works. In order to complete the works as far as possible by the meeting of Parliament we had to hurry them on, and I pressed the Treasury to allow me to take this course, because I thought it would be for the convenience of Members. We do not expect that it will be necessary to ask for anything else beyond that which appears on the Estimate, and the sum of £3,000 which is referred to in the foot-note.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I should like to know whether this Estimate includes the restoration of the timbers on the eastern slope of the roof of Westminster Hall. Last year the timbers on the western slope of the roof were restored, but those on the eastern slope do not appear to have been touched. The dormer windows are still blocked, presenting a most unsightly appearance, both inside and outside the building. Although the restoration is not quite as we all desired, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the work, and hope he will complete it by the necessary work in the roof.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: Before the right hon. Gentleman replies I should like to press him for an answer on the point I raised with regard to the bastions at the eastern end of the Hall. After I raised the question on a previous occasion, the right hon. Gentleman wrote me a letter in regard to it, and I should now like to know whether he has come to any positive decision about it, whether he has conferred with the architect or any other architect in regard to it, and whether he thinks it is a desirable thing that an ancient monument should be pulled about in this way without any reason?

*MR. MORTON: Perhaps the First Commissioner of Works will also reply to the question I raised just now.

*MR. PLUNKET: I apologise to the hon. Member for not having answered his question before. The answer to his question is that all the work of this kind done under the Office of Works is done by contract, which is put up for competition.

*MR. MORTON: My question was whether the money had been actually spent.

*(5.45.) MR. PLUNKET: Yes. This money has been, or is being, or will be spent before the end of the financial year. In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicestershire I have to say that the Western slope of the roof of the Hall

has been completely restored. The work required on the eastern side has not been lost sight of, but at any rate it is not a very expensive business. The point raised by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) has nothing to do with the Vote we are now discussing. But I may say that I have asked the opinion of many others on the point, and they are not in favour of the change. I shall, of course, do my best to secure the approval of my right hon. Friend in this particular instance. A considerable number of people take the view he does, and if I can find that his is the prevailing opinion I will turn my attention again to the matter. I cannot, at present, however, undertake to alter the building.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Having myself pressed on the right hon. Gentleman the completion of the work by laying out the ground, and having protested against the long delay which took place in this respect, I view with great satisfaction this Supplementary Estimate. As my right hon. Friend has stated, this is really not connected with the structural work on the Hall, and does not raise the question referred to by the right hon. Member for Whitehaven, Upon that question there is a very great difference of opinion amongst Members of the House and others. There is a large amount of authority in favour of these bastions, but after all the matter is a very small one. If the prevailing opinion should turn out to be adverse to these staircases it will not be difficult to remove them. Personally, I believe that when the work is complete the general opinion will be that as regards the interior of the Hall, at all events, the improvement has been great.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I will only say one word upon the question of finance. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that what is being done now was foreseen from the beginning. In that case why did he not give us at first an honest Estimate of the whole cost? I protest against being led into jobs of this kind without being told what they are to cost. We voted a large sum in a former Session for this restoration, and now we are asked for a sum for the surrounding fencing and clearing up. I do not think this is a reasonable or right way of treating the House.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: I am glad I elicited the answer from the right hon. Gentleman that this is not an increase of the Estimate by 25 per cent., but what he has said puts us in another difficulty. We find that the Estimate for £7,854, which was passed last year, was to cover certain work, and now the right hon. Gentleman tells us that this £2,000 is for extra work not included in the Estimate. I agree it is well that all the work possible should be finished before the opening of Parliament; still I do not think there was any great emergency which necessitated such a strong proceeding as the expenditure of £2,000 for work which had not been sanctioned by Parliament.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Personally, I think the alterations both inside and outside Westminster Hall are hideous. The Member for Bradford, who was one of the promoters of the scheme, thinks the contrary, and so does the architect, Mr. Pearson. But this Vote in no sort of way affects the question of the structural alterations. Outside there has been a great hoarding. It is perfectly true there was no Estimate last year for levelling and grassing and making the wall round the space, but the right hon. Gentleman had to face the fact that if he did not commence to do the work it would have been put off for months. Although I generally protest against money being expended before it is voted, this is a case of a halfpenny worth of tar which was absolutely necessary, owing to what had been expended, to finish the job.

*MR. MORTON: I am very glad to know these works were put up for public tender, but as far as I can understand there is not a single item connected with these works which might not have been easily estimated and voted on before the works were undertaken. I must protest against the Estimates being exceeded, as in this case. I understand that the House was told last year, or at some other time, that the total cost of these works would be £25,300. We are now told when the works have been commenced that they will cost £36,180. That is an increase of something like 40 per cent. Such increases are unfair to the taxpayers and are to be severely condemned.

(5.55.) Question put.

(5.55.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 106; Noes 215.—(Div. List, No. 11.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £7,000, Supplementary, for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the acquisition of certain Land and Buildings at South Kensington."

*(6.10.) SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I do not think we should allow this Vote to pass without an acknowledgment of the perseverance the Vice-President of the Committee of the Council has displayed, and which at last has been successful in inducing his Colleagues to assent to this purchase, though I believe they were at first not favourable to the proposal. I think also some recognition is due to the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851 for the liberal way in which they have met the wishes of the Government. I am told the extent of the land is about 4½ acres, and I need hardly tell the Committee how much greater the value of the land for building purposes is in this part of London. The Commissioners, taking a very wise view, thought their duties as Commissioners were not fulfilled by merely looking to derive revenue from this land. They thought it proper that the land should be devoted to the advancement of Science and Art, and they expressed their willingness to show some consideration for such an object in the price they asked, and, unless I am misinformed, they have very properly attached to the sale the condition that the land shall be devoted to Science and Art purposes and no other. The complaint cannot be urged against this Vote that it is asked for after the money has been spent, for the purchase is, I believe, subject strictly to the sanction of Parliament, in the sense that should the House not vote this money the transaction will be void. But I hope the Committee will not be so short-sighted as to refuse the Vote. With my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Sir H. Roscoe) I served on the Departmental Committee to take into consideration the accommodation necessary for the Museum of Applied Science in connection with South Kensington Museum, and although some of the Members of that Committee were at the outset prejudiced strongly against any further expenditure, after hearing the evidence in favour of this proposal there was not a Member who was not convinced that it was absolutely necessary that a building must be erected if it was to be worthy the name of a Museum of Science and Art at all. I have only further to hope that when the land is acquired too much time will not be lost before it is turned to the purpose for which it is designed, and that with the truest economy the building will be worthy of its purpose. Proper consideration should be given to the plans, and no regard for a small saving should induce those entrusted with the erection of a building to do otherwise than arrange it in the best possible manner for the purpose to which it is to be devoted. At present it is not possible for the museum to serve the purpose for which it exists. The expenditure need not be very large, and a considerable expense now incurred by the Department in the shape of rent will be saved, and this rent capitalised ought to go a long way towards the erection of a suitable building. I am glad this Estimate has been brought forward, and I congratulate both the right hon. Gentleman and the Commissioners on the arrangement which has been arrived at.

*(6.15.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I do not rise to follow my hon. Friend's arguments in favour of voting the money, but to call attention to another matter in connection with the Vote. My hon. Friend has informed the Committee that, the money has not been paid, that the purchase is not actually completed, and of course we are glad to hear that, for it is much more regular to come to Parliament before the money is paid than afterwards. But if the money has not been paid, I should like to ask the question why should not the ordinary course be followed and this amount be included in the Estimates for the coming

year? It is a proceeding that should be closely watched in Committee of Supply, for there is a tendency on the part of the Government of the day to do that by Supplementary Estimate which would be more regularly done in the ordinary Estimates for the year. Here we are at the end of February, and if this money has not been paid and we are dealing with friendly parties like the Exhibition Commissioners, why not postpone payment to the next financial year instead of dealing with it in this irregular manner by Supplementary Estimate? The Government ask for time from private Members to discuss the Supplementary Estimates, and then we find that they include this item, which ought to take its place in the ordinary Estimates. Speaking as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, I cannot help thinking there is grave financial objection to this proceeding, and that it is calculated to impair the control the House ought to have over the expenditure. It is also calculated to impair the principle laid down that, after the House has voted the money for the year, unexpended balances should go towards the reduction of the National Debt, for in reality you deprive that reduction of debt of a sum of £100,000.

(6.20.) THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the question at once. There were, I think, very strong reasons why the course taken should have been taken on this occasion. In the first place, the Exhibition Commissioners have been extremely patient with regard to the negotiations which have been going on for years in connection with this particular question. The Government have been pressed, certainly for the last three years, very strongly to say "Aye" or "No," whether they proposed to purchase the land or not. There has been the Committee which has been referred to by the hon. Member for Banbury considering what should be done with a view to providing additional accommodation for a Science Museum. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Exhibition Commissioners has communicated with the Treasury on several occasions, and when the Government had the Report of the Committee which has been referred to, they determined—and without going into details I may say they are justified in that Report—on accepting the principle that there should be some extension and relief to the overcrowded buildings of South Kensington. It was impossible to decide what should be done until the question of site was settled. We were pressed on the one hand—I think rightly pressed, and make no complaint against it; I think it was only fair to the Commissioners—that they should have an answer "yes" or "no" whether the Government would take the land or not; and, on the other hand, we had the pressing needs of South Kensington. The Chancellor of the Exchequer came to the conclusion that the offer made by the Exhibition Commissioners was one that he ought to accept in the interest of the nation generally, and that the question of additional accommodation for the Department could not be longer postponed. We could take no steps until the question of this land had been decided, and so we decided to put the case before Parliament, leaving to Parliament the responsibility of saying whether or not this land should be purchased. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clitheroe knows perfectly well the uncertainties in regard to Supply. He knows perfectly well it would not be in our power, or in accordance with custom in this House, to take any part of this money in a Vote on Account, and it would have to be relegated to a time when the Vote could be got through as a whole. I hope the Committee will agree that the Government have been right. We have no desire to evade responsibility, but, on the whole, have come to the conclusion that this was the best course to pursue. We had no certainty that even if we put the Vote on the Estimates for next year the House would accept our proposal, and, therefore, we thought it advisable at once to take the opinion of the House before we committed ourselves to the expenditure. I hope that expenditure will be sanctioned, and that we shall be enabled to take some practical step towards accomplishing what I believe is a general wish.

(6.25.) SIR H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I hope the explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury will be considered satisfactory. It seems to me most desirable that the money should be voted at once. No doubt the plot of

land in question is the only one in the neighbourhood and the only one in the neighbourhood, likely to be available for all time for the establishment and extension of this great Science Museum. My hon. Friend below me has alluded to the Committee of which I had the honour to be a Member. Our instructions were to give an opinion as to the general value of the collection, and to see if any articles should be eliminated. We came to the conclusion that the value was extremely great, and that there were few articles which with advantage could be eliminated. The Committee should remember that this is not a Museum for London alone; it is a National Institution to be used by a large number of teachers and scientific students from all parts of the country, and it also provides valuable and interesting objects that are sent on to other parts of the country. We had the assistance of experts of all kinds, and all agreed as to the great value of the collection, and that it was absolutely necessary to have some proper building in which it could be housed, with proper means of keeping it up year by year to the requirements of modern science. It is a satisfaction to know that the Government are prepared to carry out the views of the Committee. It is, of course, no use having the land unless we put a building upon it, and I hope that before long a small portion of the large surplus we hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have at disposal will be set apart for this particular purpose. One question I should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, and that has reference to the dwelling house built on the Queen's Gate side of the ground. What is the arrangement with the Commissioners in regard to this house?

(6.28.) MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I do not desire to enter into the question whether the present galleries should be enlarged or not, but to say a word on the point raised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Clitheroe (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth). He protested against a Vote of this magnitude being included in the Supplementary Estimates, and I think the answer given by the Secretary to the Treasury is very insufficient. He has shown no sufficient reason why the Vote should not be postponed to next year's ordinary Votes. He says the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 wished to have an answer, but I apprehend the Commissioners would have been perfectly well satisfied with the announcement that the Government intended to buy the land, and it would be a matter of comparative indifference to them whether the money was voted in the one year or the other. The effect of taking the Vote now will be to reduce the expenditure of the coming year by £100,000 and diverting that sum from the possible reduction of the National Debt. I agree that the House should not be called upon to vote at this time a sum of money which could very well be brought forward in next year's Estimates in the ordinary course, and at a time when we should be able to have the whole scheme before us, and know what are the intentions of the Government on the matter. I do not propose at this stage to enter on the question of policy. What I desire to object to is the introduction of these large Votes in Supplementary Estimates, because it is a proceeding altogether without precedent, and one which, whenever attempted during the last few years, has been described as wholly contrary to Parliamentary practice. I take it that the general rule with regard to Supplementary Estimates is that only money should be applied for which must be paid in the current financial year, and that anything which can be legitimately postponed should be put off till the next year. I therefore join my right hon. Friend in protesting against the course which has been taken on this occasion, but I protest only on financial grounds.

*(6.32.) MR. MORTON: I quite agree with the objections raised by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench. I should like to have some more information on this matter. I want to know who valued this land. How are we to know it is worth £100,000? It does seem to me extraordinary to ask for a Vote of this large sum, and then to give us no information whatever as to who valued the land, or as to the extent of it, or where the money is going to, or whether any persons get a commission upon the sale.

(6.34.) SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am resident at South Kensington, and am therefore in favour of spending money there. As a British citizen I am also in favour of spending money for the

promotion of science: but, at the same time, I feel that this is a large order, because it is not only an application for a Vote of £100,000, but it will bind us to the expenditure of several more hundreds of thousands of pounds for the buildings which will have to be erected. I think it is not right that in a Supplementary Estimate such a scheme as this should be sprung upon the House. Of course, I should be happy deliberately to consider the scheme which is to be laid before the House, but I do share the opinion of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that it is neither right nor proper that the Government should ask us to pass this Vote, and enter into no explanation either as to the extent or as to the value of the land. I was looking at the land this morning, and was struck by seeing upon it a solitary house. Is it included in the purchase? Now, I should like to know what it is exactly that we are buying, how the land has been valued, whether it is a fair bargain between the Commissioners and the Government, and what authority there is for the opinion which has been expressed that the Commissioners are generously parting with the land at a great deal below its value.

(6.36.) MR. JACKSON: With regard to the questions which have been addressed to me by hon. Members, I am afraid I took it for granted that everybody knew the circumstances connected with this purchase. The land is 4½ acres, and, in addition to the land, there is a building on it which is called the Southern Gallery, for which, at present, we pay a sum of £1,500 a year. That £1,500 yearly will, of course, fall out of the Estimates when we become the proprietors of the land. An hon. Member opposite has asked whether there are any commissions to be paid in connection with this transaction. I may tell him that there are no commissions to be paid, either on one side or on the other, because the transaction is one between the 1851 Exhibition Commissioners—gentlemen who are very well-known to all who take an interest in this question—and the Government. It is not very easy to say what is the sale value of the land unless it were, in some way, offered for public sale. The area to be bought includes the whole of the land on the south side of Exhibition Road, from one end to the other, with the exception of a house which was built on a portion of the land prior to the sale of it. We have had a valuation made by the Office of Works, and the result is that the value of the land was put down at something between £100,000 and £120,000. I believe that the Exhibition Commissioners have also had an estimate made which was considerably higher. In fact, they put the value of the land at £200,000, but they are willing to sell it to the Government for this purpose, and for this purpose only, at what they call a nominal price. I think there can be no doubt as to the advantages which will be derived from the Government being the owner of the whole of the land from the south side of Exhibition Road to Cromwell Road.

*(6.39.) MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): As I have been pressing the Government to make provision for the Science Collections for the last 10 years, I think I ought to say something in defence of the action of the Government in putting this Vote in the Supplementary Estimate. I do not, of course, object to the principle which has been laid down by my right hon. Friends as to what Votes ought properly to be included in the Supplementary Estimates; but there is no doubt that this question has been a pressing one for some years. We have a most valuable science collection which is housed in a most disgraceful manner. We have collections such as no other country in the world possesses. The Treasury have all along resisted every application for the extension of the Museum, and for placing these valuable collections in a building in which they would be useful and accessible to the country. There have been no less than three Departmental Committees appointed to inquire as to the necessity of extending the Museum, and although some of the Members so appointed on the Committee went into the inquiry holding the view that the extension was unnecessary, they have, before the inquiry closed, been bound to confess that it was not only necessary, but highly desirable. I hear it asked for the first time whether we are going to get good value for our money. Now, I have been for many years a Member of the Exhibition Commission, and I know something about the value of the property. I believe our

Surveyors—one of the most eminent firms in London—valued it at £160,000, this valuation not including certain portions of the property. The present value is undoubtedly £200,000, and we let the Government have it for the nominal sum of £70,000, the balance being the value of the Southern Gallery. Now we are asked what is to be done with the money. My reply is, that we are looking forward to provide a sum of £5,000 a year in scholarships for technical education, and I do not think that we could better apply the money than in this direction, for we propose that the scholarships shall be open to all schools in every part of the United Kingdom. I never stood up in this House to recommend any expenditure with a more clear conviction that I am doing my duty than I now possess in urging the Commission to pass this Vote and enable the Government to have the Museum completed as rapidly as possible.

(6·44) MR. JAMES ROWLANDS: The right hon. Gentleman has failed entirely to grasp the objection which we are taking to this Vote. I do not wish for one moment to be considered as objecting to the proper housing of the science exhibits which we may have. We are as strongly in favour of proper buildings for Scientific Institutions as any one in this House. But the great thing is, where is the proper place to put these buildings, whether we get full value for the money we pay, and whether the money asked for ought to be included in a Supplementary Vote. I am surprised at the right hon. Gentleman, with his experience of 10 years in respect to this matter, failing to see the importance of the position we have taken up. We are told by the Government that they must have the money within a short time. We are also told by the Secretary to the Treasury that the Exhibition Commissioners have been trying to get an answer from the Government during the past three years, but have failed to get it. What have the Government been about during those three years, and what reason is there that they should not wait another month or two instead of trying to get the Vote in the present financial year? If the Commissioners have been kind enough, as we are told, to offer the land at a sum much below its real value, surely they might add to their kindness by waiting for the Vote to be asked for properly at a time when Members can have full information on the subject before them. Again, I am not sure that the Commissioners have a right to sell the land to the Government at a reduced price. If they are anxious to establish scholarships, they ought to make the Government pay the full value of the land. I do not wish to be too severe on the right hon. Gentleman, but it struck me whether he and his Colleagues were not committing a breach of trust in giving away valuable land which they have under their charge. There is another question which strikes me, and that is, whether it is necessary that all these buildings should be put up at South Kensington. That is not, as a matter of course, the most convenient spot for these institutions, or for the students who come up from the country to attend them. It is, I admit, a most convenient place for a number of wealthy people who like to have these art and science collections at their very doors. I think the time has come when we should consider the propriety of building these institutions on sites which cost something less than £20,000 an acre, and I believe that if we chose other localities it would be more convenient to the students, who would be able probably to get cheaper lodgings, while the localities would greatly benefit. But my strong ground of opposition is that you are using a Supplementary Estimate for a purpose to which it ought not to be applied. There is no reason why you should thus suddenly spring this matter upon the House after it has been in abeyance so many years. Surely if we have the friendship of the Exhibition Commissioners they might be expected to wait until the ordinary Estimates for the year could be laid before the House of Commons, and Members have an opportunity of considering the scheme as a whole. I shall consequently vote against the Estimate.

*(6.49.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): It seems to me that we are making a fresh departure in the way of buildings at South Kensington. On the east side of Exhibition Road there is a considerable quantity of vacant land, and I think it is a great scandal that the South Kensington Museum is left in its present unfinished state. But this is a Vote

to enable us to acquire land on the other side of the road, and I agree thoroughly with the hon. Member who has just spoken that it is a great mistake to concentrate all these buildings in one place. I want, in the first place, to see the Museum on the east side of the road completed, and I think when that is done the building will serve all practical purposes for some time to come. But the present proposal really amounts to the beginning of a new Museum. I think it is a great misfortune that this Vote has been put forward under these circumstances. I would much rather see a new Museum established in some other part of London. I want to see these places of public instruction distributed, and I do protest strongly against acquiring this new lot of land when we have so much space at South Kensington still unoccupied, and not likely to be occupied for many years to come, and when other parts of London are so inadequately provided with museums.

(6.52.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I sympathise with what fell from my right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield as to the extreme desirability of properly housing our science and art collections; but I think there is a good deal to be said for the objections which have been made to the course taken by the Government in presenting this as a Supplementary Estimate, and I trust that before the debate is concluded we shall have some further explanation. It is evident that there is a good deal of danger in initiating the practice of thrusting into the Supplementary Estimates demands which properly belong to the succeeding year. We did not know until we came down to the House what these Supplementary Estimates were about, and we, therefore, have had no time to consider this proposal. Supposing a Minister has a piece of work to get through which is not at all popular, he conceives the idea of putting it into the Supplementary Estimates, and bringing it forward at a time when it cannot be properly discussed, because no one knows anything about it. I entirely sympathise with the objections which have been raised, and unless I can be convinced that the sum proposed to be granted now does not properly belong to the burdens of next year, I shall be compelled to vote against the grant.

(6.55.) MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): When a right hon. Gentleman spoke of South Kensington being crowded with many valuable exhibits, I think he could not have been at that place very recently or else he would have known that in one large room there is nothing but a number of old and dusty chairs which have not been used since 1862, while the electric appliances room is utterly unused. I think if all the space there were properly utilised there would be no necessity to ask for this Vote, and the right hon. Gentleman would have no reason to complain that our valuable exhibits are badly housed. I say that the bad housing is due to want of attention on the part of the heads of Departments. This is a large sum to be voted in a Supplementary Estimate, and I think the Government might fairly have waited for the beginning of a new financial year before asking for it.

*(6.57.) SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): Having acted as honorary secretary to the Royal Commission for some years, I wish to say a few words in explanation of a mistake which has evidently arisen in the course of this debate. The hon. Member for Finsbury suggested that the Commissioners might be doing a great wrong to the public by selling the land at a price below its actual value. But the fact is, that a Charter was given to the Commissioners for the purpose of acquiring the land, and either giving it, or selling it at a low price for the foundation of institutions such as these. The reason for giving the Charter was that the cost of sites for public buildings in the Metropolis was so enormous that it was desirable to secure a large extent of land, and then dispose of it at moderate figures for various public purposes. If any hon. Members will go to the Library, they will find the Report of the Royal Commission of 1851 which came out towards the end of last year, and in which the whole of this Vote was explained at great length. The Commissioners have based their estimate of the value of the land upon sales of similar land which have actually taken place in the locality, and they have come to the conclusion that the land which they are offering to the Government for £70,000 is actually worth about £200,000. The additional £30,000 which is to be

paid by the Government is in respect of a building upon the land, and the sum of £30,000 is the value put upon that building by the Board of Works Surveyor, although the Commissioners are of opinion that the value is higher. With regard to the disposal of the £100,000 by the Commissioners, I may say that they are being continually pressed by people in the provinces to set apart a portion of their revenue for the purpose of promoting technical education. We have been pressed year after year to apply our surplus revenues to educational purposes, and could not do so because originally more land was secured than we had the money to buy, and have had to borrow money on mortgage. Our present debt is £129,000, and when the present amount of the Vote is applied to the extinction of the debt, if the Government choose to accept our offer we shall have only £29,000 of debt, which would be easily met by certain contributions from revenue. We have pressed the Government to come to a decision on the question whether they will acquire the land for the public, or whether it should be let to private individuals at full value to pay off the debt. We are now tired of waiting, the present state of things having been going on for 10 years, during which time the pressure from the provinces has been more and more strongly exerted upon the Commissioners, and after what we heard from the last Committee which reported on the subject, the Commissioners told the Government—

"We now offer you this land for the last time for £70,000, although we believe it to be worth £200,000. Will you take it? We cannot wait any longer, as we must answer the provincial demands for applying the revenue which will exist after we have paid off the debt."

At last the Government have come to a conclusion, which I think is a wise one; and when it is argued that it is unusual to vote a sum of this kind on the Supplementary Estimates, I believe that when the Correspondence on the question is published, it will be seen that we have been very patient, and that the time has come when the Government must give us an answer. This they have done, and it is now for the Committee to say what course it will take upon the subject.

(7.1.) MR. LABOUCHERE: It strikes me that the right hon. Gentleman has not made a very good defence. He tells us that the Commissioners have entered into a species of general engagement either to give their land for nothing, or to part with it under its value for purposes connected with science and art. But he now says the money ought to be granted immediately, and that if not they will sell the land to private individuals for building upon. But obviously the Commissioners are bound not to do that.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR: They may apply the proceeds of any money they may obtain for public purposes.

MR. LABOUCHERE: That seem to me to be a round-about method. The sites are for London and not for the provinces, and therefore the Commissioners are bound to sell the land for sites in London far below its value, in order that it may be used for scientific purposes. I think we ought to register a protest against these large sums of money being put into the Supplementary Estimates. To bring them forward in that way usually means that, by some sort of accident, there has been an excessive expenditure which was not at first contemplated; it was never intended that a scheme like this for a building in connection with the South Kensington Museum should be so dealt with. Even had it come up in the ordinary Estimates, I am inclined to think I should have opposed the proposal; because I regard the South Kensington Museum as a perfect vortex against which we should be upon our guard. I am positively shocked at the amount of money obtained for South Kensington. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) generally looks upon those of us who take this view as Goths and Philistines, because we object to this expenditure on his part and on the part of the friends of art; but I say the time has come when it is necessary that we should keep a wary eye on the proceedings of the friends of art, who, as a rule, mismanage everything with which they are connected, and spend thirteen pence where they ought not to spend more than tenpence. The friends of art ought to think of finance as well as of art. Under all the circumstances I hope the Committee will not only divide against this £100,000 Vote, but will throw it out.

(7.5.) MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The policy of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken is pretty clear; it is to oppose any grants in favour of South Kensington; and this is because it is not in his view a good commercial speculation. But I think I may make an appeal to the commercial and financial mind of the hon. Gentleman. I differ entirely from him on this point, because, as he will be told by duly qualified persons, if you take the erections of South Kensington, they are at the present moment worth, in mere commercial value, two or three times as much as they have cost the nation. I think that this fact ought to satisfy the commercial mind of the hon. Gentleman. But there is another point I should like to press on the hon. Member. Some of the most valuable possessions in the South Kensington collection have either been bequeathed to the nation or presented as gifts during the lifetime of the donors; and those gifts and bequests are dependent almost entirely in point of value on the appreciation the public have for them. If after obtaining gifts of this kind the nation does not take steps to house them properly they are not likely to obtain such gifts in future. I think, also, in a matter of this kind we are bound to take cognisance of the experience we have had of what has been the case in connection with the provincial museums and exhibitions. Wherever the community show the great value they attach to these collections, they have at once been met by the public spirit of the inhabitants, and large gifts have been made in consequence. The collection at South Kensington is both splendid and unique, and one of which any nation might be proud; but it is improperly and inadequately housed. I am, therefore, delighted to see this Vote placed before the Committee, and hope it will only be the precursor of other votes of the same kind.

(7.7.) MR. PICTON: I should like to hear why it is that the Government cannot wait till the end of the financial year.

*(7.7.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The answer is short; the end of the financial year falls at such a time that the vote could not be taken until June or July, or perhaps August, and it is unreasonable to ask the Commissioners of 1851 to wait until then. I am one of those who have resisted the expenditure at South Kensington as long as I could, and until I was perfectly satisfied it was necessary in the public interests. A Committee was appointed by the present Government to inquire and report whether any further accommodation could be found to meet the requirements of the case. We have received the Report of that Committee, and have no alternative but to carry out their recommendations to the best of our ability. The step we propose is one of the first steps necessary to be taken. When exception is taken to the Vote appearing in the Supplementary Estimates I wish to point out what is involved in that objection. It is suggested that the Government may at any period enter into a national engagement for the purchase of costly property and not communicate it to the House; of the two alternatives I should say the postponement of the announcement of such a financial engagement must be regarded as a much more serious matter than to ask the House to confirm at once the obligation into which the Government have entered. I may add that full notice has been given of the engagement into which we entered, as the Estimates were circulated last night or early this morning, and consequently hon. Members have come down to the House with ample information on the subject.

(7.10.) MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon Gentleman says we have had full information; whereas the Government merely enter into an engagement of which we have this short notice, and then leave it to the House to pass the Vote. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir L. Playfair) says the Commissioners cannot wait for another six months. Why not? They have already waited for 10 long years, and surely they might wait another six months. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) appeared to me to take a somewhat huxtering view of the matter. He seems to say that "We ought to go on purchasing every species of *bric-à-brac*, because its price has risen in the market; that what the nation has bought is worth three times what it was. Here is a splendid speculation! Let us buy a quantity more in the hope

the price will continue to rise." The right hon. Gentleman also says many persons have given certain things to South Kensington. Well, whenever I have been there, I have generally found, on inquiry, that where there is a very poor thing, it has been given by some gentleman, but that where there is a really good thing, it has been bought by the nation. If you go on building in the manner proposed, you will have persons sending every species of rubbish in the hope that their names may be put down as donors to the nation. I object to that. We ought not to accept a gift horse without looking it in the mouth, and most assuredly we ought not to build a stable of more than three times the value of the horse.

*(7.13.) MR. MUNDELLA: The hon. Gentleman has stated that what is given to the Museums are generally rubbish; does he not know that during a period of three years the value of these gifts has equalled half a million sterling? Why, Sir, many of these gifts are perfectly unique. The Jones Collection alone is worth £350,000, and is one of the best collections of its kind in Europe. In fact, I belief the gifts to South Kensington are worth many times over the amount the Government has expended there; while recently more was received in gifts in one year than had been expended during the previous 27 years.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): The right hon Gentleman (Mr. Smith) has stated that if this Vote were not placed in the Supplementary Estimates, it might have to wait till July or August. I ask does he propose to carry out the policy of last year by taking the last Votes first, and making Class 1 come at the end of the list? We want to know from the First Lord whether he intends to begin with Class 1 or Class 6?

*(7.16.) MR. BARTLEY: I think there is a misapprehension about the Vote now. I agree that the collection at the Kensington Museum is not properly housed; and, secondly, that the Museum is not complete. But will this Vote assist the better housing of the collection? The Vote is simply to buy a piece of land now used by the South Kensington Museum; it will not in any way aid in the better housing of the collection. Therefore, I think we ought to give a liberal Vote to complete the South Kensington Museum, and to put the collection in proper order, in which it is not at the present time. But I thoroughly object to extending the Museum to the other side of the road before completing the building on the east side of the road.

*(7.18.) MR. MORTON: I am glad to hear that this land has been valued by somebody. We are told that the purchaser valued the land at £120,000, and the landlord at £200,000; and it appears that we are going to give £70,000 and £30,000 for the building. I want to know how we can get it for a less sum than the purchaser valued it at. I object to this money being spent altogether in the West End. Some of this money ought to be expended in the East End of London, or even in the North End. The aristocracy of this country have already got enough of the good things of this world, and if we are to have these buildings and collections by all means let us have them in the East End of London, to improve the people there. I hope the Committee will allow this matter to be postponed with the object of our having time to consider whether, in common fairness, to the people of this country, and especially to the people of the Metropolis, some of these buildings ought not to be erected in the East End of London.

(7.30.) MR. BLANE: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield has said that gifts worth half a million have been received at the South Kensington Museum in the course of one year. When visiting that institution, the first thing that has met my gaze has been the bust of the right hon. Gentleman himself. I take great interest in objects of art, and I know what pleases me, and I quite agree that this bust is not properly housed. There is also a picture of the Committee of the Exhibition of 1851, in which is a portrait of the right hon. Gentleman, Sir Lyon Playfair. I quite agree that it also is not properly housed. It is a good portrait, but it is not in a good position. Perhaps this good portrait of the right hon. Gentleman might be put in a better position than it is at present. I have no objection to the right hon. Gentleman having both his bust and the painting put in a good position, so long as he does so at his own expense, but I object to expending

£100,000 for the purpose, and I therefore resist this Vote.

*(7.22.) MR. MUNDELLA: The hon. Gentleman is entirely mistaken. I have no bust at present at the Kensington Museum. The bust was a presentation from the factory workers, but has long since been removed.

(7.23.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 144; Noes 67.—(Div. List, No. 12.)

4. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,050, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st day of March, 1890, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings."

(7.32.) MR. LABOUCHERE: This is one of those singular items that occasionally slip into Supplementary Estimates. We are perpetually being asked to spend money on the Legation at Washington. The original Estimate for the alterations there was £700. That Estimate is exceeded this year by £850; that is to say, it has positively been doubled, and yet we have not any species of explanation offered to us. This is an instance of the reckless manner in which Gentlemen connected with the Foreign Office act in these matters. I see that £100 is put down for buying a filter, and £450 for alterations and repairs to the heating apparatus, and £700 for alterations in the drainage arrangements.

*(7.34.) MR. PLUNKET: I think I can explain the necessity of taking this Vote in the form of a Supplementary Estimate. When Sir Julian Pauncefote went to take up his residence at Washington, it was found that the house was in a very bad state, and there were no means of heating the upper part of it. It was necessary if he was to go into the house this winter that the work should be done at once. The drains were in a bad condition, and a number of officials had been suffering from illness caused by the defective arrangements. The water supplied to the Embassy house at Washington is often in a bad state in consequence of floods, and it is therefore necessary to filter it. £100 seems to be a large sum to expend on a filter, but it was a very large filter, as it was necessary to deal with the water supply of the whole of the house and the stables.

(7.36.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I can only tell the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) that I lived for some years in the house at Washington, that it had no heating apparatus, no special drainage arrangements, and no filter. I drank the water, and I throve. I have no doubt that Sir Julian Pauncefote and his successors would have thriven in the same way without these alterations. An Ambassador or a Minister never goes to any Legation which has been built at great cost to the country without insisting on having some sort of alteration made. It is really a strong thing for the right hon. Gentleman to tell us that it was absolutely necessary to put up a filter at a cost of £100. Probably the President of the United States drinks the Washington water unfiltered, and the Cabinet in Washington no doubt drink it also. I think it will meet the exigencies of the case if I move to reduce the Vote by £1,350, so as to bring it down to the original estimate.

Motion made, and Question porposed, "That Item N, of £1,350, for the Washington Legation, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

*(7.40.) MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I know something of the circumstances of this case, and think it would be ungracious of the Committee to divide against the Vote. I was recently in the house in question, and I think if there is anything wrong it is in the system, and not in the demand for repairs. It seems very unsatisfactory that the repairs of our establishments in foreign countries should be dealt with, at a distance, by the Board of Works, and that if an Ambassador requires to have any repairs carried out he should have, as in this case, to come to England, and besiege the doors of the Board of Works. When that is the state of things it is not wonderful that there should be a gradual accumulation of repairs, and that larger sums should be asked for than are altogether agreeable. I believe that in this case several of the people employed in the house, including some of the secretaries and servants, were laid up in consequence of defects in the drainage. That is not a creditable thing, and it is not wonderful that a considerable expense should be necessary under such circumstances. When a

man is serving his country at a great distance from home, I think it is only reasonable that we should give him a decent and healthy house to live in.

(7.43.) MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): The hon. Member's views on this subject are evidently the result of having dined with the Ambassador at Washington. I can personally testify that the water at Washington is quite as good in every sense as the water supplied in London, and I may add that the ordinary price of a family filter in America is four dollars, or 16s. It appears that a filter which costs 16s. is put down, when it is for an Ambassador, at £100. It is too ridiculous. Either this expenditure is not for a filter, or, if it is, there is something more than appears on the face of the Votes. It seems absurd to discuss small items of this kind, but it is generally in regard to these smaller items that fraud creeps in. The supposition that any filter in America ever cost £100 is absolutely ridiculous. We can hardly object to the cost incurred in altering the drains, because we all know that drains go wrong, and we ought not to let our Ambassador run the risk of illness on account of the drains. But the sum of £450 is put down for heating four or five rooms in a house in Washington. Why, £450 would heat a terrace in Washington. The small furnaces which they have in the rooms there, and which, to my mind, are very unhealthy and unpleasant, only cost a few dollars. If we go to a Division I shall certainly vote for the Amendment.

*(7.46.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen S.): I hope my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) will be satisfied with the discussion that has taken place, and that he will not think it necessary to go to a Division. At the same time I think this is one of the frequent occasions on which the Board of Works seems unprepared to give the explanations we might expect from them. There must be something wrong in the working of a system which frequently gives rise to cases of this kind, when the expenditure seems disproportionate to the result. However, we have had evidence that the drainage is bad, and I do not think, therefore, the Committee has any reason to quarrel with the chief item of the Vote.

(7.48.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I would ask leave, then, to withdraw the Amendment. I think the case has been met by the discussion which has taken place, and I hope it will act as a warning to our Ministers abroad, and to those who represent them here, that they must not incur reckless expenditure whenever they go to a fresh Embassy.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*(7.49.) MR. MORTON: I wish to object to this Vote on principle. The original estimate for the well and water supply in this case was £790, and we are asked to sanction an expenditure of £700 more than that amount. It appears that the Committee was deceived last year when it was told that the work would cost only £790. I quite agree that the House should be put into good order, and that the drainage should be perfected, but I am not sure that these are fair charges. I speak with some little knowledge of drainage, and £750 seems to me to be an enormous sum for the drainage of one small house. I think that the Yankees have made a fool of John Bull over this matter. I should like to have some further explanation respecting the filter, and also with regard to the "contingencies." Contingencies may mean anything. I remember reading some years ago that Joseph Hume discovered that "etc." in the House of Commons meant sherry and biscuits. I wish to know whether "contingencies" means sherry and biscuits, or whether it means some other extraordinary expenditure?

(7.52.) MR. BLANE: As to this water supply——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot go back to that item, as it has been disposed of.

MR. BLANE: I wish to speak on the total Vote. I think the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) does not know much about Washington or its water supply. He alleges that the water supply is sometimes unhealthy by reason of the floods. The reverse is the case, and there is a better water supply at Washington than in any town I know of in the United Kingdom. It is manifest that if our Minister is not satisfied with the Embassy at Washington he must be very hard to please. It has done for

his predecessors for many years, and if Sir Julian Pauncefote is not satisfied let him make the alterations he desires at his own expense. He has an allowance of some £700 a month or more.

(7.54.) MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I do not want to go into the details of the Vote; but I would point out that it refers to works carried on a long way from this country. In past years a very large number of cases of this kind have come, not only before this House, but before the Public Accounts Committee, and observations have been made upon them. I remember the sum of £40 being once charged for a washing-stand in the Embassy at Berlin. How far the items now before us are admissible we shall not learn this evening. We must, perforce, pass the Vote. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that something like an understanding was arrived at on a previous occasion, whereby not only were Clerks of the Works to be sent out from head-quarters to visit distant places and report on repairs and buildings, but it should be taken into consideration whether there should not be some transfer of the services. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that matter has been decided upon or considered; or whether we are to go on, year after year, having bills sent in which are transparently ridiculous and exorbitant in respect of services which cannot be checked?

*MR. PLUNKET: I am not aware of an understanding of the kind referred to by the hon. Member.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS II.

5. £700, Supplementary, for the Foreign Office.

(7.56.) MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): A study of the Estimates and Appropriation Accounts for the last 10 years has convinced me that the growth of the telegraph expenses in all the Departments has been rapid and uncontrolled. The increase of gross expenditure has been very great—in fact, it has in eight years doubled; and it is remarkable that year by year the Estimates have been largely exceeded, almost without exception, in every Department. The importance of the subject justifies me in asking that an inquiry into the whole subject of telegraph expense in all Government Departments should be granted without delay. The total expenditure on telegrams by the Foreign and Colonial Offices, by the Diplomatic and Consular Services, and by the Navy during the 10 years 1876-77 to 1886-7 was £409,459, but the original Estimates for those Services only amounted to £239,400. We are now asked to vote £7,600 for extra expenses incurred in telegrams for these Departments, in addition to the sum of £13,400 originally voted. These sums are paid to a Telegraph Company for sending messages over lines to South Africa which we now subsidise to the extent of £35,000 a year. I allude to the company controlled by that monopolist, Sir John Pender, which in addition gets a subsidy of £19,000 a year for a cable down the West Coast of Africa. This is not the time for raising the graver question whether the Government ought not, as a matter of State policy, and with a view to afford the public a cheap telegraph service throughout the Empire, to become possessed, by purchase or construction, of a complete Imperial telegraphic net. But, in any case, I think I am justified in asking that a Committee be appointed to inquire into this large expenditure and the continual abnormal growth in Government telegraph expenses.

Vote agreed to.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,166, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture."

(8.0.) SIR W. BARTTELOT: I should like to say a word on this Vote. In the first place, I should like to congratulate my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) on the high place he now occupies; and I think that we who speak on behalf of the agricultural interest will be sure on all occasions to receive the greatest courtesy and consideration at his hands. I should like to ask my right hon. Friend what are the additional salaries, amounting to £500, for collecting agricultural statistics? We are anxious to have every information

that can be given to us on that subject. I presume there is to be a large extension of the Returns we have previously had. We have always felt that the Agricultural Returns should be as accurate as possible, and I am sure that such is the intention of my right hon. Friend. I presume that the expenditure with regard to the Land Commission will now be merged in that of the Department of Agriculture; but I hope that the money already voted for the Land Commission will be spent under that head, and that at the end of the financial year the operation of the Commission will be carried out by the Agricultural Department.

*(8.2.) MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I desire to move the reduction of the salary of the President of the Board of Agriculture by the sum of £100. In doi g so, I must say I very heartily join with the hon. Baronet opposite in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman on the position to which he has attained; and I am sure that whenever we want any question attended to we shall be met by the right hon. Gentleman with the greatest courtesy. He knows I should be the last person to deprive him of his salary, which I am quite sure will be well earned. My only object in moving the reduction is to give him an opportunity of affording us some further information than he can do in answer to questions addressed to him across the Table of the House. There are a great many important matters on which we should like to have a statement. The right hon. Gentleman has been looked upon in this country as the champion of the tenant farmers. He has urged upon them the desirability of a great number of remedies for alleviating the great distress which agriculture has undoubtedly been afflicted with in the last few years. It is not so long ago that the right hon. Gentleman thought a return to Protection would be desirable for the purpose of alleviating the distress. It was, I think, called Fair Trade. After that he dropped Protection like a red-hot coal and took up another subject, which is called bi-metallism. It would be satisfactory to us on this side of the House if the right hon. Gentleman would tell us plainly that he has altogether abandoned those two visionary remedies. Earlier in the Session I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether Her Majesty's Government intended to carry out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Agriculture and Dairy Schools, and especially as to the Central Normal School at Rugby. The right hon. Gentleman replied that, undoubtedly, the Government did propose to promote technical education in agriculture and dairy farming, and he pointed out that at present only £5,000 was given to the new Department of Agriculture to assist him in the matter. I hardly think that £5,000 is sufficient for what is wanted, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will use the great influence which we know he possesses as a Member of the Cabinet to obtain a large increase of that sum. The results of helping agricultural schools which have shown a disposition to help themselves have been very satisfactory, and we on this side of the House are decidedly in accord with him when he says he prefers rather to help those schools which are helping themselves than to provide new schools to be maintained by the State; but in saying this, I wish still to urge the importance of establishing the Central Normal School at or near near Rugby. I also, by means of a question, called the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the subjects that have been discussed by farmers and fox-hunters as to the mode in which fox-hunting can be carried on in this country, so as not only to keep up the great reputation of that sport, but also to be more beneficial to farmers than it is at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman treated the question as somewhat of a joke, and said he presumed it was put to him as an ex-master of fox-hounds, and not as the Minister of Agriculture. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that it was not so; and if he reflects for a moment he will see that in the position in which he is now placed it would be desirable for him, as far as possible, to cast aside all recollections of the distinguished position he occupied as a master of fox-hounds, and to remember that he is now the head of an important Department of the State. When sport is mentioned in this House hon. Members opposite seem to think they have a monopoly of it. But I can assure them that there are Gentlemen on the Opposition side who can

ride as straight, shoot as straight, and present as straight a bat to the bowler as hon. Gentlemen on the other side. There are some points on which the right hon. Gentleman might do something for the tenant farmers. In the first place, it might be desirable that there should be an enforced subscription to the hunt.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is going beyond the scope of the Vote. The right hon. Gentleman has duties imposed upon him by Parliament, and the hon. Member should address himself to them.

*MR. COBB: I was coming to that. The second section of the Act distinctly states that the Board of Agriculture may do anything which may be useful for promoting agriculture. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he sees his way to promoting agriculture by enabling farmers to have a better opportunity for selling the horses they breed, and the forage which their fields produce, so that it should not be necessary for purchasers always to go to middlemen. The stock and crops of the farmers are now, owing to want of arrangement rather than to bad arrangement, not properly protected. I am not a hunting-man; but everyone knows that the farmers' crops, stock and fences are liable to reckless and wanton damage, which, it is thought, might be prevented if proper arrangements were made by the appointment of field-stewards. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the damage to crops might be more effectually dealt with by the masters of hounds themselves. If so, why have they not dealt with it in past years so successfully as to put an end to complaints which are now continually made? Then, he said, he thought all these questions might be left to the good sense and good feeling of all concerned. Of course, there is nothing better to leave them to than good sense and good feeling; but, again, I would say it has been left to their good sense and good feeling for a great number of years; but that has not prevented the farmers demanding that their voices should be heard through the medium of Agricultural Committees appointed to meet the Hunt Committees. There are many other subjects to which I could allude, affecting the agriculturalists, whom we all desire to help—such, for instance, as the muzzling orders in Kent and Essex, and still more the numerous amendments which are so urgently required in the Agricultural Holdings Act; but I leave these to be dealt with by my hon. Friends sitting near me.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That Item A, £1,266, Salaries, be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the President."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

(8.21.) COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): There is one thing with which the Committee will agree in the hon. Member who has just sat down, and that is that he is not a hunting man, because his arguments with regard to fox-hunting were impracticable. Whilst I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his promotion, I wish also to express my own intense grief, astonishment, and amazement when I find that his beneficent sway is not to extend to our side of the Channel. I think it a most disastrous thing that this should be the case; because the agricultural interests of the country are very intimately connected, and it is desirable that they should be placed under the superintendence of one head. I wish to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the Irish cross-Channel traffic. The animals from Ireland are treated in such a barbarous way whilst coming across the Channel that their value is much deteriorated. Cattle are brought from America in a much better and more humane manner, although the voyage is much longer and more stormy, and I do not see why a similar system should not be adopted with regard to Irish cattle. Some of the Railway and Steam-Packet Companies agree to take cattle at a lower rate at what is called "owners' risk," and these cattle are treated in an especially brutal matter. To my mind, the "owners' risk" system ought to be abolished. Another point which ought to occupy the attention of the Board of Agriculture, and in dealing with which I am sure my right hon. Friend will assist the Irish Government, is the extermination, by very firm and determined means, of the disease of pleuro-pneumonia. We are perpetually being accused, I think for the most part very unjustly, of sending over pleuro-pneumonia. At any rate, a great loss is occasioned to the Irish farmers by these

continual alarms; and I am certain that nothing is wanted but a firm application of the Slaughter Order wherever pleuro-pneumonia is proved to exist; and I think it would much improve the chance of success if the cost of communication were paid out of Imperial rather than out of local funds. I am bound to say that the composition of the Irish Privy Council, which is supposed to deal with this subject in Ireland, is not such as to give confidence to Irish agriculturalists. It is composed largely of lawyers, some of whom might have some difficulty in deciding at which end of a cow to look for its head and at which to look for its tail. I hope the right hon. Gentleman's beneficent sway will soon be extended to agriculture in Ireland. (8.25.)

*(9.0.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): My hon. Friend the Member for Rugby, at the opening of his remarks, expressed a feeling, which I am sure is general on this side of the House as well as on the other, that the Motion which stands in his name was not framed in an unfriendly spirit, but was simply intended to enable us to draw the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to one or two points of importance. I should like, in the first place, to express my own satisfaction on the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman. I happen to know that some of my Radical supporters, who are farmers, think that he is the right man in the right place, and I am sure there is a general feeling of approval of the appointment made by Her Majesty. The fact that his appointment is approved by farmers of both sides in politics I hope may induce the right hon. Gentleman to signalise his tenure of office by an advanced and a generous treatment of agricultural matters. As this Vote refers to the question of agricultural statistics and the Veterinary Department, in addition to the salary of the right hon. Gentleman, I do not think that I shall be out of order in referring briefly to those two questions. I have taken a great deal of interest, as other Members have, in what has been made known of the practice of other Boards of Agriculture in other countries; and I sincerely hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not hesitate to pull on the purse-strings of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to make the Statistical Department of the Board of Agriculture an honour to the country, a help to the farmers, small as well as large, and a real means of furthering the great interests of agriculture. Then, as to the Veterinary Department. I wish to take this opportunity of recording my satisfaction—a satisfaction which I think is generally felt—with the firm administration of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts by the right hon. Gentleman. The information which is now in the hands of private Members is not so exhaustive as we could wish with regard to the prevalence of disease in France and Germany; but I venture to say that hon. Members, irrespective of Party, will gladly support any policy which will protect the farmers of the country from the ravages of these dreadful diseases. Now, I will turn to the questions which particularly prompted me to take part in this debate. It seems to me, Mr. Courtney, that we are rapidly arriving at a new stage with regard to the whole policy of the Legislature respecting compensation for agricultural improvements. I know I might be out of order if I entered into the question of the state of the existing laws, which is a question rather of legislative reforms than of the administration of the Department of Agriculture; and so, as I do not wish to put myself out of order, I will not go beyond the scope of what I wish to bring before the attention of the Committee. Now, in carrying into practice the principles laid down in the Agricultural Holdings Act, there is a very important power placed in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman by the Act of last Session, and I hope it will be used for the benefit of agriculture. The Committee will know that the Act of last year transferred to the new Ministry of Agriculture the powers of the Land Commission. One of these powers was the drawing up of lists of competent valuers in counties. Sir James Caird, who occupies so distinguished a position on the Board of Agriculture, and who is, perhaps, the very best man who could have been placed in the position, expressed his opinions five or six years ago on the question of the appointment of valuers. All of us interested in agriculture, and especially in the great principle which we thought had been successfully asserted by the Agricultural Holdings

Act, namely, the principle that the tenants should have a real right of compensation for the value added to the land by their improvements, have had our attention drawn to a very remarkable speech delivered before the Chamber of Agriculture of Norfolk by a former well-known Member of this House, Mr. Clare Sewell Read. Any one who read that speech must feel that if the facts are verified by inquiry a very serious state of affairs prevails. I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will grant an inquiry, by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, into the working of the Valuation Clauses of the Act, and especially with regard to possible future action by the Board of Agriculture in reference to the appointment of valuers, as well as with a view to instituting a more satisfactory mode of carrying out agricultural valuation? I think I am justified in drawing attention to the important references to this mode made by Mr. C. S. Read. I am not dealing with legislative changes; I am merely going to attack the administration of the Act; and the point I wish to dwell upon is this—that in the county of Norfolk the lawyers and valuers and land agents have successfully boycotted the Agricultural Holdings Act; they have paralysed its administration, and have made it null and void, and of no use to the tenants. Mr. Read does not find fault with the Act itself; he does not challenge the wisdom of many of its provisions; but he does find fault with the spirit in which it is carried out, and the way in which the valuers do, in practice, defeat and paralyse the objects of the Act. He gives many striking illustrations of this. For instance, in cases in which the tenant has a right under his lease to sell the hay off his land, when the lease expires and he is going out and he puts in his claim for unexhausted improvements, he is at once met with a counter claim—on a most extravagant basis—for the manurial value of the hay so sold. Mr. Read gives his own experience in this particular. He had the right on one of his farms to sell off the hay, the manurial value of which, according to the ordinary custom of valuation, was £18. But he had a counter claim sent in for £45; and when he drew the attention of the valuers to the fact that he had spent no less than £300 in artificial and other manures during the preceding two or three years they would allow him nothing for that, but insisted on enforcing the counter claim of £45. Mr. Read also described in his speech how he had spent as much as £1,000 on one farm, and when he put in a claim for £57 it was at once met by a counter-claim for £30, afterwards raised to £90. He pointed out that he had converted a wilderness into fruitful fields, and did not expect gratitude, although he did expect even-handed justice; but he could not get a penny of compensation, and was actually a considerable loser on the whole of these transactions through the present system of valuation. An Act which was intended to benefit tenant farmers has been turned into an engine of oppression. Under these circumstances, I think a strong case is made out for an inquiry into the present system of valuation—an inquiry which I trust may lead to the establishment by the Board of Agriculture of something like the system which has been carried out by the Local Government Board with regard to the valuation of property under the Artisans Dwellings Act, namely, the appointment of an official arbitrator or valuer to act for a moderate scale and office fees, and to examine into the whole matter, and decide, in an impartial spirit, the questions in dispute between tenant and landlord. By adopting this course we should get rid of those professional middlemen who have really lived on the vitals of agriculture too long, and have wrung such immense bills of costs out of landlords and tenants, while instituting a system which generally defrauds the tenants, and often defrauds the landlords of part of their just claims. Before I pass from this subject I wish to emphasise the question I put to the right hon. Gentleman; *i.e.*, whether he can see his way to consent to the appointment of a Select Committee, or to some other form of inquiry, into the working of the Agricultural Holdings Act in the matter of valuation, and with a view to instituting a better system from which will be absent the evils complained of by Mr. C. S. Read. Now I come to another matter. Those acquainted with the Agricultural Question must have had their attention drawn by several recent cases in the North of England to the state of the law with re-

gard to mortgaged farms; and I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the guardian of agricultural interests, whether he will not take these cases into his careful consideration and hold an inquiry, with a view to legislating this Session upon the subject? I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman and the House are familiar with the case which recently occurred in Yorkshire (near Doncaster), in which an unfortunate tenant took over a farm and paid £1,500 for the tenant right. He was deceived, whether by the landlord or the agent I do not know, and was told that the farm was not mortgaged, whereas it was. When he decided to leave the farm he gave the proper notice, and obtained an award of £1,000 for his out-going tenant right. But the mortgagees subsequently foreclosed, and actually sold the stock and standing crops off the farm which they cleared, as they had power to do, under the existing law, and the tenant had not a claim for even a farthing against the mortgagees, who had become, in fact, the owners of the farm. That constitutes an obvious state of injustice in the law which I believe——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*MR. CHANNING: This is, perhaps, a matter for legislation, and I am not, therefore, justified in further alluding to it; but having drawn to it the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, I hope he will not let it escape his notice. I will only say, in conclusion, and with regard to the main object with which I spoke, that it is of the utmost importance to the effective carrying out of the principle of the Agricultural Holdings Act—the principle of recognising that tenants who have added to the value of the soil should reap the benefit of what they have done to improve the land—that he should endeavour to secure an improved system of valuation under the Act.

(9.20.) MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I am somewhat surprised to find we have become engaged in an agricultural debate on this Vote. I am sorry we should thus be taking up the time of the House, for I think it is not fair to force our grievances on the House on this occasion, although the temptation to do so is very great. We have had almost every subject connected with agriculture touched upon; but as I think a more convenient opportunity will be found during the Session for discussing these topics, I prefer to-night to confine my remarks to doing what other speakers have done, and that is to congratulate the Government on having formed this Board of Agriculture, and particularly on having put at the head of it a gentleman whose appointment meets with universal approval. The appointment also of Major Craigie to the Statistical Department is, I am sure, equally popular. It is of the utmost importance that agricultural statistics should be thoroughly looked after, and that they should be in the hands of a competent Director. The importance of this has been exemplied recently in connection with the collection of the market prices of corn, and I hope that the supervision of that collection will be one of the duties entrusted to Major Craigie. A year or two ago a Committee sat upstairs for the purpose of finding out whether the Returns were efficiently made; and we found, after examining gentlemen whose duty it had been to make the Returns, that the work was not effectively carried out. The Returns made since last harvest have been very misleading, especially in the matter of the comparisons of quantities of corn sold on the market this year and last. According to the Returns, for instance, the sales of barley since last harvest have been largely in increase of the quantity in the preceding 12 months, although, as practical farmers, we know that the last crop of barley was very deficient. Therefore the statistics are very misleading. The hon. Member for Rugby has suggested that the Ministry of Agriculture should take fox-hunting under its charge; but I think we had better by far get it to deal with questions of much greater importance. Surely hunters and farmers can arrange between themselves any little disputes that may arise. With regard to the question of tenants' compensation, no doubt the Minister will pay attention to the matter; while as to the case of mortgaged farms, if it can be shown that tenants' property has been sacrificed through defects in the existing law, it may be hoped that legislation dealing with it will soon be introduced. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down has asked the right hon. Gentleman to take steps in the direction of securing that cattle brought over to this country from Ireland shall be

protected as far as possible from injury. This is a question of the greatest importance. As we in England find corn production no longer profitable—and the growing of wheat at £5 per acre is impossible—we are obliged to change our business, and the only change we can make is to convert arable into pasture land—and in many cases it will be very poor grass we shall get from these pastures. Consequently, we have to depend more and more on stock raising; and it is therefore very important that the British farmers should be able to get store stock from Ireland and other districts in which it is bred placed on his farm in the best possible condition. I do not think this is the time to trot out all our various ideas; so, in conclusion, I will only say I hope that the work of the new Ministry will continue in the same favourable way as it has commenced.

*(9.29.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I also wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on what I think is a well-deserved honour, and I assure him that I wish him success in carrying out the duties that will devolve on him in his new office. But I have something else to say. Doubtless the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture remembers that in the *Daily News* of February 4th there appeared a *precis* of a letter addressed to the editor by an Essex gentleman, in which that gentleman described the hunting that went on in his district, and spoke of there being some 220 or 300 skilled riders.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is travelling quite beyond the question raised by the Amendment.

*MR. PICTON: I bow, Sir, to your ruling, and would merely express a hope that the right hon. Gentleman will do something for the amelioration of the farmers. I might refer him to a letter from Mr. George Baylis in regard to the difficulties with which certain farmers on the borders of Berks have to contend in reference to the payment of tithes. It appears that many of them are unable to pay the 10s. and 11s. per acre, which includes both rent and tithes. That, I think, is a point deserving consideration. There must be some reason why farmers holding very fair land should not be able to pay so small a sum. Of course, he has been told that the burdens imposed on the farmers by the present fiscal system were more than they can bear.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is again entering upon matter which is irrelevant to the subject before the Committee.

*MR. PICTON: I again bow, Sir, to your ruling; but I presume I am in order in asking the Minister of Agriculture to consider in what way he may best improve the position of the cultivators of the land; and in regard to that question I would point out that there is a matter of great importance deserving his careful attention. I allude to the growth of fruit. In the United States of America there is a Department of the Government which distributes statistics relative, amongst other things, to the cultivation of fruit. Last May several cargoes of apples were brought here from the Colony of Tasmania, and they were sold at as much as from 12s. to 20s. a bushel, which is a very good price. It is also stated that a few years ago as large a quantity as one million and a half of barrels of apples were imported from America, while in a more recent year the importation of that fruit from America reached 800,000 barrels. That is an enormous quantity to import into this Kingdom from one country, and I think inquiry should be made into the matter; because if, as is said, we can grow as good or better fruit as can be brought from abroad, our growers must be placed at a considerable disadvantage by the competition thus going on. I am told that near the Land's End there is a small fruit farm which pays a good percentage to the owner; but that is due to the fact that he is the owner of the land on which the fruit is grown. Again, I think the Minister of Agriculture would do well to pay some attention to the ominous words of the hon. Member for Maldon (Mr. C. Gray), when he said that the only alternative for the decreased production of corn was the increased production of meat. Surely other alternatives ought to be possible, and would be so, if our farmers took a more intelligent view of their position. That is an important matter, and well worthy of serious attenon. In conclusion, I would merely express my sympathetic hope that the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman, who, from his previous association with

agriculture, is exceedingly well qualified for the position he holds, will lead to a more intelligent appreciation of the difficulties which beset the British farmer, and to the consideration of measures whereby his present position may be materially improved.

*(9.38.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): As this is the first occasion on which it has ever been my fortune to defend the Estimates of a Government Department, I hope I may be allowed to refer to the kind expressions which have, without one single exception, been used by hon. Members, no matter in what part of the House they sit, with regard to the appointment which I have the honour to hold. I beg to express my thanks and gratitude to those hon. Members who have spoken so kindly in reference to myself. If the ruling of the Chairman will permit, I should desire to say something in reply to the hon. Member who has just sat down. It is true that the conditions of agriculture have very considerably changed during the last few years. I am as sen ible of that change as any Member of this Committee; and although I do not, perhaps, attach quite so much importance to the cultivation of fruit as the hon. Gentleman appears to do. It has engaged my attention, and undoubtedly all those matters are entitled to, and are, in fact, at the present time engaging, the careful consideration of the Board of Agriculture. Fruit cultivation is a matter which we are now considering in connection with the question of agricultural education; but let me give one word of caution on this subject. It must be remembered that the cultivation of fruit depends perhaps more upon climate than upon anything else, and there we stand unquestionably, with the exception of some favoured districts, at a disadvantage as compared with many other countries of the world. The hon. Member said he could not understand why certain land in Berkshire could not afford to pay 10s. an acre for tithe and rent combined, and asked what was the reason. The answer is perfectly simple. The value of land depends upon two things—the quality of the soil and the prices of produce. The answer to the hon. Gentleman's question is that land, unfortunately, is in some cases too bad at the present prices of produce to pay any rent at all. That that is not at all an unknown state of things in this country I know from my experience in connection with a farm, which I consider a fairly good farm, and which used in former times to bring me in a good revenue. It was my misfortune to have to let that farm for no rent at all, rather than have it on my own hands. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Sussex asks me to explain that item in the Supplementary Estimate which consists of £500 for collection of additional produce Returns beyond those provided under another sub-head of the same Vote. There is a Return given of the estimated total produce of barley and oats in bushels. It was thought desirable to supplement this Return during the present year by further information of the average weight of the bushel, which varies considerably in different seasons. The collection and tabulation of this Return added to the cost—and it is to cover this that the Supplementary Vote is required. The subject of statistics is under consideration, and, indeed, revision, by the Department, and we hope to make some improvement. My hon. and gallant Friend behind me asked whether the Land Commission was in future to be under the control of the Board of Agriculture. As a matter of fact, the Land Commission at the present moment, by an Act that was passed last Session, is merged altogether in the Board of Agriculture, and as my hon. and gallant Friend perhaps has noticed, at the foot of the Returns is a note to this effect, which I hope will be satisfactory to him—that the additional charges under the Supplementary Estimates will be more than covered by the savings upon the Vote of the Land Commission, which savings amount, notwithstanding the present Supplementary Estimate, to £2,290. I come to the question put to me by the hon. Member for Rugby as to agricultural education. The hon. Gentleman repeated his inquiries, to which I gave him an answer some days ago, with regard to the establishment of a central normal school at Rugby, or in that neighbourhood. That is a matter which the Board of Agriculture have under consideration. I do not know that I can do more on this

occasion than repeat practically the answer which I gave to him the other day. The whole subject of agricultural education at the present moment is engaging our careful consideration, for it will be some satisfaction to the hon. Member to learn that the subject is included in that branch of the Department which is at present presided over by Major Craigie. I was only fortunate enough to obtain the services of Major Craigie for the Department a few weeks ago; and it has been impossible, because of the great quantity of other work which has fallen to the Department, to frame a complete scheme of agricultural education at present. I hope, however, that it will be possible to do so before any very considerable period has elapsed. And I can assure the hon. Member for Northamptonshire, who urged upon me to pull hard at the purse strings of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that I shall never be backward in that respect when the interests of agriculture appear to justly demand it; but which of us can pull the harder at the strings only the future can determine. But I am bound to say for my right hon. Friend that I have no cause of complaint of any kind of the way in which he has met me up till now. The hon. Member for the County Down drew my attention to the question of the traffic in animals across the Channel between this country and Ireland. He was kind enough to express his regret that the duties of the Board of Agriculture do not also include the agricultural interests of Ireland. I cannot say that I altogether share in the regret of my hon. Friend, although I thank him for the complimentary and kindly allusions he made to myself. But I may be able to give him some satisfaction by stating that up to the present time the Board of Agriculture and the Irish Government have always been able to work in perfect harmony—a harmony which I trust will continue as long as my right hon. Friend and myself continue to occupy the offices which we do at present. Undoubtedly it is of great importance that there should be complete and harmonious working between the two Governments; because the question to which he called my attention, that of pleuro pneumonia and the effective control of that disease, is undoubtedly of the very first importance, and is a matter which even at the present moment is more than under consideration, for it is one with regard to which I have already prepared a Bill, which I hope to introduce into this House at no distant time, but with regard to which also it is impossible for me on this occasion to give any further information. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire, while expressing satisfaction, which I was exceedingly glad to note, with the policy which I thought fit at the Board of Agriculture to pursue with regard to the importation of foreign animals into this country, and the duty and necessity which fell upon this Board to take reasonable measures to prevent that importation being accompanied by the introduction of foreign disease—the hon. Member, in addition to that question, laid great stress upon the alleged deficiencies of the Agricultural Holdings Act. He called my attention in particular to statements that have been made in relation to that subject.

*MR. CHANNING: The right hon. Gentleman will pardon my interrupting him for a moment. I did not draw attention to the defects of the Agricultural Holdings Act, but to the way in which the present system of valuation is carried out by the valuers, so as to defeat the purposes of the Act.

*MR. CHAPLIN: Quite so; but these valuers are appointed under the Act, and I concluded that the hon. Member's observations reflected upon the Agricultural Holdings Act itself. With regard to the appointment of valuers, that is a question to which, undoubtedly, after the observations of the hon. Member, it will be necessary for the Board of Agriculture to devote the most careful attention. He asked me whether I was willing to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire, I understood him, into this question. I am of opinion, and I always have been, that, probably, in all these matters there is a good deal too much of red tape already; and as far as I am concerned, I entertain the view to-day which I have always entertained, that arrangements of this kind are much better managed by private agreements between the landlord on the one hand and the tenant on the other than they could be by any legislation in the world. This is the first occasion, I confess, that

my attention has been called to the necessity of appointing a Select Committee to inquire into this question. I have not had an opportunity of seeing and of considering, with the necessary care, any sufficiently full and accurate report of the statements that were made by Mr. Clare Read some little time ago, and I am somewhat sorry that I have been disappointed of having an interview which I partly expected with Mr. Read, who is an old and valued friend of mine, upon this subject. But I am perfectly willing to admit that it is a matter which deserves careful and thorough consideration, as I attach very considerable importance to anything which falls from Mr. Clare Read on agricultural questions. I am bound to say this also: that, so far as I am acquainted with what did fall from him on the occasion referred to, it seems to me that the difficulties of which Mr. Clare Read complained and the injustice which I understand he alleged is suffered, were owing rather to some old agreements entered into many years ago than to any defects in the law at the present time. My own view of this question, generally speaking, I confess is that in these days, and more especially during the last few years, the tenant farmers, as a rule, have been placed in so advantageous a position, for this purpose at least, that they have been able on all occasions to make almost any agreement that they pleased. Certainly it has been my own experience during the last few years, and I expect that it will have been the general experience of the landlords throughout the country, that where a farm has been in the market for which a tenant has been required the rent has practically been fixed by the tenant and not by the landlord. And if a tenant can fix the amount of his rent, which is by far and away the most important part of his agreement, there is no reason in the world why he cannot fix the other terms in that agreement as well. At the same time, I can promise the hon. Member this: that with regard to the question of valuers which he has raised, it shall receive my most careful consideration; and although I cannot pledge myself to the appointment of a Select Committee, this being the first occasion on which the proposal has been brought to my notice, I can promise him that the whole question which he has raised shall receive the careful attention of the Board of Agriculture. The hon. Member raised another question which is perhaps of even greater importance. He called my attention to the case which occurred in Yorkshire, in the neighbourhood of Doncaster, some two years ago, in which, I believe, it was the fact that the tenant of a farm which had been mortgaged left it for some reason or another, when the mortgagee stepped in and seized the estate. The estate was not sufficient to pay the debts of the landlord, and the general result was that the tenant was turned out of the farm without receiving any compensation whatever, either under the Agricultural Holdings Act or under his agreement with his landlord. The result to him was this: that he had no one from whom to recover compensation except his landlord, who was a bankrupt. I acknowledge that this is also a question of importance and is deserving of great consideration. I remember that I examined into this question when it was first brought under my notice; but I came to no conclusion sufficiently definite to induce me to take action upon it. I have not considered it since I was appointed to this office, and therefore I do not wish to pledge myself to anything definite upon the subject at the present moment. I admit the importance of the matter, and it is a question upon which, before I commit myself to any particular policy with regard to it, I naturally desire to consult the Legal Authorities. It is, however, a question which the hon. Member has not only a right, but is fully justified, in my opinion, in bringing to the notice of the Government, and it is one which I shall be careful to consider. Then I come to the question raised by the hon. Member for Essex, who sits behind me. He referred to the present condition of the Corn Returns. He is not satisfied with them, and he thinks that a very great improvement might be effected in connection with the corn trade. He thinks that the present system in connection with the corn trade is susceptible of great improvement. That system which is in operation is at present carried on by the Board of Trade, and not by the Board of Agriculture, and naturally, although I am glad to be able to agree with him, I

do not wish to pass criticism of a hostile character upon the work of a Department other than my own. There is one more question which I approach with some trepidation after your ruling to-night, Mr. Chairman—I mean that which was brought under our notice by the hon. Member for Rugby, who spoke at some length upon it. He put to me a whole list of questions with regard to the future of fox-hunting in this country. I was impressed with one suggestion which bears on the interest of agriculture. The hon. Member suggested that it would be most desirable if, in future, horses and forage could be bought directly of tenant farmers instead of from middlemen and dealers, who prevent the profits from going into the pockets of those whom we desire to have them. I warmly endorse the suggestion. I think it would be the most desirable thing in the world; but it is not a question in which the Board of Agriculture ought to interfere. The hon. Member next dwelt on the damage to fences and crops, and insinuated——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*MR. CHAPLIN: To tell the truth I am very glad, Sir, to be relieved from the duty of replying at greater length to the observations of the hon. Gentleman, which are scarcely, I think, with in the province of the Department. I hope now that the Supplementary Estimates of the Board of Agriculture will be allowed to pass. I assure hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House that the various suggestions which have been made to me will receive the most careful attention of the new Department of which I am President.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

(10.3.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish, Sir, now to bring back the discussion to its financial aspect, and I have no doubt I shall have the attention of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Board of Agriculture to the matter on which I am about to speak. I intend to move the reduction of the Vote by the whole of the salary of the right hon. Gentleman, and I think I shall be able to show him that my proposal is reasonable and legitimate. I assure the right hon. Gentleman that there is nothing personal in this Amendment, nor do I take this action because the right hon. Gentleman happens to be at this time President of the Board. I have no doubt that he will make just as good a Minister of Agriculture as any other gentleman on that side of the House. But there was a distinct pledge given by the Government, after a good many discussions, as to the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. Formerly, the duties of this Minister were performed by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, whose office was a purely honorary one. I remember once meeting the late Mr. John Bright during the vacation. I asked him something about his office, and he replied, "Oh, I have not even seen my private secretary for the last four months; there is really nothing to do." It was admitted that there was nothing to do in the office, and the duties now fulfilled by the right hon. Gentleman were added to those of the Chancellor of the Duchy. It was fully understood that when a Minister of Agriculture was appointed, the salary of the Chancellor of the Duchy would be transferred to the office now held by the right hon. Gentleman. But we have still a Chancellor of the Duchy—a very estimable nobleman—and we cannot attack his salary, as it is not in the Estimates. It comes out of the revenues of the Duchy. We are therefore obliged to attack the salary of the right hon. Gentleman himself. I do not expect that right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite are so patriotic as to say they do not want salaries, and I would therefore say to the President of the Board of Agriculture, "Go to the Duke of Rutland. Get your salary from him—get his salary." There was a pledge given to the House that the salary of the Chancellor of the Duchy should be given to the new Minister for Agriculture, and it has not been carried out. I need not refer to the day when that pledge was given, as it must be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman. "Coming events cast their shadows before," and the right hon. Gentleman took a much greater interest in the discussion in the course of which the pledge was given than some of us on this side did. I would urge that the pledge which was given ought to be carried out; and, as a protest against its non-fulfilment, I move the reduction of the Vote by £1,120.

(10.10.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, £1,266, Salaries, be reduced by £1,120, part of the Salary of the President.—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes 58; Noes 118.—(Div. List, No. 13.)

CLASS III.

7. £9,068, Supplementary for County Courts.

8. £326, Supplementary, for Revising Barristers, England.

9. £3,400, Supplementary, for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

(10.20.) ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I desire to call attention to the question of the Reformatory and Industrial School Ships. There are 18 of these vessels, and I wish to draw attention to the absurd and mischievous system of inspection which exists.

THE CHAIRMAN: That subject is outside the scope of this Vote.

*(10.21.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I desire to point out that the number of children in industrial schools goes on increasing, and I am anxious to know what steps are being taken to press forward the Bill on this matter. I hope some assurance will be given to Members on both sides of the House who served on the Royal Commission that the Government intend on an early day to proceed with the Bill. I would suggest to the Home Secretary whether it would not be better to introduce the Bill in this House rather than in the House of Lords? A Bill on the subject was introduced in the other House last year and went before the Standing Committee on Law, but it was cruelly murdered by its own parents after having been amended, to some extent, by the Committee. I think, as one of the Commissioners, I have a right to urge the Government to pass a Bill. The subject is pressing, as this Vote is increasing from year to year, and there are many reforms needed, such as the substitution, in suitable cases, of the system of boarding out for that of confining children in industrial schools.

(10.23.) THE HOME SECRETARY (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I have this matter very much at heart. I certainly have turned over in my own mind the alternative of bringing in the Bill in this House, but I am convinced that the best plan would be to follow the course of last year and introduce the Bill in the House of Lords. The Bill is quite ready, and will be introduced without delay.

Vote agreed to.

10. £630, Supplementary, for the Register House, Edinburgh.

11. £1,205, Supplementary, for the Crofters' Commission.

(10.25.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I do not think we can fairly object to the items of this Vote; but, before it is agreed to, I should like to take the opportunity of asking that we should have the latest information possible in regard to the condition of the crofters. For my own part, I never shall be satisfied with the way in which the crofter plan has been carried out.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman cannot enter into the general question on this Vote. He can only discuss the supplementary additions.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS IV.

12. £565, Supplementary, for Universities, &c., in Scotland.

CLASS V.

13. £4,000, Supplementary, for Diplomatic Services.

(10.27.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I understand this Vote refers to the abortive mission of the Member for West Birmingham to America.

*(10.28.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): No; the Vote refers to the Maritime Conference held within the last few months at Washington.

*(10.29.) SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I should like to express the appreciation of my constituency, and also that of the other great mercantile centres, of the action of the Government, not only in joining this Conference, but in so ably representing the interests of this country. I may add that I have found from various sources that the great success of that Conference has been

in a great measure due to the skill, eloquence, and ability of the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire, our chief delegate. It was stated before the Conference met that the delegates had no power to bind Her Majesty's Government, and that any proposals could only be dealt with *ad referendum*. I should like to know whether the Government, before they come to any definite decision on the subject, will give those interested in the great mercantile interests of this country any opportunity of expressing their opinions upon those decisions.

(10.31.) MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I should like to know whether, as the outcome of this Commission, any change is to be made in regard to the rule of the road at sea. I should like also to ask whether the Commission has under its consideration the existing load-line; whether there is any probability of the Conference bringing about an International load-line between this country and America, and other countries; and, also, whether it is the intention of the Government to place in the hands of Members a full Report of the Conference proceedings.

(10.32.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: The last thing I would wish to do would be to object to this expenditure. I believe it is expenditure incurred for an excellent purpose. But I hope that before the Vote is passed the President of the Board of Trade will be able to state what is the exact state of the negotiations.

(10.33). SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I should like, in the first place, to corroborate all that has been said by my hon. Friend behind me in commendation of the admirable way in which this country has been served by its delegates at this Conference. Too much cannot be said in praise of the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire, who has acted as First Commissioner, and who has been most efficiently assisted by the other delegates. It is especially agreeable to the Government and to the country to observe the attention which has been paid to this Conference by the representatives of all nations, and the recognition of the special knowledge and experience of England in these matters. In reply to the questions addressed to me, I have to say that the Protocols of the Conference have not yet arrived, and it is, therefore, premature to discuss the proceedings. It is certainly desirable that the proceedings should be made public as soon as possible in order that they may be carefully considered by the country before anything is done to carry out the recommendations of the Conference. As to the two questions of the hon. Member for Sunderland, I may say that very few alterations have been proposed in the rule of the road, and I believe it will be possible to adopt them. As to the International load-line, I myself suggested the insertion of that subject among the matters to be considered. It was considered, but I am sorry to say it was found impossible to arrive at any decision on the subject.

Vote agreed to

14. £10, Supplementary, for Consular Services.

15. £5,030, Supplementary, for Colonies, Grants in Aid.

16. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £23,250, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for certain Charges connected with Bechuanaland, the High Commissioner for South Africa, and other services in South Africa."

(10.37.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I have given notice of a Motion to reduce this Vote by £20,000 in respect of the additional grant in aid to Bechuanaland. The Bechuanaland territory has been an extremely expensive territory to this country. We have already voted this year £70,000 as a grant in aid of it, and now we are asked to vote an additional £20,000. May I ask what is our position with regard to the new Chartered Company? We are told that the revenue of the territory does not come up to the expenditure, and that additional expenditure has been found necessary in consequence of the rise in price of wages, and the heavy cost of the police in the Protectorate. But I understand that the rights and privileges which the Government acquired in that part of Africa have by Charter devolved upon a company. In that case might not the company be called upon to bear the expenses? Why should we be called upon to pay an additional £20,000 for

the maintenance of order in the Protectorate? I look with great suspicion and doubt upon the policy of devolving great territory upon Mercantile Companies got up in the City; for I am afraid that through the action of these companies we are led into annexation which is not desired by Parliament or the country. Perhaps the Under Secretary for the Colonies will tell us whether the new Chartered Company has assumed the function which has hitherto been assumed by Her Majesty's Treasury; and, if so, why we are called upon to bear this additional expense? In order that my question may be answered, I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by £20,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item D, £20,000, Bechuanaland, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

*(10.40.) THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The hon. Member is in error in supposing that the increased expenditure for the police has any connection, however remote, with the Chartered Company.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: What I suggested was that the Chartered Company was intended to relieve us of the expense.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I do not think it was ever intended that the Chartered Company should relieve us of the expense of the police which has nothing whatever to do with the company. There has been no increase in the number of the police, but the force has proved a great deal more expensive than we expected owing to the great distances to be travelled and to the increase of prices. The reason why it is necessary to have a police force there, I think, I explained to the hon. Member last Session. It is to prevent filibustering on the frontier of our Protectorate. The hon. Member seems to be under the impression that the Chartered Company are doing nothing to relieve us of the burden and expense consequent on the territory in which we have allowed them certain rights. That is not strictly correct. The company are spending out of their own pockets about £60,000 on a telegraph line north of Bechuanaland, and they are constructing at their own expense a railway from Kimberley. It is anticipated that an immediate advantage will accrue not only to British Bechuanaland, but to the advancement of industry in the Protectorate by this action on the part of the company.

(10.44.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I understand that all the profits which may be derived from the territory have been made over to the Chartered Company. The Under Secretary tells us that the expense which is now proposed to be met by this £20,000 is increased expenditure on the police. What I want explained is, why should not the company bear the expense of the police in the territory, exactly as the East India Company bore the cost of the Army maintained in India.

(10.45.) DR. CLARK (Caithness): I think there is involved in this Vote a far more important question than my hon. Friend has raised. I know that Colonel Carrington, who is in charge of the police, has been in Cape Colony, and that recruiting is going on in the Transvaal and the gold fields for 1,000 men to go into this Protectorate. I naturally supposed that this £20,000 was for these new soldiers that Colonel Carrington has been sending there. However, we are told this grant in aid has nothing to do with that, but is necessitated by the extra cost of the police in the Protectorate. Let us understand the position of affairs. Last year we voted £48,000, and the last Report is that there is no filibustering and no crime, that every one at the gold fields is rich, and there is no trouble. During the present year we have increased the grant from £48,000 to £70,000, and now we are asked for £20,000 in addition. The whole of this sum is to be spent on the police. You have got a declining revenue—your revenue is going down every year because your land sales are going down. Why is that, and why is this colony one of the biggest disgraces we have ever had? In this grand colony of Bechuanaland there is no church and no clergyman. Your officers have been appealing to you to get them a church and a clergyman; and in this huge territory, twice as big as this country, there are only two medical men. The people appeal to you for more medical officers. They appeal to you for education. There is not one school for white children in the whole

country. Last year I brought the matter before the House and pressed the Government to do something, and a month or six weeks ago the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, in a letter to the *Times*, entreated of the Treasury to do something. The condition of the colony is a disgrace to the Treasury. Under your fostering care the population is lessening and the revenue is declining. I wish hon. Members who are fond of annexation would read the Report sent home by our officials out there, for it will put them to shame if anything can. You are there told that in one village with 6,000 inhabitants, people are dying at the rate of 10 per day. If we had handed the colony to the Cape they might have done something with it. The last Report showed that £105,000 had been spent. Of that £80,000 was spent on the police and £25,000 spent for all other purposes! Now, I wish to know why Colonel Carrington wants 1,000 more men. Why has he been down in Cape Colony picking up recruits and promising them large salaries? Do you want with these men to attack Lobengula, the King of the Matabeles? It seems to me that the present policy is to force the Matabeles into war. The Bechuanaland Protectorate embraces a portion of the Matabeleland territory. We claim that territory because some time ago King Lobengula made a Treaty of friendship with John Moffatt. What is there in that Treaty to give you any right to determine any question with reference to Matabeleland? No rights or privileges in that country have been conferred on the Chartered Company, and if they want possession of Lobengula's territory they will have to fight for it. There is no doubt that the 1,000 men Colonel Carrington is recruiting are the men intended to fight the Matabeles and get mineral rights for the company which Mr. Rhodes is running.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see how this arises out of this Vote.

DR. CLARK: Certainly, because this money is for police, and these police are like the Irish Police—a military force.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The hon. Member is in error. The police who are being recruited are the police of the company. There is no charge whatever on the Estimate for them.

DR. CLARK: Then why is Colonel Carrington, who is the Chief of the Police, recruiting these filibusters? We want definite information. If these men are not for the Bechuanaland Police, I want to know why the gentleman whom we pay very highly and who is at the head of the Bechuanaland Police should be the recruiting officer for the new company?

*(10.55.) BARON H. DE WORMS: I am not prepared to admit that Colonel Carrington is the recruiting officer for the police; the only statement to that effect that I have heard is that of the hon. Member himself. What I stated was that the police, to whom the hon. Member refers as being recruited, are not for Her Majesty's Government, and have nothing to do with them. The hon. Member was in the House the other day when I entered fully into the merits of the Charter. I then explained that the British South Africa Company are raising 500 police for the purpose of maintaining law and order within the districts over which they have certain rights. [DR. CLARK: What rights?] I do not think that the rights of the Chartered Company can possibly arise in the discussion of a Vote for the Bechuanaland Police, and I should be out of order if I discussed now the policy with respect to Matabeleland and the position of the Chartered Company. With respect to the raid which has been referred to, we have an assurance from the President of the Transvaal that there is no truth in the report that any is contemplated, and the hon. Member, from his official position in relation to the Transvaal Government, ought to be in possession of information to that effect. In reply to the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, I have to repeat that we have not increased the number of police, but the increased expenditure is owing to the fact that provisions are much dearer owing to the drought. We have moved the police further north, and thus, being further from their base, the cost of maintenance has increased.

(11.0.) DR. CLARK: Is it not the case that these police are engaged in the territory over which the company exercise their rights and privileges? Is it not the case that they are stationed north of the Molopo river and outside the colony of Bechuanaland?

(11.1.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: The statement of the Under Secretary for the Colonies makes explanation more necessary than ever. We are constituting a police force, for which we are asked to pay, and at the same time this Chartered Company is also raising a police force for the same country, for which they are to pay. Where is the line drawn between the functions of these two bodies of police? It is the police of the Chartered Company which is responsible for keeping the peace, and, I suppose, for making war in that territory; but how can you draw a line between the functions of the Government police and the police of the Chartered Company?

*(11.2.) BARON H. DE WORMS: These police will not be in that district. The police of the company will be far beyond the frontier where our police are. The police of the company are for the purpose of maintaining law and order in the territory over which the company exercise certain control and have certain rights. Our police are stationed on the frontier of our Protectorate to prevent the operations of filibustering expeditions there.

*(11.3.) SIR R. FOWLER (London): I think the Under Secretary has made it very clear that these police are to be stationed within our own territory, and that what goes on beyond is matter for the Chartered Company, and not relevant to the present discussion. The hon. Gentleman opposite began by complaining that we did not do enough for this settlement. There were, he said, no surgeons and no clergymen there. I do not, from what I know of the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, suppose that the hon. Member means to suggest that the Government should send out clergymen, but I hope, at all events, he will support an increase of surgeons. I think we have just cause to look with satisfaction upon what has been done in Bechuanaland. I remember in former years how the late Mr. W. E. Forster earnestly advocated something of this kind. The policy the Government have pursued is in accordance with that of the statesmen I have mentioned, and has been productive, I think, of great good. I think the House should look in no niggardly spirit on any demands Her Majesty's Government may make towards carrying out their policy there, and in maintenance of our interests in South Africa.

(11.5.) DR. CLARK: What are really the facts of the case? They seem very difficult to get at. These police are to be found far beyond the Bechuanaland frontier. You can meet them in the country of Bamangwato, in Mashonaland, in the country of the Moslikatzes, in native territories far north of the Molopo River, between that river and the Zambesi, all coming within the control of this company. This amount of £20,000 is, in my opinion, for the services of these police who are in this territory now, without the colony—without the protected territory. I am glad the Under Secretary is content with the proper proclamations, but if he had occupied his present position some six years ago, when Bechuanaland was in pretty much the same position it is in now, he would know that exactly similar proclamations were issued then as now, notwithstanding which people did cross the frontier, and there was fighting in consequence. Every one who reads the South African Papers knows that Colonel Carrington is getting together his new recruits, and that when he has completed his force he will go into Matabeleland. There he will probably meet with a hostile reception, and we shall be asked to send a military force to support him. We shall probably have a war before the year is out. Now, Mr. Bowler is an Englishman having a large interest in Mashonaland, and he claims to have received some concession from the Mashonas for giving assistance to them. These are the most industrious and peaceful among these South African peoples, while the Matabeles are the most warlike. Now that Lobengula cannot send his young men across the Molopo he will send them to make raids on the Mashonas. Mr. Bowler has organised a force for the protection of the Mashonas, and we shall have trouble, all President Kruger's proclamations notwithstanding. If I were in the Transvaal I would do as I thought proper so far as President Kruger is concerned. Paper proclamations have never stopped these inter-tribal wars in South Africa, which always end in the acquisition of territory by the white men who take part in the wars. By a treaty, which is merely a treaty of friendship, and more a personal treaty than anything else, between the father of the present King and the late Dr. Moffatt, the father of John Moffatt,

who was on terms of intimate friendship with the King, giving his name to the King's son—by this treaty and on this shadowy foundation you put forward claims to territory in Matabeleland and Mashonaland. Lobengula is sure to resist. War will arise in which freebooters will take part on one side legalised by us, or the other side not legalised by the Transvaal. Who is to step in and take command? In Mashonaland and Matabeleland we shall have a repetition of those terrible scenes of bloodshed that disgraced South African Administration six or seven years ago. Instead of this Chartered Company solving the problem in South Africa, it makes the problem more difficult, and you are legalising filibustering some 500 miles from where it went on six or seven years ago.

*(11.10.) BARON H. DE WORMS: Perhaps I might shorten the discussion by dispelling some errors into which the hon. Gentleman seems to have fallen. He seems to think that the police force is intended to protect the new territory of the company, but, as a matter of fact, the police force was augmented last year or the year before, before the Chartered Company was thought of. The force is not intended to protect the interests of the company. The hon. Gentleman has advocated the claims of Mr. Bowler, but it is alleged that this raid into Mashonaland has been instigated by Mr. Bowler, who thinks he has a concession from the Mashonas and wishes to enforce it. It has nothing whatever to do with the Chartered Company nor with Her Majesty's Government. We have received a telegram from President Kruger disclaiming any participation in Mr. Bowler's proceedings. I do not think, Sir, this Committee should be made the medium of pushing the interest of individuals or companies. I say, again, this raid into Mashonaland has nothing to do with the action of the Transvaal Republic.

(11.12.) COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I should like to remind the Committee that we, having established a Protectorate, are bound to take measures to protect our interests and prevent filibustering expeditions being pushed forward. I think the hon. Member for Caithness always takes a pessimistic view of affairs, and that he has exaggerated the evils that do exist. Te fact of Her Majesty's Government not having taken sufficient steps to provide schools and other advantages for the settlers is no argument for making matters worse by not having a sufficient number of police. But in regard to the increase in expenditure, I may, perhaps, remind the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy that it would be hardly fair to this company—the policy of which I personally do not approve, I dislike these big companies—it would not be fair to place the original expenditure for police on the shoulders of the company in the very genesis of its existence. These are old troubles existing on our borders. It is true the company has been started to take up a position outside our protectorate, but it would be unfair to put upon the company straight away the burden of these troubles. What may be the case in the future when the company has more power is another matter. A distinction must be drawn between the original police to protect our own borders, and the police the company have a right to raise for the territory within which they have some sort of rule. As I understand, that is what the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy wished to get from the Under Secretary when he asked why the company did not take over the police duties. The answer is it would be unfair to require the company to do so now, though the company may do so in the future.

*(11.15.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I acknowledge the hon. and gallant Member has put the case much more clearly than the Under Secretary did. It is acknowledged that the police are employed in the territory this company now occupies. I cannot help thinking the hon. Baronet the Member for the City confused the House by his reference to British territory, not drawing a distinction between British Bechuanaland and the protected territory beyond. As the hon. and gallant Gentleman has explained, that is the scene of the operations of the new company, which I do not like, and as to which it is argued that it would be hard to put the burden of the police on the company in the earliest days of their occupation, though, in time, the company might be required to undertake it. I shall be glad if the Government accept this explanation, and say this is only a temporary charge. We pay

£90,000 a year for Bechuanaland; that is not the mere bagatelle the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Fowler) seems to think it is. Why, a great deal is thought of an expenditure of £10,000 for the relief of crofters, in Scotland, and we are told the country cannot afford this or that, and yet here is £90,000 a year spent for the administration of this miserable territory in South Africa, and to maintain order among a number of wretched African tribes. I admit the hon. and gallant Gentleman's explanation has put a better face on the matter, but I must ask the Committee to disallow this £20,000.

*(11.18.) SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): There is one misconception hon. Members are under. It is a question of time, not of place, that is under discussion. The protectorate had to be arranged, and this £20,000 is required for preserving order in this territory, which is now under the control of the Imperial Government, but which is to pass under the control of the Chartered Company.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: Has it not passed?

*SIR G. BADEN-POWELL: I do not know the present position. It is to pass. The great expenditure from year to year on Bechuanaland is for the extension of the Protectorate, not for the Colony, and when this Protectorate passes under the control of the Chartered Company these extra charges, especially that for police, will cease to appear on the Estimates, and will fall upon the Chartered Company. I am convinced that this company will respect all the rights and interests of the natives quite as much as the Imperial Government. When the hon. Member for Caithness speaks of Colonel Carrington recruiting soldiers for filibustering expeditions into the country of the Matabeles, I may point out that any recruiting that is carried on is not for filibustering expeditions nor is it by Colonel Carrington, but by agents of the great Chartered Company, with a view of having a supply of reserve men should any emergency occur. We know that filibusters do exist in Mashonaland, Matabeleland, and all the territory along the Zambesi, and that in protecting its own interests, and that of the natives, the Company may have to control these filibusters by force.

(11.20.) MR. LABOUCHERE: We are gradually getting information, but every hon. Member on the other side gives another reason, and, as he thinks, a better reason, for the Vote than that offered by the Under Secretary. I can only say that if these reasons are correct, then the right hon. Gentleman at the commencement of this debate must have been signally ignorant of matters connected with Bechuanaland and this great Chartered Company. We are asked to vote an extra £20,000 for police for what is called Bechuanaland, and at the head of the police is a certain Colonel Carrington. It is admitted—it is openly stated in all the Cape papers—that Colonel Carrington is recruiting police for this Chartered Company. The hon. Gentleman just now told us the recruiting is not carried on directly by Colonel Carrington, but is in some sort of way aided by Colonel Carrington, which is nearly the same thing. Now, the Under Secretary has protested against my hon. Friend advocating, as he said, the claims of an individual, and yet the hon. Member (Sir G. Baden-Powell) finished his speech by a puff, which I might almost call indecent, of this Chartered Company. Now, what is this Chartered Company? You will be surprised to hear, Mr. Courtney, that it consists of seven individuals, two of them the noble Dukes of Fife and Abercorn——

THE CHAIRMAN: This is travelling outside the limits of the discussion.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then, Mr. Courtney, I will say that the hon. Member for Holderness Division said we ought to incur a certain burden for this Chartered Company because this company would do so much good afterwards. Why, Sir, this Chartered Company subscribed a million sterling, and could at this moment raise four millions per annum.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. LABOUCHERE: I will not go into that. At any rate, we may clearly understand, not from the Under Secretary, whom I do not blame personally, because Under Secretaries in his position usually know less about the Colonies than anybody else, but from those hon. Members whose knowledge of what they talk about we admit, that this sum of £20,000 is an expenditure being incurred for this Chartered Company, that it is expenditure which but for this company would not have been incurred, and that this very company could raise four

millions sterling. I hope my hon. Friend will persevere with his Motion and divide against the Vote.

(11.23.) DR. CLARK: We are getting nearer the facts. At first we were told there were no police in this territory, but now we are informed that for a certain time the police are there, and that the expense will, after a time, fall upon the company. Then we have been told—and that I knew long ago—that reserves are being massed to meet certain eventualities. Now, I want to know, will the Government protect the Mashonas from the incursions of the Matabeles, and if war arises between the Matabeles and filibusters which will you support? Although the names of the Duke of Fife and the Duke of Abercorn are prominently put forward, the real meaning is that Mr. Rhodes wishes to enforce the concession he claims from the Matabeles. I remember that the hon. Member for Lichfield showed that he holds that concession, and 20 years ago worked for gold under it. Lobengula has since repudiated the concession claimed by Mr. Rhodes.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I would ask you, Sir, if this is really relevant to the Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Under Secretary stated several times that the police were required to go outside the territory.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Not into Lobengula's territory.

DR. CLARK: Lobengula claims it as his country, and sends his warriors to make raids there. The condition of things is that the whole country is in a state of fermentation, and I say that if the company's filibusters try to force their way, bloodshed will result, and I ask are you going to protect the Matabele King in the war that may arise? The right hon. Gentleman accuses me of advocating the claims of Mr. Bowler, but I do nothing of the kind. I neither want to grind Mr. Bowler's axe or Mr. Rhodes' axe. Of the two, perhaps, I should prefer to grind Mr. Rhodes' axe.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I have no information dealing with the matter the hon. Member raises, and I cannot say what the action of Her Majesty's Government would be under hypothetical circumstances, and which have no foundation except in the fertile imagination of the hon. Member.

(11.25.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): The circumstances now remind me strongly of the condition of things some 14 or 15 years ago, when the Government refused to listen to us on South African affairs, and the House was impatient of discussion. But following this, and in a great measure because of the impatience of the House and the refusal of the Government, came the Boer War and the Zulu War, in the one of which we suffered considerable loss of prestige, and in the other heavy loss of life. I ask the Government not to attempt to cut short this debate, but to allow it to be adjourned, as the subject is one of great consequence. The Duke of Wellington once told us to beware of little wars, and I venture to think that we are laying the foundation for a very expensive little war in South Africa. We ought, therefore, to have more time to discuss the matter.

(11.32.) DR. CLARK: I will now ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whom I see in his place, if we are going to make a treaty of friendship with the Matabelele King? The Chartered Company are now enlisting recruits; are we going to protect Matabelele against these filibusters? I remember that when it was once suggested to Lobengula that if he loved his country he would kill all the white men, he made the diplomatic reply—

> "If you will kill all the white men at the Diamond Fields and Cape Town, and then come to me, I will hand all the white men in my territory over to you to be killed."

I can assure you recent occurrences have excited strong feeling in Swaziland. Now, I want to know, will the Government support the Matabelele King or will they legalise the acts of the filibusters who intend to attack him?

(11.35.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 79; Noes 143.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

Original Question again proposed.

*(11.45.) SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: There is another item on which I should like some information, and that is, as to the sum of £2,700 for defraying certain expenses in connection with Swaziland? I hope the Government will tell us something about the matter.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The hon. Gentleman must be aware I stated the other evening that it is utterly impossible to give the House any infor-

mation upon this subject. Sir Francis De Winton's Report has not yet been considered by the Government, and therefore I cannot go into details.

DR. CLARK: Will the House be given an opportunity of discussing the Report, supposing this estimate is passed?

SIR R. FOWLER: I believe that the hon. Member for Liverpool has secured an early Tuesday in March for the discussion of the subject of Swaziland. That occasion will supply the opportunity which the hon. Member desires.

MR. BAUMANN: Will the Government undertake to lay Sir F. De Winton's Report on the Table before the date fixed for the discussion of the Motion of the hon. Member for Liverpool? The House, I hold, is entitled to see the Report before that debate, and I also think the Colonial Office should not come to a decision on the question until we have had an opportunity of discussing it.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: As I have said before, it is obviously impossible for the Government to submit the decision of this question to the House. The Papers will be presented by the Government as soon as possible after the decision has been arrived at.

MR. BRYCE: When may we expect to have the Report in our hands?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government regard the subject as one of considerable importance. As soon as it becomes possible for the Government to take the House into their confidence they will certainly do so. The Report has not yet reached the Government. I myself have not seen it. Therefore it is impossible to give any precise promise as to the date on which information will be given, but it will undoubtedly be given as soon as possible.

SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): The country feels exceedingly strong on this question of Swaziland, and upon the way in which it may be decided. I hope the Government will take no steps in the direction of giving up Swaziland, but if they contemplate such steps they ought certainly to give the country some opportunity of expressing its views.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: I should be very glad to know that we may with honour and safety be relieved of the great difficulties attending the retention of Swaziland. Have I rightly understood the Under Secretary for the Colonies to say that the House will not be given an opportunity of discussing the matter before it is settled? My information differs somewhat from that of the hon. and gallant Member opposite, and as we have given up the territory surrounding Swaziland, I think we might give up the country also.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: This is pre-eminently one of those questions with regard to which the Government must act on their own responsibility. If they act wrongly it is for the House to censure them. It is obviously impossible for us to submit our policy on a matter of this kind to the House of Commons. The Government are alone responsible for the conduct of such affairs, and the House cannot take matters of this kind into its own hands.

(11.49.) MR. BRYCE: I think the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House has not quite appreciated the point of my hon. Friend's question. The hon. Member for Liverpool has given a notice of Motion on the subject, and at present the Under Secretary for the Colonies refuses to express any opinion, on the ground that the Report of Sir Francis de Winton has not been considered. The right hon. Gentleman tells us the Government alone must bear the responsibility. That we admit. But the fact remains that many Members opposite, like those on my own side of the House, wish to have the opportunity of discussing this subject. We do not ask the Government to follow the opinion which the House may express. I hope the Government will not endeavour to prevent the House from having all the information before it, so as to enable it to make up its mind. Surely an expression of the views of the House ought to be welcomed by the Government.

*(11.51.) MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman has taken an erroneous view of what I said. As soon as the Government have considered the Papers, they will, at the earliest possible moment give full information to the House, which will have an opportunity to express an opinion on the course taken by the Government. But the Government must come to their decision first.

(11.52.) MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, E.): Will the Government agree not to come to a final decision about Swaziland until the hon. Member for Liverpool has brought forward his Motion? I can give a precedent for this. In the year 1884, when negotiations were going on between this country and Portugal with regard to the Congo, a Motion was brought forward in the House; it was discussed before the negotiations were completed, and the result of the discussion was a promise by the then First Lord of the Treasury that the Treaty should not be ratified without the consent of the House of Commons.

*(11.53.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish to treat the House with all possible respect. Hon. Members will see that we are obliged to come to a decision before Papers are presented. If afterwards the House takes a different view from that at which the Government arrive, it will be in the power of the House to express an opinion adverse to the decision of the Government.

(11.54.) Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

CLASS VI.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £8,101, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for superannuation and retired allowances."

(11.55.) MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I see that, in connection with the Supreme Court of Judicature, five gentlemen have retired, and provision is to be made for them. Is it not extraordinary that such cases as these should appear in the Supplementary Estimates? The Government must have been perfectly well aware at the beginning of the year of the ages of these gentlemen. What is the explanation of these being dealt with in this Estimate? Is it because some arrangements for the re-organisation of the Service are being carried out?

*(11.56.) MR. W. L. JACKSON: The hon. Member has exactly stated the facts of the case. There has been a re-organisation and a re-arrangement under which certain taxing masters have retired, and considerable economies have been effected. Under the system which now obtains, it is not possible for us to make provision for any superannuations which occur after the accounts have been made up, and, as hon. Gentlemen are aware, the 30th September in each year is the date for making up the accounts, on which the Estimates for the following year are framed. Sometimes it happens that the pensions which fall out equal in amount the new ones, but, unless the House of Commons will entrust the Treasury with a round sum with which to meet contingencies, these items in the Supplementary Estimates cannot be avoided.

(11.59.) MR. A. O'CONNOR: How is it that the names of some gentlemen who have retired do not appear in any of the Estimates?

MR. JACKSON: I know of no such cases; but if the hon. Gentleman will give me names I will make inquiry.

(12.0.) MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): The working classes of this country are often lectured for their want of forethought in providing for old age; and I think they are entitled to ask how it is that these gentlemen who have received high salaries for many years are granted these large annuities on retiring? Surely if a man is well paid he ought himself to make provision for his old age.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee also report Progress to sit again to-morrow.

MERCHANDISE MARKS.

Ordered—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report whether any alteration is required either in the provisions of 'The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887,' or in its administration, in order to prevent fraud by the use of an indirect indication of origin on imported goods, or their false marking after importation; and whether there is necessity for fresh legislation for prosecutions of offences against the Act."—(*Mr. Howard Vincent.*)

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS DISTRIBUTION.

Ordered—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in superintending the form

and regulating the Distribution of Parliamentary Papers:—The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Causton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Gill, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Maclean, and Sir Herbert Maxwell.

Ordered, that three be the quorum.—*(Sir Herbert Maxwell.)*

MOTIONS.

TOWN HOLDINGS.

COLONEL NOLAN: I have to move the Motion which stands in my name on the Paper, namely—

"That the Committee on Town Holdings be re-appointed to inquire into that portion of the original reference to the Committee which the Committee was precluded by want of time from reporting on last Session—namely, 'into the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of ground rents and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations or other improvements.'"

I hope the right hon. Gentleman will grant this inquiry, as it is really a matter of great importance to the parties interested?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it only fair that the Committee asked for should be appointed, and therefore I make no objection to the Motion.

Motion agreed to.

Ordered—

"That the Committee on Town Holdings be re-appointed to inquire into that portion of the original reference to the Committee which the Committee was precluded by want of time from reporting on last Session, namely, 'into the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of ground rents and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations or other improvements.'"—*(Colonel Nolan.)*

ALLOTMENTS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (NO. 2.) BILL.

On Motion of Major Rasch, Bill to amend "The Allotments Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Captain Selwyn, Colonel Cotton, and Mr. Story-Maskelyne.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 166.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend the "Public Libraries Acts," ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir William Houldsworth, and Mr. Justin M'Carthy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 167.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) (PLEURO-PNEUMONIA) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chaplin, Bill for conferring further powers under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, 1878 to 1886, with respect to pleuro-pneumonia, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 168.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY AND REDEMPTION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to make better provision for the Recovery and Redemption of Tithe Rent-charge, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Chaplin, and Mr. Raikes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 169.]

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Motion for adjournment—

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland if there is any particular reason why he has further postponed the introduction of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill, which has been on the Paper for some time, until Monday next; and whether he intends to introduce the Bill on that day?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill referred to by the hon. Member is an important Bill, and certainly will not be introduced on any night on which it cannot be made the chief business. It cannot be introduced on Monday next. The Government have been given to understand that it would not be convenient to Irish Members that any important Irish measures should be taken this week.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to ask him whether he intends to name an early day for the introduction of the measure?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Purchase Bill is the first important Bill which the Government have set down for this Session, and it will be introduced as soon as the exigencies of public business will permit.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 26th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE CLONGOREY ARRESTS.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Monday last 12 policemen at Clongorey turned four workmen out of Mrs. Kelly's premises; whether, when clearing the premises, the constable in charge used the following words:—"We have dangerous weapons, and must use them even to shoot;" and whether instructions have been given to the police to shoot; whether he is also aware that on the following day (Tuesday) armed emergency men entered Mr. Kelly's yard, and refused to leave, though requested by the owner to do so; whether the police in charge, instead of protecting the women, arrested eight workmen who were engaged on the premises; and whether he can state by what authority emergency men, armed or unarmed, can enter upon premises in the legal possession of the owner?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Constabulary Authorities report that on Monday 10 policemen turned three persons out of Mrs. Kelly's premises. The allegation in the second paragraph has no foundation. Paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 being down without previous notice, time has not admitted of my obtaining a local Report.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman contended that the police were entitled to use violence because they anticipated that the precept would be disobeyed? I also desire to know whether the right hon. Gentleman has ascertained that the precept was not duly served upon either the occupier or the workmen, and that the whole of the arrests were illegal; and whether he has discovered since the debate that the police in breaking into the dwelling-house acted without a warrant, and that, consequently, their action was in the nature of a burglarious entry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no ground for believing that the action of the police in making the arrests was illegal. As the hon. Member's last question relates to a point of law, perhaps he will place it on the Paper, and address it to my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I wish to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to state whether a Vote on Account will be taken this week?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House has been given to understand that it would be for the convenience of Members generally if the Vote on Account were taken on Friday. It will, therefore, be taken on that day.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give notice that when it is taken I will move a reduction, with a view to calling attention to a grave public scandal in the administration of justice in England.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I give notice that on the same occasion I will raise a discussion as to the conduct of the police at the Clongorey evictions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 22.)

SECOND READING.

(12.37.) Order for Second Reading read.

MR. FOLEY (Connemara): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill I should state that it is substantially the same as a measure of a similar character which has been before the House Session after Session for the last 15 years, and therefore ought not to require very much from me in the way of explanation. On several previous occasions the Bill has passed its Second Reading stage in this House with, I believe, a considerable majority; and on one of those occasions, which, if my memory serves me rightly,

was in the year 1885, it not only passed a Third Reading in this Assembly, but also went through its different stages in the House of Lords, and was passed with only slight alterations. I am sorry to say, however, that on that occasion it came back to this House at too late a period of the Session to be re-considered, and consequently failed to receive that assent which was necessary to render it effective. I trust, therefore, that under these circumstances, and taking into consideration the fact that on one or two occasions when the Bill was before this House some of the supporters of the present Government actually assisted in promoting the Second Reading of the measure, the House will think there ought to be no difficulty whatever in accepting it in the form in which it stands to-day. The alterations or amendments which the Bill proposes to make in the Poor Law of Ireland as it at present exists are restricted to two or three matters which we, who are its promoters, consider would be improvements on the present system. With the permission of the House I will state what the proposed alterations are. In the first place, instead of the open voting which prevails under the existing arrangement, the Bill proposes to substitute voting by ballot. Taking into consideration the success which has attended the adoption of the ballot in Parliamentary elections, there is hardly a Member of this House who would be disposed to return to the system of open voting, as formerly practised; and I trust, therefore, that no one will be found to object to the amendment of the present law as proposed by this measure in regard to that particular question. The next important feature of the Bill is the proposal to abolish the system which now appertains in Irish Poor Law elections of voting by proxy. Sir, this method of voting by proxy has been the cause of great trouble in Ireland. It has been the means of enabling individuals who have neglected their duties as landlords on their own estates to send batches of proxies to such persons as they might have felt disposed to select, and thereby to swamp the votes of the resident electors, in which endeavour, but for these proxies, it would have been impossible for them to have succeeded. At the same time, I am bound to say that I have heard and read with considerable astonishment that whenever a job was to be perpetrated in any of the Irish unions, those gentlemen who are so anxious at other times to be relieved of the duty of personal voting have been known to travel hundreds of miles, and in some cases even thousands, in order to assist in the accomplishment of the jobbery, whether it has been the bestowal of a contract or the appointment of some one who has been nominated for a particular situation. I trust, therefore, that by passing this Bill the House will compel those who, under such circumstances, take so much trouble to attain the object they have in view, to present themselves at the poll like ordinary electors and to vote in the ordinary way. The next important improvement proposed by this Bill is that the proportion of *ex officio* Guardians shall be reduced to one-third of the number of elected candidates. I think, Sir, there are very few Members of this House, who are disposed to deal fairly with the mode of ensuring the proper execution of the work which has to be performed by Boards of Guardians in Ireland, who will feel inclined to oppose this Amendment. At the present moment the law enables those gentlemen who exercise their right of sending in proxies to give in some cases as many as 36 votes. I, for one, am of opinion that they ought to be satisfied with the power they now have as voters without insisting on their claim to such a multiplicity of votes. Their position under the present law enables them to hold half the seats on each Board of Guardians. This Bill, however, proposes that instead of their monopolising one-half of each Board the proportion shall be reduced to one-third. I trust hon. Gentlemen opposite will see that in promoting this measure hon. Members on this side of the House have not deemed it necessary to go to extremes; and this being so, I sincerely hope they will not oppose the Second Reading of this measure. I beg, Sir, to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(12.47.) MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I rise, Sir, for the purpose of seconding the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Connemara, and in doing so I desire to draw attention to the fact that this Bill, as well as others that have been introduced by hon. Members on this side of the House, may be described, in the language of an hon. and gallant Member on the opposite Benches, as a "hardy annual," although it may sometimes have been nipped in the bud, as was the case last year and the year before. It fared somewhat better, however, on several previous occasions, when it received a kindly hearing from the right hon. Gentleman who now sits on the Front Opposition Bench during his term of office in connection with Ireland. Not only did it receive his support on that occasion, but it passed its Second Reading in this House and was put through Committee. In the following year the same Government, but with a different officer as far as Ireland is concerned, gave the measure a generous consideration; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) said the Government regarded this Bill with a sort of benevolent feeling. On that occasion the Bill had the good luck of passing through its several stages in this House and of being sent to another place. It came back, however, as usual, so mutilated that it could not be accepted by hon. Members from Ireland, and so late in the Session as to preclude any attempt to alter or amend the provisions made in the other House. Now, Sir, we are curious to know what is the attitude of the present Government in regard to this Bill. Noble Lords and hon. and gallant Gentlemen on the other side of the House have discussed this question on previous occasions, and have marked the Bill with the impression of their energy and zeal. They have altered it in accordance with their views, and in the form in which it has been so amended it is now presented to this House. We are, therefore, very curious to know what reception the Government will give it on this occasion; and whether they will receive it, as it was received by the Liberal Government in the past, in a kindly spirit; or whether they mean to oppose it, as they seem to be disposed to oppose all measures that have for their object the curtailment of undue powers placed in the hands of their friends the landlords of Ireland. I should here state that one of the first provisions of the Bill proposes to retain in the hands of the Local Government Board of Ireland its present powers. We have no desire to destroy those powers, and have never done aught in respect of that body except in so far as we have endeavoured to reform its character and its *personnel*. We know that at some future time, which we hope is not far distant, Members for Ireland will have a greater voice in the selection of the *personnel* of that Board, and we have confidence in it, knowing that the time will soon come when we may have much more confidence. We are willing to leave to it that power which may be necessary to restrict and curtail, if necessary, the undue use of the powers of the Boards of Guardians. We are not at all afraid of extending the power of the Guardians in Ireland, and why? Because the history of those bodies is such as to inspire the greatest confidence in the minds of the Irish people. There are 127 Boards of Guardians in Ireland, and, except on one recent occasion, the Local Government Board have not felt it necessary to suppress one of those bodies. Many years ago the Mill Street Board of Guardians was suppressed; but at that time its affairs were conducted, and its meetings attended, mainly by the *ex officio* Guardians, who so mismanaged their business that the Local Government Board were obliged to suppress them for a time. Recently, also, in the town of Dungarvan it was found necessary to suppress the Board of Guardians because of the mismanagement of its affairs. True it is that other Boards have been suppressed, but not for mismanagement. They have been suppressed for political reasons. The Boards of Guardians in Wexford, Wicklow, and New Ross were suppressed because they provided, according to the powers they possessed, the necessary accommodation for evicted tenants—because they set apart wards in their establishments for the purpose of providing for the comfortable housing of evicted tenants. Very recently the Cork Board of Guardians was suppressed, and no one here will deny that it was suppressed on purely political grounds.

Therefore I say that the history of the Poor Law Boards in Ireland, since their establishment and down to the present moment, has been such as to encourage us in the hope that it will be useful and safe to extend their powers and make them, if possible, more popular than they are at present. The next important provision of this Bill is the extension of the ballot to the system under which Poor Law Guardians are now elected. I am quite certain that even hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, if they will vote in accordance with their convictions, will make no objection to this Bill on account of the Ballot Clause. The Ballot Act since its passing has been a great success both in England and Ireland. I am sure it will not be denied, even by hon. Members on the other side of the House, that in no part of these Kingdoms has that Act been so great a success as it has been in Ireland. Certainly in no part of the Kingdom was there so much necessity for the adoption of that Act as existed in Ireland, where the landlord and his agents, together with the bailiffs and understrappers, all combined for the purpose of intimidating the electors into voting for the landlords' nominees.

An hon. MEMBER: What of the priests?

MR. J. O'CONNOR: An hon. Member opposite makes use of the word priests, and I hope he will allow me to point out to him that, whatever may have been the power of the priests, the Ballot Act has from the commencement been successful in its operation. Therefore, if any tyranny could have come from that quarter, the Ballot Act has proved a sufficient remedy. I have also to point out that as in the old Parliamentary elections it was necessary for the people if they desired to vote according to their political convictions, to fly in the face of their landlords, to brook the danger of such a proceeding, and thus place themselves at the mercy of the understrappers, so also it is necessary at the present day to protect the voters at the elections of Poor Law Guardians against the influence of landlords and their agents. It often happens that those elections at the present time are conducted on local party lines, and very often a little on national principles; and the landlords and their agents, because they wish to sustain the present *régime* as long as possible, put forth all their powers to intimidate electors against voting according to their convictions. Therefore, I hold that if it were necessary in the past to protect the Parliamentary voter against the undue influence of the landlord and his *employés*, it is equally necessary at the present day to protect the voter under the Poor Law system. The next important provision of this Bill is that which proposes to abolish voting by proxy; this is, and has been, a very vexed question in Ireland. I remember some years ago having been engaged in a Poor Law Guardians' election. On that occasion, I walked from house to house with a friend of mine, who afterwards became Chairman of the Cork Board of Guardians. He was a man of powerful intellect, who had been mixed up with local government in his part of the country since he was a boy—a man of great experience and great intelligence; and he pointed out to me, and thus brought very forcibly to my mind, how it was the vote by proxy swamped the election of some of the best candidates. Among the many things he then told me of was the necessity he was under of going to his constituents once a year, and on this point I wish to say just a word or two. There can be no doubt in the world that it is a great hardship for Poor Law Guardians, who know their business and possess the confidence of their constituents, to be obliged to go for election once a year. We feel the necessity of altering the Septennial Act. While I believe there are many persons in the country who would gladly see the Septennial Act altered, no one, with any experience of Parliamentary life, would care to see a Parliament elected for less than three years. There is no one who would like to see Parliament elected for less than three years who knows the great advantages to be derived from men attending closely to the business of the House, from men becoming thoroughly acquainted with all the details of Parliamentary business, and being able to transmit their knowledge to others who may follow them. Well, just in the

same way, I maintain it is necessary that Poor Law Guardians should be elected, in Ireland and elsewhere, for a series of years. It should not be necessary for a Guardian to have to seek the confidence of his constituents year after year. But my friend who pointed out this great hardship also impressed on my mind the grievance experienced by men who walk from house to house soliciting votes, and are only returned by a small majority, if returned at all, owing to these proxy votes being sent to their agents by persons who do not live in the district, and who very often spend their time in gallivanting about the Continent of Europe. As a rule, these people who send proxies do not reside in the district, and even when they do, they exercise their power, not for the purpose of returning good and useful Guardians, but for the purpose of returning their own agents and understrappers —men who watch the interests of the landlords rather than the condition of the poor. If these proxy voters do not live in the district what earthly interest can they take in the district? As a matter of fact, all they do is to thwart and obstruct everything that is attempted by the elected Guardians for the alleviation of the condition of the poor. No doubt the landlord who does not reside in the district has to pay a large amount of taxes; but he is not concerned for the poor or the sanitation of that district, or interested in carrying out that latest useful and beneficent measure of Parliament for the erection of labourers' dwellings in Ireland. We have in operation in Ireland an Act for the comfortable housing of labourers who formerly dwelt in mud cabins and hovels; but it is our experience that whenever the landlord can obstruct the carrying out of the Act he does so. He never willingly grants land for the erection of these dwellings, and the Poor Law Guardians are obliged to invoke the powers of the Act to compel him. The only desire of non-residents is to save their pockets, and therefore I say it is absolutely necessary to destroy this power of proxy voting. It was proposed on a former occasion by a noble Lord, who would be sitting with the Government were he in this House, that proxy voters should vote personally at one election, and if they found it impossible to be present at two or three, or four other elections, as the case might be, they should be allowed to send their proxies by registered letter. That principle we oppose, because we believe that the same principle which applies to Parliamentary elections should also apply to elections for Boards of Guardians, namely, one man one vote. Until that principle is firmly established in Ireland in connection with elections of this kind I believe that justice will not be done to the poor. Coming to the 5th clause of the third part of the Bill, which provides that the *ex officio* Guardians should not exceed one-third of the number elected by the ratepayers, I would urge in its favour that the poor belong to the poor—that the elected Guardians, being closer to the poor people than the landlords or their agents, are better disposed towards them. They know their wants, and are more likely to know their wants than people who do not dwell amongst them. We do not object to property being represented, but we desire that it should not have an undue representation; and we maintain that while the *ex officios* are equal in number to the elected Guardians we cannot have on the Boards a sufficient proportion of men who know the wants of the poor and are interested in protecting them against the evils of human nature and the chances of time. I would, therefore, urge the House to accept this measure, for the reasons stated by my hon. Friend, which I have endeavoured to support by what I know of the Poor Law Guardians. I appeal to the House and to the Government to accept, as former Houses and Governments have accepted, the principles of the Bill for the benefit of the Irish poor and the settlement of a vexed question.

(1.10.) COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I rise to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. I would say, at the outset, that I was rather startled by one observation which fell from the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. He seems to assume that the acceptance of the proposal of the Bill as to *ex officio* Guardians would leave vacancies on the Boards to be filled

by elected Guardians. But the Bill does not propose anything of the kind; and it would, therefore, seem as though the hon. Member has not read the Bill, the Second Reading of which he seconded.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: I said the proportion should be increased.

COLONEL WARING: I understood him to say that the proportion would be inceased because others would be elected, his argument being that a reduction in the number of *ex officio* Guardians would leave room for the election of others.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: No, no.

COLONEL WARING: Then I do not wish to pin the hon. Member to the exact phraseology he used. The history of this Bill seems to be a little mixed in the minds of hon. Members opposite; for whilst the Mover said it had on one occasion passed through this House, and had come back from the House of Lords with very little alteration, the Seconder, on the other hand, declared that, on the only occasion on which it reached the House of Lords, it came back so mutilated that it was impossible for hon. Members opposite to recognise it as their own child at all. If hon. Members opposite have such imperfect recollections, or have such different ideas, as to the effect of the alterations made in the Lords, they must not wonder if we are somewhat puzzled as to what the effect of the measure would be if passed in its present shape. I do not suppose, however, that hon. Members would be satisfied with the Bill if it came back in the form in which it was returned before; therefore, I think it advisable to save the other august House the trouble of making amendments, which would only lead to discussions here at a time of year when everyone is anxious to get home and turn his attention to his own private pursuits. I must confess that I have no objection to the first and larger portion of the Bill—namely, that which applies the Ballot Act to Poor Law elections—and I hope that I shall have the support of the hon. Member for South Tipperary for a Bill which I myself have on the Books of the House for the improvement and extension of the Ballot Act, which will also come in extremely handy. The introduction of the ballot will neutralise the influence not only of the landlords and their agents, but also of the money-lender and the publican at the elections; though I should insist that the principle of the ballot should be so adapted as not to exclude proxy and plural voting. "One man one vote" is all very well when the burden of the rates is equally borne; and I should not object to surrender my plurality of votes if I could be relieved thereby of the three-quarters of the poor rate for every tenant on my property. No doubt on those parts of an estate divided into large farms the proportion paid by the landlord is only half; but where there are a large number of cottages and allotments the rates are entirely paid by the landlord. But I am not alone in my view that the landlords should have a plurality of votes, for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan), in June 1883, took that line, pointing out that the proportion of votes in the hands of owners was infinitesimal as compared with those in the hands of occupiers. And not only was that so, but the influence of owners on the Boards of Guardians has been steadily decreasing for some years. At one time the magistrates who sat as *ex officio* Guardians were to a large extent landlords; but now, owing to the policy of successive Governments, a very small minority of local Magistrates are landlords. I do not exonerate the present Government from having followed very much in the footsteps of Governments from the opposite side of the House in selecting for the Magistracy gentlemen having no connection with the land, whose only desire is to have a couple of letters added to their names. Proxy voting ought to be retained; and I hope that, even supposing the Members of this House should be so much misled as to agree to its abolition, that portion of the Bill, at any rate, will be "mutilated" when it gets to "another place." It is urged against proxy voting that it only benefits absentee landlords, who, as the hon. Member opposite says, "go gallivanting about the Continent of Europe." As a matter of fact, only a very few Irish landlords are absentees, and it is only a very small minority who go gallivanting about the Continent of

Europe. I deplore their conduct, and nobody feels the consequences of it more than the resident landlord, who tries to do his duty. But the sins of the few ought not to be visited on the many, who, in spite of every persecution on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite, have remained at their posts. At present half the Boards are constituted of *ex officio* Guardians, but they are never all present. Many of them have property in several Unions, and some never come to the Board at all, so that they do not swamp the elected Guardians.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: They come specially to carry a job.

COLONEL WARING: My experience is that the jobs are on the other side. I have had considerable experience on Boards of Guardians, and I say that if the *ex officio* Guardians are reduced to one-third, as is proposed, they will be deprived of all power to uphold their interests, and I cannot see how the interests of the poor or of the Union would in any way be benefited. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion for the Second Reading told us that the elected Guardians were kinder to the poor than the *ex officio* Guardians. I would say to the hon. Member: "Ask the poor themselves whether that is so, and I think you will receive a very different answer." My experience, at any rate, is to the contrary; and so far as the instance which he gave to prove his contention is concerned, namely, that the power given by Parliament for the improvement of labourers' dwellings is opposed by the landlords, my experience is that the opposition comes almost entirely from the tenant farmers, who object to giving the smallest corner of their newly acquired possessions to those who have tilled them for centuries. And I can assure hon. Members opposite that if this question is allowed to be agitated much longer, there will be a much stronger demand made by the labourers for some of the spoils the tenants have been so anxious to secure from the unfortunate landlords of Ireland, and the landlords and their friends will not be backward in acknowledging the justice of the demand. The hon. Gentleman opposite said he had great respect for the Local Government Board in Ireland, and that the Bill did not propose to interfere with the functions of that Board. But I see a provision in the Bill which alters the entire mode of appeal in regard to Poor Law elections. The law which allows the Local Government Board to decide questions as to the legality or illegality of elections is to be abolished, and the decision of such matters is to be handed over to the already overladen and overworked County Court Judge. Everybody knows that recent legislation has increased the work of the County Courts. Those Courts sit four times a year, and unless it is proposed to summon a special Court to sit for the purpose of hearing election appeals there would be grave inconvenience in adopting the principle of the measure; and I need hardly point out that this would mean additional remuneration to the County Court Judges and officials. For these reasons I think that, in all probability, the proposed alteration in the law will not meet with the approval of the House. I move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Colonel Waring.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(1.28.) MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I hardly think it appropriate, Sir, that the hon. Member (Mr. Johnston) should second the measure by a nod, but I think at the same time that the hon. Member was quite as argumentative as the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the measure. We are asked now to go back 10 years—to take a retrograde step utterly inconsistent with the development of local government, which forms one of the leading features of modern history. If this is not retrograde policy I fail altogether to understand what benighted Toryism means. I will deal with the statement the hon. Member opposite has made—in regard to the subject of the preponderance of the landlord element on the Board of Guardians

—that the opposition to the Labourers' Dwellings Act comes from the farmers as represented by the elected Guardians and not from the landlords. How can he reconcile that with the fact that in that portion of Ulster where the landlords have a preponderating influence on the Boards of Guardians, an attempt has been made in the case of only one cottage, to take advantage of that legislation on behalf of the labourers. In the Limerick, Tipperary, and Kanturk Unions, many cottages have been built under the Labourers Act, which are creditable to the Boards and most beneficial to the labourers. The hon. and gallant Gentleman failed to make any reference to the fact that all the clauses of this Bill received a Second Reading in 1884, and that a number of those to which he now takes exception were in Committee passed unanimously, and without any comment. Included in the list was the clause relating to the appeal being made to the County Court Judge. Let us examine the provisions of the Bill. The hon. and gallant Gentleman is in favour of the principle of vote by Ballot being applied to Poor Law elections, and yet he moves the rejection of the Second Reading. I do not suppose there will be much opposition to that portion of the Bill; if there is, it can only take the shape of a nod of the head, by which the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), seconded the rejection of the Bill. The Bill does away with proxy voting, and, in my opinion, very properly so, because such voting does not conduce to the good working of the Poor Law Relief Acts and the Medical Charities Acts in Ireland. But then the Bill provides that no ratepayers shall have more than 18 votes in any electoral division. Does it not seem that that is a very fair proportion of votes to give any ratepayer? These are property votes, and surely 18 votes will give property-holders a very fair share of the representation. When we object to proxy voting we object to a system which is a disgrace to the Poor Law system of Ireland. We object to that which is opposed by the popular sense all over Ireland, and opposed by those who have any experience of the Poor Laws in Ireland. Proxy votes are only used on behalf of landlords' agents, on behalf of those who, as the hon and gallant Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill said, are there to guard their own interests. Not a word about the interests of the poor, or the proper administration of relief; they are there to guard their own interests, and as to the practical operation of proxy voting, we find that proxies are cast for one set of people only; not for the set of men who have given proof of their efficiency in the work of the Board, or who have shown a sympathetic interest in the condition of the poor; but for the men who are there to represent the landlord's interest and whose chief aim is at all costs to keep down the rates to the lowest possible minimum. In addition to this, recollect what an overwhelming vote the landlords of Ireland have at the present moment on Boards of Guardians. At present the *ex officio* Guardians number half of the entire Board, and the landlord party generally manage to secure the election of a certain number of their nominees. Thus you have popular representation entirely swamped. The hon. Member for South Tipperary in supporting the Second Reading of the Bill referred to the principle of one man one vote. But in this Bill we do not resort to that principle. This Bill provides that a ratepayer may have 18 votes, his exact number being determined by his rating. That in itself will admit of a large representation of property, but nevertheless the measure allows that there may be *ex officio* Guardians to the number of one-third of the elected Guardians. I think the Bill is moderation itself, and I am fully persuaded it will receive the support of hon. Members who have had any experience of the working of the Poor Law in England. Now, we are very anxious to know what action Her Majesty's Government intend to take in regard to the Bill. The measure is one which has been demanded for years back by the popular voice of Ireland, and it is only resisted by a small clique of the community. Perhaps the Government may tell us they are going to introduce a Local Government Bill, but we prefer a bird in the hand to a Local Government Bill in the bush. Even if they have the intention of dealing with the subject of local government in Ireland there is no reason

why a Bill of this kind should not pass, because it deals only with one feature of the system of local government in Ireland. The Boards of Guardians in Ireland have to deal with very important features of the social life of our people. It is essential that our people should have representation on these Boards. In many districts, owing to the smallness of the towns, we have no Bodies such as Corporations or Town Commissioners, nor have we any local Bodies of any importance or standing whatever. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the Rural Sanitary Authorities, who have to deal with questions concerning the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of the rural population of Ireland, should represent the people, and be in touch and sympathy with the people. My hon. Friend who seconded the Motion referred to the fact that it is on only a few occasions that the Local Government Board have come into collision with Boards of Guardians, and that on those few occasions the collisions have been due entirely to political considerations. There cannot be a doubt on this point. On the occasion when one Poor Law Board was suppressed by the Local Government Board for having acted *ultra vires* in passing a political Resolution, the entire business of the Board was got through, and when the Guardians rose that evening there was a clean sheet, so that they could not have been suppressed because of any neglect of business. I noticed that when my hon. Friend referred to the efficient administration, as a whole, of the Poor Law Guardians in Ireland somewhat of a sneer came from one of the hon. Members opposite. In this connection I have to say that the *ex officio* Guardians in Ireland attend the meetings only when jobbery is about to be perpetrated. The entire business of the Boards is done by the elected Guardians, but whenever an officer is to be appointed, or a chairman or vice-chairman elected, or anything large in the way of spending money is to be done, the *ex officios* come in from all parts of the Union—some of them sometimes even cross from England to Ireland—in order to swamp the elected Guardians and to perpetrate jobs. I hope this Bill will pass, and that the unreasonable opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite will not receive the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

*(1.45.) CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I am glad to recognise in this Bill a revival of provisions which I supported as long ago as 1866. It is my intention to vote for the Second Reading with the view afterwards of moving that it be an instruction to the Committee to extend the Bill to England. I cannot say I am altogether satisfied with the Bill, but it is very well as far as it goes. Like many other Members, I have only during the last few years had my attention called earnestly to the state of local government in Ireland. I confess I am amazed at the extraordinary moderation of this Bill, and cannot understand why any opposition should be offered to it by the Government which has brought in local government measures for England and Scotland.

(1.46.) MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): A previous speaker told us that he would be in favour of abolishing proxy votes. But he did not tell us that a gentleman with a sufficient property qualification can have 36 votes for each candidate in every electoral division in a Union. In the Union in which I have the honour to be a Guardian I have known gentlemen residing in England and America send home their votes to their friends. Thus gentlemen who take no interest whatever in the Union have the power to swamp the number of votes given by the representatives of the ratepayers. It has also been the custom and practice recently of gentlemen who hold property in Ireland to give deeds of assignment to their friends and relations so as to secure proxy votes for them. I know a man owning land rated at £20. By dividing it among 10 of his friends he can increase the number of votes from two to 20. It has been said that an appeal lies from the Returning Officer to the Local Government Board. As a matter of fact when an election has been declared by the Returning Officer, the Local Government Board has no power to interfere. As regards the principle of the Ballot, I wish to give some experience as to how a few elections are conducted in Ireland.

It is the practice of the friends of both candidates to go out accompanied by their friends and by mobs, and it is a question of physical force as to which party will get the votes which have been handed to policemen. I have known men get their workmen to close the doors on the policeman and so prevent him from laying down a voting paper with which he had been entrusted by the Returning Officer. I can assure the House that the friends of the hon. and gallant Member for County Down (Colonel Waring) use more intimidation at elections than the Party we represent. I have known a man who was in gaol on a charge of assault, being visited by the agent of Lord Bantry and asked by him how he was going to vote at the Poor Law Guardian Election. Thinking he might obtain his release, the man said he would vote for the agent's nominee. The agent did not, however, believe him, and got his case adjourned for a fortnight to see how he would vote. When he found that the man did not vote for his nominee he had him committed for trial. I know of another instance in which it was said openly: "If you vote for Mr. Barrett's nominee you will have a friend at Court." The gentleman had a seat on the Petty Sessions Bench, and, without doubt, the position is used to advance political interest and crush political opponents. There is every reason why we should put an end to this intimidation by landlords and magistrates. The right hon. Gentleman says the majority of *ex officio* Guardians are not landlords, but my experience in the south of Ireland is, that as a rule, they are both landlords and magistrates. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the proportion of payment of rates, he must have forgotten that these gentlemen pay no part of the county cess except where they allow it to tenants who have taken holdings since 1870. The system under which Poor Law Elections are conducted in Ireland is a scandal and a disgrace to the Government of the country. [An hon. MEMBER: And so it is in England.] The sooner this House recognises this fact the better for the peace of the country, and the cause of law and order in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman tells us of his intention to bring in a Local Government Bill; but we are so accustomed in Ireland to Government promises never fulfilled by legislation, that we prefer to rely only on practical proof of good intentions. If he is anxious to convince us of his willingness to concede legislation in a fair spirit, let him accept this as a small instalment in that direction.

(2.20.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(2.24). MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I think the vicissitudes through which this Bill has passed fully demonstrate the unfitness of this House to deal with Irish matters. It has passed this Legislative Assembly several times, once without Division and on another occasion by a very large majority. On the last occasion I believe the majority was 98, and in that majority I have noticed the names of some prominent Unionists who supported the Bill. It will be interesting to see how those Unionist gentlemen will vote to-day. However, the history of the Bill gives ample proof of the unfitness of any but an Irish Legislature to deal with such matters. In reference to the question of open voting I see that a Select Committee appointed by this House to inquire into the system of elections of Poor Law Guardians in Ireland in 1878, expressed disapprobation in the most unmeasured terms of the existing system. If the Committee did not go so far as to admit that the Ballot system was necessary, it condemned voting papers very strongly. This is what the Committee said—

> "On the other hand it was shown that the abuses and inconvenience of the voting paper system were very grave, that under it intimidation and obstruction, tampering with and forging of papers is practised, that frequently voters do not receive their papers at all, and in other cases they are invalidated for the most trivial technical reasons."

The Committee also went on to show that under the triennial system the Ballot system would be cheaper, though attended with inconvenience to voters. The statements in the Report of that Committee have been conclusively proved by the hon. Member for West Cork to-day. The facts, indeed, are well known. The agents and hangers-on of the landlords in the different Unions follow the policeman engaged in the distribution of

voting papers, and as soon as the paper is left they try to intimidate the voter into voting as they desire, and if the voter refuses that they insist on the voting paper being destroyed. These facts are so well known that I cannot understand how any Member can vote for the rejection of this Bill. As to the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to examine this Bill in 1884, we on this side of the House regarded that action on the part of the Lords as tantamount to an effort to shelve the Bill altogether, and consequently the supporters of the Bill refused to give evidence before that Committee. I do not remember that any prominent opponent of the existing system gave evidence regarding it. In 1878 the only witnesses who supported the existing system were the officials; all the lay witnesses condemned it. And, now as to the property qualification. It seems absurd in the last degree that for a Board of Guardians in Ireland it should be necessary to have a property qualification, while to this House a Member can be elected without any qualification at all, except the qualification of intelligence. My knowledge leads me to think that in many cottages in Ireland we can find men quite as capable of discharging the duties of Poor Law Guardians as among the inmates of the castles. In this particular the Bill does not meet my wishes, for I would have the property qualification swept away altogether. I think, also, the Bill goes too far in allowing a number of votes to a single individual. Why should any one person have 18 votes? It is a remnant from the feudal times to have anything of the kind. In this proposal I think my hon. Friends have gone too far, and if the Bill reaches Committee I shall certainly do my best to get this clause eliminated. The system of *ex officio* members of the Boards is a monstrous state of things, that ought to be abolished, and with it the system of proxies. Under this system see what an enormous influence the *ex officio* members have when they enter the Board Room. Except on special occasions they do not attend, but when there is a chairman to be elected, when there is an appointment to be made, when there is a job of any kind to be perpetrated, then these gentlemen come from all parts of the world. I have known them come from Switzerland to vote for the appointment of a chairman or a doctor. See what they do in the South Dublin Union; see the spirit of intolerance which obtains when the case of one of the poor little waifs found in the streets of Dublin has to be considered. Look at the force in which the *ex officio* Guardians attend, and for what purpose? To vote down the elected Guardians, to vote that the infant be registered as a Protestant though the chances are a hundred to one that the mother was a Catholic. I do not think that a single instance can be cited in which the *ex officio* Guardians have not been successful in carrying out their purpose of having these children registered as Protestants; that fact alone ought to be sufficient to show the intolerance of the *ex officio* Guardians and to call for some limitation of their power. My own opinion is that it ought to be sufficient to require that at the most they should constitute no more than one-third of the Board of Guardians. In the first year of the reign of Her Majesty an Act was passed limiting the *ex officio* Guardians to one-third of the entire body; at the end of 10 years that Act was repealed, I do not know for what reason, but it was before Household Suffrage prevailed, and now with Household Suffrage we have an entirely different House of Commons. I trust, therefore, that the present House of Commons will consent to undo the Act of an Assembly which was constituted before the people had a vote. On the last occasion that this Bill was before Parliament, I remember that the then Attorney General for Ireland, now one of Her Majesty's Judges, pressed very strongly upon the late Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) the propriety of withdrawing his objections to the Bill, seeing that hon. Members on his own side of the House were agreed upon the main principle and that the measure could be amended in Committee. I shall watch anxiously what the Government propose to do with the Bill, having regard to that statement of their late Attorney General. We were told at the last General Election that we were to have local government in Ireland, and

that the people were at any rate to have the management of their local affairs. If that is so, there can be no difficulty in giving to the Irish people this small crumb of justice which the Irish Members claim. We know that the day is not far distant when the return of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) will sweep away these relics of the past in Ireland and give real Home Rule to the Irish people. But I await with some anxiety the verdict of the House upon the present measure, in order that we may know whether their intentions in regard to Ireland are founded on honesty and justice.

*(2.35.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I rise for the purpose of saying that I cannot support the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for South Down (Colonel Waring). I cannot support it for two reasons. In the first place I do not approve of it, and there is another reason, namely, that as he has moved that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months, it is very likely that the House may be sitting on that day. I trust that the Government are not about to commit the mistake of supporting the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for South Down. I am far from saying that I approve of everything that is contained in the Bill. It is hard to discover what the real principle of it is. If it is to establish vote by Ballot in Poor Law elections I see no reason why the proposition should be objected to. But I do not think that is the real principle of the Bill. On the contrary, I think the real principle is the abolition of the proxy vote and the cutting down of the representation of *ex officio* Guardians. As to these two propositions, I cannot get over the fact that Ireland does not stand in the same position as England in regard to this question. In a great part of Ireland the landlord pays the entire poor rate where the valuation is under £4, and in Donegal, Mayo, and other parts of the country the valuation, as a rule, is under £4. Therefore, if we are to go on the old Liberal principle that representation and taxation are to go together we must make some reasonable allowance for the rights of property.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): It is paid in the rent.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It is not a mere question of the landlords alone. The hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Tuite) has referred to the City of Dublin. How does the principle operate in Dublin? All I can say is that if you abolish the proxy vote the owners of property will very often not be represented at all. The result will be that you may put the vote in the hands of men who do not pay the rate, and take it out of the hands of those who do pay it. I intend to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. I think that there is a great deal of good in it, and that the Government may well consent to accept it. But while I vote for the Second Reading I think there are many things contained in the measure which are objectionable, and which, I think, will require amendment in Committee.

(2.45.) MR. SEXTON: I think that the hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House had no option but to support the Second Reading, because I can recollect that when the measure was last before the House, some four years ago—since which time the Government have been too busy in adopting a policy of coercion, and considering its results, to devote any time to minor subjects—every Member of the Party now known as the Liberal Unionist Party supported the Second Reading of the Bill. At the same time I dare say that the speech which has been delivered by the hon. Gentleman will command and draw more attention from the Chief Secretary than any speech which could be delivered by any Member representing the vast majority of the British people. But the speech deserves more attention on another ground. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) has just been admitted to the dignity of a Justice of the Peace, and from that circumstance he is entitled to become an *ex officio* Guardian of the Poor. His testimony, therefore, as to the untenable character of the administration of the Irish Poor Law must be regarded as of particular value. I think that any impartial person who has observed the course of this debate must admit that there can be no wonder that the Irish

people are heartily tired of coming to this House for measures of reform. This Bill for the reform of the constitution of the Irish Boards of Guardians has experienced the ups and downs of fortune before this House for the space of nearly 20 years, and it is still a Bill and not an Act. It has several times passed this House, and on one occasion it passed the House of Lords after an exhaustive inquiry by a select Committee and the examination of witnesses who represented, without exception, the landlord class in Ireland. I must, therefore, express surprise that any Member of the Tory Party—even an Ulster landlord—should desire to be more Conservative in 1890 on the question of Poor Law reform, considering the rapid development of the theory of popular rights, than the House of Lords in 1884. I would also call to the recollection of the House, that when the Bill was last under discussion in 1886, a very distinguished Member of the Irish Conservative Party (Mr. Holmes) Member for the University of Dublin, afterwards Attorney General for Ireland, and now one of Her Majesty's Judges, intervened in the debate and used his influence, although unavailingly, to induce his friends to forego their opposition to the measure. It is, therefore, with surprise and regret that, four years later, I find the Tory Members for Ireland opposing this Bill. There are important provisions in the measure to which no objection is taken. It contains provisions for the better inspection and for the due and orderly revision of the list of voters. No Member of the House will contend that the present system in regard to the revision of the list of voters is one which ought to prevail, and I should be much surprised to hear the Chief Secretary say one word against our proposals in that respect. Then, again, no objection worth listening to has been made against the proposal for an appeal before the County Court Judge without a jury. The Local Government Board, with whom the appeal now lies, feel that they are an agency entirely unfitted for such a purpose. It must be manifest that a Department of the State created for the performance of executive duties is not fitted for the performance of judicial functions, and I believe that the Local Government Board would be very glad to be relieved of this duty. The County Court Judges of Ireland, considering the amount of the salaries they receive, are very moderately and lightly worked compared with other public officers. The petitions in regard to the administration of the Poor Law are not numerous, and I venture to anticipate that in the event of a change in the system taking place they will become even more rare, and that the amount of additional labour thrown upon the County Court Judges will be very considerable. Another provision of the Bill is to provide for the presentation of appeals in disputes as to law. At present the decision really rests with the Clerk of the Union, who is the Returning Officer, and there is no adequate appeal on any question of law. It is not only improper, but even grotesque, that the decision should rest with a person who is the nominee of the dominant section of the Board. Then, again, as to the qualification, we propose that a magistrate shall not be qualified to be an *ex officio* Guardian unless he is a ratepayer. Surely it will not be contended that a gentleman, merely because he is made a magistrate, is entitled to control the administration of the poor rates in a Union to which he does not contribute. We further provide that a £12 rating shall qualify for election. At present there is no general rule on the subject. The Local Government Board by a general order define the amount of the qualification, and it varies in different parts of Ireland, being in some parts as high as £30 and in others as low as £6. The result is to shut out from the service of the people in every Union many men of the highest qualification, who are among the most competent men who can be found. I now come to the three main provisions of the Bill. The first is that vote by Ballot shall be applied to Poor Law elections. Vote by Ballot is applied to every election except that for the Poor Law Board, and several of my hon. Friends who have addressed the House to-day have given conclusive reasons why it should be also applied to the election of Poor Law Guardians. The present system is for the police to leave voting papers; an interval elapses before they are collected, and in the case of a

contested election the humble voter in Ireland is exposed for several days to intimidation and undue solicitation by the agents of one or other of the parties, and in the end he is induced to fill up the voting paper against his will. I think that a system of voting should be adopted which would enable the voter to give a free vote according to his conscience. I trust that the spokesmen of the Government, who are so ready to charge us with intimidation, will be ready to accept from us a suggestion in this sphere of local government that will definitely put an end to intimidation in the future. We propose also the abolition of the proxy vote. If persons do not choose to live in the country or the district they cannot have an accurate knowledge of the affairs of the Union or take an active interest in them. It is high time to put an end to the scandals which have marked the Poor Law elections in Ireland, and by which the opinions of those who live on the spot, and are acquainted with the condition of the Union and the state of the poor, are continually over-ruled by proxies imported from Boulogne or Spain on behalf of impecunious landlords, and even from China and Peru, and the ends of the earth. It is a gross scandal to find the opinion of those acquainted with the district regularly overborne by the lodgment of proxies retained from year to year by one individual, who, by the systematic use of them, becomes, in fact, a dictator. I might call attention to a case in which an enterprising gentleman of the dominant political Party possessed himself of the proxies of all the landlords of the Union who were absent from the country, and, by the use of those proxies from year to year, succeeded not only in nominating the Board but in appointing himself Clerk of the Union, thus becoming the practical controller of it. As to the argument of the hon. Member for South Tyrone that men may be absent on professional business, my reply is that such casualties must be borne for the sake of the general principle. Now, upon this question of the representation of property let me show you how they blow hot and cold, how they make principles to suit the facts. What about the county cess in Ireland? The landlords pay none of it, yet they control it, through the Grand Jury, which administers every penny of it. The tenant farmer has no chance of being admitted to the Grand Jury in Ireland.

Mr. Sexton

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Gentleman is forgetting the associated cess-payers.

Mr. SEXTON: I am not forgetting the associated cess-payers. Their power is illusory. These cess-payers are nominated by the Grand Jury; they have no seat upon the Grand Jury itself. Therefore, the Body which has effectual control is a Body to which no tenant farmer ever finds his way, and I submit and insist that the whole of the valuation of the county cess in Ireland lies in the hands of those who do not contribute one penny to the funds. In the presence of that fact, I say it is absurd for the hon. Member to raise in the case of Ireland the principle of taxation and representation, as if that principle had not been duly observed. Upon that question of taxation and representation I would go very much further than this Bill, which is inadequate. Property is extremely over represented in respect of these Poor Law votes. In the first place the landlord may have 36, and rarely has less than 18 votes; the occupier has rarely more than two. The landlords possess one half of the Board without the trouble of electing any candidate, and where there is a property rate, of course they determine the elections. The element of property has the controlling influence upon the Poor Law Boards of Ireland. It is no longer pretended that property ought to have that influence in the Imperial Legislature. In regard to the Imperial revenue, many a man contributes as much to it as 10,000 others, yet each one of that 10,000 has as much power as he has in nominating a candidate for membership in the Imperial Parliament. I fail to see why that principle should not be applied in the local administration of the Poor Law Boards of Ireland. Formerly those Poor Law Boards simply raised funds for the relief of the poor. But, within the last 20 years, by different Acts of Parliament, various other functions have been cast upon those Boards. They have to deal with the important questions of burial, public health, and education—questions in which every

man, with or without property, has an equal interest, and which demand, it is clear, an elective franchise. We have in this House the direct representation of labour, and working men have been admitted to the Magisterial Bench; and I certainly think that the time has come when, in the administration of the Poor Law, we should have a direct representation of the labouring classes, who are certainly concerned in that work. I am quite in favour of abolishing the property qualification altogether in the election of Poor Law Guardians. I think neither poverty nor humble condition should prevent a man from administering relief to the poor. I believe the labouring classes are more interested than any other in the due administration of relief to the poor. Whilst it is important that there should be economy in the administration of the rates, and whilst, therefore, there should be a substantial representation of the property element, it is equally important in a Christian and civilised condition of society, that the administration should be characterised by a liberal and generous care for the necessities of the poor. While the landlords have to contribute to the poor rates in every case, and to pay the whole where the valuation is under £4, the tenants who earn the rents and pay the landlords are the persons who contribute the rates, and I decline to consider that the fact of the landlord being the medium or agent entitles him to special representation. Then, as to the proportion of *ex officio* members. An Act was passed by Parliament, when the whole subject had been freshly considered and examined by a powerful Committee, and Parliament decided that the proportion of one-fourth for *ex officio* members was sufficient. That was the law for 10 years; but the Act was repealed in that respect, and repealed in the darkest and gloomiest time of the Irish history of our century, the famine period, when the Irish people had no diligent guardians of their interests in this House, when their representatives were elected under a system of the most rigid and terrible boycotting, and when a tenant who ventured to vote against the nominee of his landlord, whether that landlord was Liberal or Tory, did so under the pain of eviction. There is nothing more painful or terrible than that, during the last half century, not thousands but millions of poor Irish people should have suffered eviction from their homes by expulsion from their country, because they voted in obedience to their conscience and in the interest of their class, and against the dictation of their landlords. At the time of the repeal of the Act of 1837 the Irish people had no guardians of their interests in this House. What I ask is, that we should return to the proportion of one-fourth *ex officio* members. I cannot anticipate what reply the right hon. Gentleman is going to make, but, from the fact that his late Attorney General supported the Second Reading, and from the fact that the House of Lords have already passed the Bill, I should hope that the reply of the right hon. Gentleman will be favourable to the Second Reading, and the main proposals of the Bill. At the same time, I frankly tell him that I do not greatly care. The country takes note of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman and his Party obtained power four years ago upon formal and solemn promises to the country of not only a large but a generous extension of the powers of local government in Ireland. The Party opposite is the Party of broken pledges, of violated faith. Four years have passed since the General Election. The cold shadow of another General Election is already falling upon that Party. And I must say that I do not feel greatly concerned, knowing the chilling influence of that shade, whether the right hon. Gentlemen accepts the Bill or no. If he accepts it we shall be prepared to go forward and to pass it into law. If he refuses, I for my part shall deem the rejection useful, because I am certain that, either by a Local Government Bill in this House or an Irish Chamber, the Poor Law and other Departments of the Public Service of Ireland will be placed upon a basis far more democratic, and, therefore, far more just and satisfactory and more permanent than the basis proposed by this Bill.

*(3.15.) SIR J. COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, &c.): I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact, that this Bill was only circulated this morning. ["Last night."] I can only say that I received it

and again, to go round to collect them. In the case of Galway, for instance, intimidation is practised in some parts, and the only way to get rid of it is to adopt the ballot. It is a great evil to give a man a vote, and then not to enable him to vote as he wishes. As to the objection to the number of *ex officio* Guardians fixed upon in the Bill, the Government have a majority, and backed up by the 70 Unionists can fix upon any number they like. Proxies are terribly abused in their use in Ireland, not in the case of the landlords who may be in London performing their duties in this House, but in the case of men who totally neglect all their duties both in England and in Ireland. These men ought either to be made to reside in Ireland or to be deprived of the power of voting by proxy. I hope the Government will assent to the Second Reading of the Bill, and introduce any desired modification in Committee. We must all admit that the present system of electing Poor Law Guardians is a most imperfect one, and that it ought to be amended.

(3.34.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Those who have listened to this debate must, I think, have experienced some difficulty in coming to a conclusion as to the real object aimed at by the framers of the Bill. The Member for West Donegal told us it was useless for the Government to accept the provision relating to the substitution of the ballot for open voting unless the rest of the Bill was also adopted. The hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down has told us the real essence of the Bill is the provision as to the ballot, and that the other provisions might be modified without destroying the measure. Thus the supporters of the Bill seem to differ as to what are to be considered its vital proposals; and I am not sufficiently in their counsels to decide which of the speakers represents the balance of opinion in the Party. No one will, I think, deny that it would be an important change to adopt the ballot, and it is a change I should be very glad to see made. It is said that the ballot is necessary on account of landlord intimidation; but I think that that contention has been successfully disposed of by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, who pointed out that, under the existing law, intimidation on the part of the landlord is impossible, but that it might be practised by an organised political party which thought it could gain an advantage by having a majority at a Board. However, I will not press the point, because the debate has been of a very moderate character, and I am unwilling to divert it into controversial channels. I also understand that hon. Members opposite desire to suppress intimidation of all kinds, whether by landlords or by Land League; and, therefore, as far as the ballot is concerned, I offer no opposition. I should also be glad to see an alteration in the procedure by which doubtful votes are decided. The Local Government Board is not the best tribunal for deciding questions of that sort, and as there is adequate legal machinery there would be no objection to substituting it for the Board. I have no objection to exclude from the office of *ex officio* Guardian Justices who do not happen to be ratepayers. I conceive that the number of them is small, and therefore the operation of the clause would be limited; but whether limited or not, the clause is sound in theory, and would be salutary in practice. As to the limitation of the number of votes that can be given by one individual, I understand that up to 1884 the Local Government Board held that 18 was the maximum. The matter, however, came before the Court of Appeal, which decided that the Board had not rightly interpreted the Statute, and that the maximum was not 18 but 36. I am of opinion that there could be no injustice done by returning to the practice which prevailed before 1884. That, I think, exhausts the last of the minor provisions to which the Government do not object. We now, therefore, come to some of the larger proposals. There is one point which I have missed, however. I take the view adopted by a Committee of the House of Lords, that though a minor should not have votes, it is only fair that those who administer his property should represent him in voting. Now I come to the provisions, the object of which is to limit the representation of property and diminish the number of *ex officio* Guardians, and I say at once I am in

entire divergence from these proposals of the Bill. We have been asked how it is possible to justify the presence on a body whose duty it is to administer rates levied on the community so large a proportion of non-elected members. The first observation I have to make upon that is that a similar system exists in England, and the House when it has had the question before it has deliberately declined to interfere. It is for hon. Members opposite to show why Ireland is to be treated in a different manner from England.

MR. SEXTON: Do *ex officio* members constitute one-half of the Boards in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that definitely, but there is a large *ex officio* representation in England; and in Ireland, undoubtedly, there is a justification for *ex officio* representation which does not exist in England. The rates in England are levied on occupiers, but in Ireland one-half the rates are levied on owners, except where they are levied wholly on owners, and these cases are not fragmentary and exceptional, and are found chiefly in the poorest parts of Ireland, where the administration of the Poor Law is difficult, arduous, and critical. The hon. Member for West Belfast has put forward another argument. He says, what is the use of telling us that taxation and representation should go together, when in Ireland you administer through the medium of Grand Juries (which may be truly described as a Landlord Board) the county cess, which is wholly paid by the tenants. That is an anomaly which has always been admitted on both sides of the House, and this is one of the things that has moved the Government to deal with the question of local government in Ireland. I therefore ask the hon. Gentleman to refrain from using that argument, at all events until he has seen the proposals with regard to local government for Ireland which it will be my duty to lay before the House. The next argument of the hon. Gentleman contains an even more serious fallacy. The hon. Member denies that the landlord pays the rates, even in the case of tenants below £4, because, says the hon. Member, the rates are paid out of the rent. What is really meant by the principle that representation and taxation should go together is that some responsibility in cases where the rate is increased should fall upon those who vote the increase. The question is, who suffers by an increase of rate in those cases where the rent is below £4? I think the hon. Member will, on reflection, agree that the increase does and must fall on the landlord, and does not and cannot fall on the tenant; therefore it is a misuse of language to say it is the tenant who pays the rates and should be represented on the Boards of Guardians. In passing from these theoretical arguments I am afraid the agreement, or partial agreement, I have hitherto been able to maintain with hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the Bill breaks down. I say plainly and openly to the House that the experience I have had of Poor Law administration in Ireland during the last three or four years has made me absolutely opposed to anything which would diminish the influence of the *ex officio* Guardians. That administration has in many respects been far from a creditable administration in Ireland; and I think that if hon. Gentlemen will impartially investigate those cases in which it has broken down most flagrantly and scandalously they will find that it has been in those instances where *ex officio* Guardians have been not over but under-represented. I acknowledge with regret that *ex officio* Guardians do not attend so often as they ought; but we cannot forget that those Guardians have in many cases been submitted to treatment which it would require the most robust sense of public duty to withstand; and I fear that in too many cases that diminished representation of the *ex officio* Guardians has been obtained by other than legal or statutory means. The hon. Gentleman opposite attaches, I believe, importance to this part of the Bill; and if I assent, as I am prepared to do, to the Second Reading, I desire to make a statement which will make my attitude perfectly clear. I desire it shall be understood that I shall do my utmost in Committee to resist those provisions of the Bill which propose to diminish the proportion of *ex officio* Guardians who now have a right to attend the meetings. What hon. Members opposite may think of the

Bill, altered as I desire to see it altered, I cannot say. In 1885, when the Bill came down from the House of Lords, modified very much in the direction in which I desire to see it modified, the hon. Member for West Belfast gave notice that if the Government retained the Amendments he should move that the Bill be discharged. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman still holds that view.

MR. SEXTON: Yes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should have gathered from his speech it was not so, as the hon. Member went over point after point and said he presumed the Government would not resist them, and he then went on to tell the House what a large proportion of the Bill they constituted.

MR. SEXTON: I said they covered a large area.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume the hon. Gentleman did not mean that, although they covered a large area, they were of little importance. As I am unable to gather from the utterances of hon. Members what is the vital principle of the Bill, I shall not take upon myself the responsibility of resisting the Second Reading; but will do my best in Committee to remove from the Bill all those provisions which I think would interfere with the due administration of the Poor Law in Ireland for the benefit of all classes of the community, and especially for that portion of the community whom the Bill is most intended to benefit—the poor of Ireland.

(3.53.) SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The right hon. Gentleman, in a speech of extremely temperate character, has come to a conclusion which I extremely regret, following, as it does, upon many admissions which I, in common with other Members of this House, gladly welcomed. Still, I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman does not propose to offer any opposition to the Second Reading; and I earnestly trust that hon. Members below the Gangway will persevere in their efforts to bring this Bill in its further stages before the House, so that we may be able to show that the provisions to which exception has been taken are defensible in justice, in reason, and in national expediency. It will then be time enough, when these vital principles, as I regard them, have been rejected, to consider whether the Bill should be dropped or not. I am inclined to agree with the position taken up by the hon. Member for West Belfast in 1885, when he said that if the Government insisted on accepting their Lordships' Amendment, and keeping the number of *ex officio* Guardians at the old proportion, we would not be responsible for further proceeding with the Bill. But we have not reached that point yet. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets complained that the Bill had only been before the House a few hours; while the hon. and gallant Member who moved that it be read a second time this day six months called the Bill a "hardy annual." It is little to the credit of the House that it should be so. When I think how often measures, dictated by the purest sentiments of justice, are brought forward in this House on behalf of Ireland, defended by able arguments and opposed with arguments which will not hold water, but put forward simply on the ground of expediency; when I remember that it is only after many years that grievances thus pointed out are remedied, and then only as part of a great measure of justice to England, Scotland, and Wales; and when I think that this Bill has been twice passed by this House and sent back once from that Chamber in which the Irish tenant is not represented, in a condition in which its authors did not care to recognise it, I come to the conclusion that in these matters are to be found very strong argument on the side of those who hold that great changes are wanted in connection with the administration of Irish affairs. With regard to this Bill, it contains much with which I am glad to say we are all agreed. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said he had found some difficulty in discovering the principle of the Bill; but, as he will remember, the hon. Member for West Belfast said it was not easy to name the principle of a Bill which was a proposal to recast a great system of popular representation. This Bill is a complete re-casting of the system of electing Poor Law Guardians, and hon. Members must all admire the skill with which so many excellent provisions have been compressed into so small a compass. What does it

do? First, it simplifies the system of registration, and then it provides simple machinery by which the right man shall get the vote, and know that he has it. In the next place, it gives an appeal in cases of disputed elections of a cheap and ready sort, which lies at almost every man's door, because the County Court Judge is to be substituted for the authority of the Local Government Board, or for the cumbrous and expensive machinery of the Court of Queen's Bench. Above all, it gives us vote by ballot. Can anyone who has been Irish Secretary forget how as soon as possible after the 25th of March he is bombarded with questions about cases of intimidation? The hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Sir J. Colomb) stated that a moonlight expedition had taken place for the purpose of seizing voting papers. There was a cheer from below the Gangway, in which I joined. Strange to say, the hon. Member mistook the meaning of that cheer. I do not suppose anyone but himself supposed it meant pleasure at the voting papers being stolen. It was merely an expression of surprise and amusement at hearing the hon. Member bring forward a very strong argument in favour of the Bill. The hon. Member, however, gave as an interpretation of its meaning sympathy with moonlighting; and I have very little doubt if this is left to pass without protest we shall be told by the newspapers and in speeches for the next three or four years that Members from Ireland had cheered the fact that moonlighting was carried on at Poor Law elections. If intimidation does not exist on both sides, it is believed to exist. We believe that the only effective method of putting a stop to it is the ballot, and the ballot we will have. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary did not notice the question of proxies. In 1883, as the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor, I was obliged to speak at some length on the representation of property in Ireland. I said the landlords ought to have influence, and that that is given in two ways—indirectly by means of *ex officio* Guardians, and directly by means of votes representing the position of the property which the voter holds. Then I said there was a danger in insisting too much on this point with reference to *ex officio* Guardians; because if they are to be the only protectors of the landlord interest the Government would have been justified in appointing none but landlords in the past. I think it very dangerous to lay down the principle that Justices of the Peace ought to be almost exclusively connected with the land. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill said that in recent days men not connected with the land had been appointed Justices of the Peace, and he thinks that is a thing deserving of reprobation.

COLONEL WARING: I did not hold it up to reprobation at all. I merely mentioned it in the sense in which he is using it himself.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I was going to quote the expression the hon. and gallant Gentleman used. He said he did not exonerate his own Government from having done it.

COLONEL WARING: I must say I do not consider all the recent magisterial appointments praiseworthy at all.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I shall have to deal with that later. With regard to the question of proxies, I think there is some slight difficulty in having the vote by ballot undiluted. I entirely agree with hon. Members who maintain that people who want to manage local affairs ought to live in the district. But there is this difficulty. There may be a man resident in Ireland who really does his best as a resident citizen, and who at the same time may hold property in more districts than one. It is no doubt a small matter, because there are comparatively few men in this position. At one time I thought that the voting might be so arranged as to take place on different days in different districts, but that would be a matter of peculiar difficulty. An idea was, however, thrown out by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), who suggested that a man who voted in a Poor Law election as an owner should be allowed, under certain safe methods, to exercise his privilege in another district by means of a registered letter to the Postmaster, or in some other way. In order to get the benefit of vote by ballot for all the occupiers and owners who vote on the spot, I for one would be willing, as in 1883, to purchase that very great

advantage by making an exception in favour of the small number of owners resident in Ireland who desire to vote as owners in other districts. The right hon. Gentleman says that the case for the retention of the magistrates is much stronger in Ireland than in England. The first reason he gives us is that the rates in Ireland fall on the owner. They fall more directly on the owner, undoubtedly, in the case of all the smaller tenancies in Ireland; but I appeal to anyone who knows country life in England to say whether the economical theory of rating, that it falls on the rent, is not borne out by this experience. In our yearly tenures an increase in the rate tells very rapidly on the rent. The grievance about the rate in England is not only in the country districts but in the town districts, where you have long leases, and where the tenant makes a bargain to pay what are called the rates, but what are in truth taxes for education, for sanitation, for the beautifying of the town, and which have been imposed since the 99 years' lease was granted. In the case of the farmer it is a yearly tenure, and the increase, and sometimes the diminution, of the rates shows itself at no long distance in the rent. The right hon. Gentleman pounced upon what was by far the most interesting observation in the very interesting speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton)—the passage in which the hon. Member stated the theory that the rates came out of the rent, and ought to come out of the rent. I will put it in another way. If you take agricultural rents in England, I believe in the great majority of cases that before a man gets a halfpenny out of that rent everyone who has a part in making it has to be well and decently housed. In the next place, the poverty of the district has all to be paid for out of the rents of that district. So far, I fancy, I have the House with me, and I believe I shall have all English landlords with me, when I say there is a third burden on rent, and that is the education of the district. Directly or indirectly, through the money which he himself dispenses in building schoolhouses, or, in the last resort, through the educational grant, in the shape of Income Tax, the education of the rural districts in England is provided for, generally cheerfully and willingly by the landlord. In Ireland, however, I fancy the landlord in the enormous majority of cases pays almost nothing for education. In the North, for reasons which I will not give—though many of them are quite honourable—the system adopted is the same as is adopted on good estates on this side of the Channel; but does anyone pretend that over four-fifths of the area and the population of the country the education of the great mass of the people who live on the estates is to any great extent paid by the landlords? English education is paid for out of the rent; but does anyone pretend that, therefore, the landlords should have a preponderating influence on the School Board which does not include *ex officio* members? All elections —Parliamentary, educational, local, administrative, sanitary—should be on the same principle as those for the School Board—the principle of getting the votes of the greatest number of intelligent and independent men. If the principle of the representation of property is given at all on public bodies, it should be given very sparingly; and yet this Bill introduces it, or recognises it, very lavishly in dealing with Justices of the Peace on the Boards, and in giving large franchises to property. And what are the Justices of the Peace in Ireland? The latest Returns issued—those of 1884—show that many of them are capitalists, and also that out of the 5,065 Justices of the Peace in the country only 437 belong to all other sects and different denominations of the Protestant religion other than the Church of Ireland. I take a county where both the Members of Parliament presumably are largely elected by Catholics; and unfortunately, in this case, I am obliged to take sects, not for any sectarian reason, but because it is to a sect that injustice has been done. In that county there were 74 Justices of the Peace in 1884, and only one of them was a Catholic. In another county with, I think, five Members who sit below the gangway, out of 138 Justices only nine are Catholics. In two counties in the South and centre of Ireland, counties as Catholic as counties can be, namely, Wexford and Wicklow, out of 114 and 104 magistrates respectively, in the one case there are 25, and in the other five Catholic Justices. Well, but we are now

not only dealing with a question of sects, but with a question of class. We want to have all classes properly represented. We are able to judge of the matter by these Returns, through the medium of religion. I remember hearing Baron Dowse say that the landlords of Ireland belonged to the Church of Ireland because it was the most respectable. He gave another reason which does not hold now so much, namely, that undoubtedly it was the Church of the landlords. It may be said that all this has been corrected since 1884; and I know that Lord Chancellor Sullivan did place men of many classes, creeds, and callings on the Bench; but, after all, that is a matter of only 250. The Justices are still a landlord class, and it is idle to tell us that Boards of Guardians, composed to the extent of one-half of those men, can possibly be really representative bodies. Now, I earnestly hope that when the House goes into Committee on the Bill the Government, who have approached the question in a practical spirit and in a spirit of great moderation, will remember that this Bill actually passed the House of Commons four or five years ago. It is not a question which can be put aside on account of local government being a matter of the immediate future in Ireland, because obviously local government in England has been divorced from the District Councils, and consequently we can look on this as an isolated and separate measure. There is a growing feeling in England that Parish Councils ought to be established in order to enlist the interest of the labourers, and of the great mass of the rural population, in the administration of their villages; and I believe that if there is a personal supervision of Poor Law relief by the people, who have a strong personal interest in the objects of that relief, it will not only lead in many cases to a much more humane and kindly way of dealing with it, but to an increase of economy. I believe a like result, under similar circumstances, will follow in the normal and ordinary districts of Ireland. It is impossible to deny that in the last few years some things have been done by Boards of Guardians in Ireland which are exceptional and altogether outside the meaning of the law; but these are exceptional times, and we are legislating for times that some day or other will cease to be exceptional. In Ireland, as in England and Scotland, the more we popularise the administration of poor relief, the more we make the people understand it, and take a minute and personal local interest in it, the more we shall make it a system tolerably contributing to the real happiness of mankind.

(4.25.) COLONEL WARING: If I rightly understand what the Chief Secretary has stated—that he does not accept the proposal to abolish proxy voting, or to diminish the number of *ex officio* guardians—I will ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

(4.26.) MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): The short speech of the hon. and gallant Member gives us an indication of the concessions made by the Chief Secretary. It seems that the concessions are of no importance whatever. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was such as we might have expected. This is a landlord government, and it is standing by the landlords through thick and thin; and, in refusing to abolish proxy voting, it is once more displaying landlord proclivities in a way that the House and the country ought thoroughly to understand. As to what fell from the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Sir J. Colomb), who asked whether there were any members of Irish Boards of Guardians amongst the Members who support the Bill, I would point out that Colonel Nolan, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. P. J. O'Brien, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Sheehan are Chairmen of Boards of Guardians, and that the following either are or have been members of Boards:—Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Leahy, Mr. O'Hanlon, Mr. Jordan, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Mahoney, Mr. T. Harrington, Mr. Marum, and Mr. Condon. But I think the hon. Member's argument in this respect utterly irrelevant, for it does not require men to be members of Boards of Guardians to discuss this Bill intelligently. The Chief Secretary saw the mistake of the hon. Gentleman when he adduced the moonlighting case in Clare, and gave away that part of his argument altogether. The cheer which went up from this side of the House when the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley was speaking was exactly such

as was described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton. We are not altogether such fools, even if we had sympathy with moonlighting, to cheer for it in the House of Commons. That is a stretch of fatuity which would only appeal to an Ulster patriot. We cheered because we thought the hon. Member was introducing a most cogent argument in favour of the Ballot. I have not the slightest sympathy with violence, either on the side of the landlord or the people, and would unhesitatingly adopt the Ballot for the purpose of putting it down, both on the one side and the other. The hon. and gallant Member spoke as if he and his friends owned Ulster. He spoke of the comparative prosperity which prevails in Ulster as contrasted with the comparative poverty in the other Provinces of the country. I am glad that Ulster is prosperous. I am glad that Ulster, if it be true, manages its affairs better than the rest of Ireland, but it must be remembered that we have a share in Ireland. It must be remembered that of the 33 Ulster seats we have possession of 17, and that it is probable that after the next Election we shall have more. But if Ulster manages its affairs better than other Provinces, that is no reason for denying to the rest of Ireland reforms that have been pointed out and proved to be necessary. The Chief Secretary declines to abolish the *ex officios* on the ground that the existing law in Ireland is at present the law in England. I am informed that that is not so. Such a state of things as half the Guardians being *ex officios* is unknown in England. But even if it did exist, that would be no argument against a reform of the character we demand. Indeed, it seems to me it would be an argument in favour of Home Rule. We have proved a grievance in Ireland; we have proved that the *ex officios* are a bad set of Guardians; and simply because the *ex officio* system suits England, we also must be saddled with it. But I understand that if this reform in the Poor Law system of England has not been made yet it will be made in the near future. District Councils are to form part of the legislation promised by the present Government even during the present Session, and I am aware also that a large body of the Tory and Liberal Unionist Party expect that the subject of the composition of Boards of Guardians will be very soon taken up and pressed to a decision in the House. Now the argument based upon the amount of rates paid by landlords in Ireland seems to be thoroughly futile. The right hon. Gentleman contests the statement that, although the landlords in Ireland really do pay the rates, they come out of the rent. I cannot understand how he makes it out. Suppose there are landlords in Ireland—and there are thousands of them—with all their land and houses let, but living themselves in foreign countries. They never come home, and retain no part of the property in their own occupation. In these cases every penny of the amount they receive comes directly from the rents. How can it be contended that their outgoings come from their own resources? I refuse to admit that a landlord who lets all his land and houses contributes one farthing to the poor rates. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the case of landlords who pay the rates on holdings under £4 a year. These are only a small proportion of the holdings; and I have to call attention to the fact that when the poor rate in Ireland was established, it became the universal practice for the landlords to add the amount of the rates to the rent. We know that up to 1881, when capricious increases of rent were put a stop to, it was the habitual produce of the landlords to add to the rent from year to year any fresh burdens that might be imposed on themselves. The right hon. Gentleman says he will not do anything to diminish the influence of the *ex officio* Guardians. It seems to me that the *ex officio* principle is altogether bad. The system might be tolerable if the men were of the better class—if they were of the more intelligent class, of the class who attend to the business of the Unions; but it cannot be denied that the present *ex officios* scarcely take any part in the management of the Unions in Ireland. They turn up at stated periods of the year when contracts are to be given away, when an officer is to be appointed, when a chairman or vice-chairman is to be elected, and then you never see them for another 12 months. The Chief Secretary referred to some

cases of maladministration in the Unions of Ireland. We invite him to an examination of those cases, for we can show that it is precisely in those places where the *ex officios* manage the affairs of the Unions that maladministration occurs. Take the case of the Cork Board of Guardians which was dissolved the other day. What was the immediate cause of the dissolution of that Board? It was that the *ex officio* or landlord party combined against the elected or popular party, and that a reactionary chairman refused to permit a political resolution to be put to the meeting. The ordinary business of the Board had to be postponed for a week, and the result was that the Local Government Board dissolved the whole Body. If the *ex officios* had exempted themselves the whole business would have been transacted. The right hon. Gentleman also referred in a mysterious way to some illegal results obtained by the popular party in Ireland. He said we had obtained our way not by statutory or by legal means. I do not know what he means. If any persons have been elected to Boards of Guardians by means that are not statutory and legal, why have not the elections been set aside? His course, he says, is plain and intelligible. It is. I agree with that description of the right hon. Gentleman's policy. His course is plain and intelligible, and it is to stand by the landlord party through thick and thin, right or wrong; and the fact that he here to-day refuses to accept the more important provisions of this Bill, or, that when he gets into Committee, he means to cut out of the measure all that is good, shows what he means to do when he comes to construct a scheme of local government for Ireland. We have been promised a scheme by which we shall be put on a footing of equality with England and Scotland as regards local affairs. It now seems that we shall have a scheme by which the most important details of local Irish administration will be left as hitherto in the hands of the minority in Ireland. That seems to be a pretty commentary on the success which the right hon. Gentleman thinks he has achieved by the enforcement of the Crimes Act. He himself has declared officially that the greater part of Ireland is now free from disturbance, and does not need the operation of the severe provisions of the Crimes Act; but he is still unable to assent in its entirety to such a Bill as this, because he believes the power it will confer on the people at large will be misused, and the minority will be oppressed. I suppose we shall have once more presented to us the spectacle of a measure of reform demanded by a majority of the people, supported, as it has been for 20 years, by a majority of the Irish Parliamentary Representatives, cut to pieces, and all for the sake of gratifying a small faction in Ireland which insists on retaining all the power in its own hands. I regret that the Second Reading is a mockery and delusion, and if I would be in order, I would be inclined to move that the Order be discharged so as to have the illusory promises of the Chief Secretary exposed in all their hideous nakedness.

*(4.48.) MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I did not intend to intervene in this Debate, as I am more interested in the Bill which stands third on the Paper; but to the statement that the Cork Board of Guardians broke up the other day without having finished the work which was on the notice paper of that day, I wish to give the most unqualified contradiction. No doubt the last sitting of the Board of Guardians was a most stormy one, and one which was protracted for a great number of hours beyond the usual period of sitting; and I have no hesitation in saying that many things took place at that meeting, and many things were said that I would much have preferred had been left undone and unsaid. But it is only right that it should be said here that before the Nationalist Guardians of the Cork Board adjourned upon the day in question they disposed of every item of Poor Law work upon the agenda paper. Great capital has been made by our opponents in politics out of the suppression, or, as it is called, dissolution of the Cork Board of Guardians, and it has been sought to instance it as an example of the incapacity of Irishmen to deal with local affairs. A more misleading use was never made of what I must characterise as an unjustifiable act on the part of the Authorities of Dublin Castle. It was entirely owing to the enormous represen-

tation which the *ex officio* element have upon the Cork Board that the dissolution took place. According to the present law when a Board of Guardians is formed one half of it is *ipso facto* constituted of *ex officio* Guardians and opponents of what is known as the Nationalist Party in Ireland. It then only requires the party representing the landlords and the Tories, which are almost synonimous terms, to carry a single popular seat in order that they may have a majority and control of all matters connected with the Poor Law in Ireland. On the Cork Poor Law Board the non-representative element have been able by the use of their proxy votes and property votes to obtain this majority and put the whole control of the management of Poor Law affairs in the hands of the Tory Party. The Chairman is a Tory, the Vice-chairman is a Tory, and the Deputy Vice-Chairman is a Liberal Unionist. They have the Chair completely in their hands on all occasions, and on the day in question the difficulty which ended in the dissolution of the Board arose simply out of the wish on the part of the elected Guardians to pass a vote of congratulation to Mr. Parnell, one of the Representatives of the city, on his victory over the *Times*, which had endeavoured to ruin his character and reputation. I do not think any one in the House will deny that the elected Guardians representing the constituency of my hon. Friend were perfectly entitled to put on the records of the Board some indication of their feeling of rejoicing at the victory the leader of the Nationalist Party had secured. The Tory Chairman refused to take the resolution, refused to allow it to be entered on the Minutes of the Board, and the Nationalist Guardians insisted, so far as it was in their power, to place it on record. Will it he believed that because the elected representatives of the City of Cork tried to place on record their pleasure at the acquittal of Mr. Parnell from the abominable charges brought against him by the *Times* the whole of the Poor Law representation of the city and the Union of Cork has been abolished by the stroke of the pen of three gentlemen who are called the Local Government Board, and that the ratepayers of Cork are for the next 14 months to be deprived of any voice whatever in the management and disposal of their poor rates? Perhaps I may be permitted to acquaint the House that one of the first results of the dissolution of the Board was a public meeting of the citizens of Cork called by the Chief Magistrate. I have never seen a larger or a more representative gathering than that.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is hardly now dealing with the subject of the Bill.

*MR. LANE: I am referring to that part of the Bill which deals with representation.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is out of order in referring in such detail to questions connected with the dissolution of the Cork Board of Guardians.

*MR. LANE: I will bow, Sir, to your ruling, and simply add that, individually, I should be very sorry to stand up and support a Bill which recognises the principle of *ex officio* representation. I should be sorry to support a Bill which recognises the right of proxy voting, and I should be very sorry to support a Bill which recognises the right of multiple voting. I do not see why, in these democratic days, when the principle of one man one vote is becoming universal all over the world, and when that principle is practically applied at the present moment to the election of Members of Parliament, we should adopt a principle of *ex officio* representation in the case of Poor Law matters. However, the Bill is brought in by my Party, and as a matter of Party discipline I feel bound to support it. At the same time, I should be glad to see Amendments introduced in the Bill which would amend it in the opposite direction to that in which the Chief Secretary intimates he intends to amend it.

Amendment, by leave, withrawn.

(5.0.) MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): The present system under which Guardians are elected undoubtedly gives by the multiple vote the preponderance of power to property, though I hold that the bulk of

the rates is paid by the workers. Now, when we turn to municipal elections we do not find any such principle recognised; we do not allow plural voting or a property vote except in the case of freeholds. I would appeal to the Attorney General will he not use his influence to get applied to these elections the same principle of representation as is recognised in municipal affairs? The work of municipal government is well carried on, and there is no necessity found for *ex officio* members. There are merchants who pay many thousands of pounds in reference to certain duties, but that does not give them a multiple vote. If you admit this principle there, I do not see why you should exclude it from other positions in life. The fact is, this *ex officio* and multiple vote system has been condemned for years, and I have heard even strong Tories in the North of Ireland condemn the system. I remember on one occasion there was an election in an electoral division of Armagh, and the Protestant Primate held 18 votes. The voting papers got as far as the gates of his house, but they never got any further, though they were returned duly signed, and were recorded. Will not the hon. and learned Attorney General use his influence to put an end to scandals of this kind? He, as head of the legal administration in Ireland, and a prominent member of his party, might use his influence with effect. I do not wish to accept the decision of the Chief Secretary as final, and I think the Attorney General might yet use his influence. I know, of course, how a man's opinions are trammelled by his official position; but I am sure, if it were put to him in his private capacity, the learned Gentleman would admit that there is no more reason for *ex officio* seats on these Boards than on municipalities or in the House of Commons. In Ireland these *ex officio* members are all nominees of Dublin Castle; that is to say, that Dublin Castle has as much representation as the whole of the ratepayers of Ireland put together, and not only so, but the influence of these *ex officio* members is greatly increased by the exercise of the multiple vote. The usual way, as the Attorney General very well knows, is for the landlords with their agents, who are *ex officio* members and magistrates, to have proxies left with them. I am sure in future days, when this reform is granted, the Attorney General will have cause to congratulate himself should he have had a hand in bringing it about. We can claim something from the Tory Party. They have declared that, setting aside the great dividing question of the day, all Irish grievances shall be attended to. Now, this Bill embodies a few matters earnestly desired by the ratepayers, and here is an opportunity for the Tory Party to make good their declaration. We cannot be accused of being precipitate in our demands. Eighteen years ago the Ballot was adopted, and it cannot be said its adoption has been attended with the slightest harm, in Parliamentary or municipal elections.

(5.10.) MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): The Chief Secretary expressed himself as being at considerable loss to know what the central principle of this Bill is. The central principle of the Bill is to extend in some degree, and only in a very slight degree, popular representation on the Poor Law Boards in Ireland. As I understood the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the promises he made as to some parts of the Bill he proposes to accept, and his remarks on those parts he proposes to reject, and the unfitness of popular representation in Ireland to conduct Irish affairs—as I understand the general tone of his speech, it amounts to this: that he will not sanction the principle of popular representation extended to Poor Law Boards. These parts of the Bill he is willing to agree to are provisions which, no doubt, would be useful, but they would not have any material effect in extending popular representation on these Boards. He objects to the abolition of the proxy vote and to the reduction of the number of *ex officio* members; but these are the material parts of the Bill as affecting representation. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be under the impression that in England the number of *ex officio* Guardians is the same in proportion to elected Guardians as in Ireland; but I am informed that in this country the proportion is the same as that we propose in the Bill it should be—a quarter of

the total number, or a third of the number of elected Guardians. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Liberal principle that representation and taxation should go together; and it is true that principle has been adopted in many cases, but the principle does not go so far as to declare that representation shall be in proportion to taxation. If such a principle were carried out to its fullest extent, we should have a man who pays £100 in taxation with a hundred times the representation of the man who only pays £1 in taxation. Such a principle as that was banished from our legislation long ago. *Ex officio* members have, as has been pointed out, enormous power as the representatives of property; but, in addition, they have enormous power under the system of plural votes. In the Union where I happened to be an *ex officio* member, I am aware of the fact that some time ago, though it does not exist now, there were more property votes than all the occupation votes put together, so that the property qualification outweighed the occupation opinion, and could set it at defiance, while in addition it had the representation by *ex officio* members on the Board. In rural parts of Ireland, and in small towns which come under the Towns Improvement Act, Boards of Guardians are the Sanitary Authority, who dispense all the medical relief in the district, and the number and extent of the duties and responsibilities they discharge are very great and closely bound up with the conditions of rural life. The people who receive benefit from the administration of these Boards, although not large ratepayers, have a right to a considerable voice in the representation on the Boards. Now, the Chief Secretary gave as a reason why he did not think the extension of popular government in Ireland in the direction of making Poor Law Boards more popular was desirable, the maladministration of some Poor Law Boards. He did not go into particulars, or dwell on this point, and if he had done so, it would no doubt have given rise to a more or less acrimonious debate, for it is a subject upon which much friction has been excited and much comment provoked throughout Ireland. I can speak from knowledge and personal acquaintance with administration of these Boards, and I am bound to say I take an entirely different and wholly opposite view to that of the right hon. Gentleman. There are cases of maladministration, no doubt, and unpleasant and regrettable scenes occur, but they are few and far between. One of these scenes may occur, and, making amusing reading in the English Press, is placarded from one end of the kingdom to the other, and so an impression is created that is unfair to Irish Boards of Guardians generally. In the great majority of cases where the proceedings at a Board meeting are in the nature of what newspapers call a "scene," they arise from the fact of the chairman of the Board not being in sympathy with the working majority thereon. On the day of election of chairman the *ex officio* Guardians attend in force, and, combining with the small number of elected Guardians who agree with them, appoint the chairman of their choice. But from that day until the end of the year, unless there happens to be an appointment of a medical officer to be made, or some job to be perpetrated, the majority, who put in the chairman, disappear until the time for another election of chairman comes round. The result is, you have a chairman entirely out of sympathy with the usual business majority of the Board. The chairman has very considerable power in administration and in the arrangement of business, and nearly all these scenes have occurred from the refusal of the chairman to act in conformity with the wishes of the majority of Guardians present at the meeting. But if the Chief Secretary's opinion is such as he has expressed to-day what becomes of the Local Government proposals of the Government? Are they going only to give such a measure of popular representation as is now allowed in Poor Law administration? I hardly think that can be so, consistently with the promise that the Local Government Bill for Ireland shall be on the lines of the measures accorded to England and Scotland. Why not make the small concession asked for in this Bill? If you will not abolish *ex officio* members altogether, then reduce the proportion from a half to a third. Deprived of this the Bill is not worth accepting, No doubt election by Ballot would prevent many scandals that now

occur. I have seen the policeman going out with the papers, and followed by agents for the landlord party and three or four members of the National Party, and in the house where a paper is left there is a contest over it. It is a scandal that there should be this state of things, but still I say it is not worth proceeding with the Bill unless you deal with *ex officio* members and proxy voting, and make these Boards more representative of the people for whom the Poor Law is administered.

(5.15.) Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

MR. SEXTON: As a matter of order, Sir, is it competent for me now to move the discharge of the Order?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is possible for the hon. Member to move that the Committee on the Bill be deferred, and it will be competent for him, on the Order for Committee to move that the Bill be withdrawn.

MR. SEXTON: Can I do that now, Sir?

*MR. SPEAKER: The proper course would be for the hon. Member to move it on the particular day for which the Committee may be set down.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to move that the Committee be taken this day six months.

Ordered, That the Bill be committed for this day six months.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) HOURS OF SALE BILL.—(No. 44.)

SECOND READING.

(5.20.) Order for Second Reading, read.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): Owing to a lamentable event, the death of our beloved Colleague, the late Mr. Biggar, it falls to my lot to introduce this Bill. It is a Bill of two clauses, and proposes a very small alteration in the laws regulating the sale of intoxicating liquors in Ireland. It requires no speech to recommend it to the House, or to explain its provisions, so I content myself with formally moving the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(5.21.) MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to second the Motion for Second Reading, and in doing so would join with hon. Members on the other side in regretting the very sudden loss sustained by the House in the death of one of its Members, who, differing widely from myself in politics, always was on kindly terms with his political opponents, and ready to co-operate with us on matters such as this. I will not occupy the short time we have by any observations. Mr. Biggar asked me to put my name on the Bill, and I did so with the greatest pleasure.

(5.22.) MR. P. McDONALD (Sligo, N.): In rising to move an Amendment, deferring the Bill for six months, I, in the first place, express my entire concurrence with the expressions that have fallen from the Mover and Seconder in reference to the death of my friend, the late Mr. Biggar. I do not think there is a single Member on this side, and, I think there can be a very few on the other side of the House, who do not agree in expressing regret for the loss of our beloved Colleague. In reference to the Bill, I will only say that I do not think there is any serious intention on the part of its promoters to carry it further than the present stage. I look upon it as merely an anticipation of the Bill of the hon. Member for South Belfast; in fact, a pilot balloon sent up to gauge the current of public opinion on this subject. I can assure the hon. Member that the current of public opinion is not in his favour. I must admit there are a very large number of Gentlemen in the House who will give him their support; but I gather that there are a still larger number entirely opposed to any coercive legislation on this subject. This Bill proposes that licensed traders in Ireland shall close their establishments from nine in the evening until nine the following morning, while their fellow-traders in England are allowed to carry on business during 18 hours out of the

24. I do not see the equity or necessity for such a proposal; and I move that the Bill be read this day six months.

(5.24.) Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Mr. Peter McDonald.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

(5.25.) MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): In rising to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend, I must also join with those who have preceded me in expressing regret for the death of our late lamented friend and Colleague Mr. Biggar. As much as Mr. Biggar differed from the hon. Gentlemen opposite on many points, he and I differed on this question now occupying the attention of the House, but I must say in all these differences of opinion my late friend ever bore himself with a kindly, courteous demeanour towards his opponents and with respect for their opinions. I am surprised that the Party with whom my late friend acted should introduce a Bill of this character outside and beyond the scope of that inquiry instituted some few months ago and upon the result of which they base their hopes of legislation for restricting the sale of intoxicating liquors. Yet I must admit that I welcome the introduction of this Bill, because I believe the more drastic the measures proposed, the less chance have they of passing this House. The proposal in the Bill is so unreasonable that it is scarcely necessary to argue against it to secure its rejection by the House. However, if the measure is to be discussed, the Report of the Committee and the evidence taken by that Committee, which is before the House, will materially assist us to a decision.

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday, 3rd March.

COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION EXPENSES BILL.—(No. 152.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Mr. P. McDonald

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [25th February] reported.

Resolution 1. [See page 1,177.]

VOTE OFFICE OF WORKS.

*(5.36.) MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): Before this Vote is passed I should like to ask if the Government have taken into consideration the desirability of appointing a Committee to inquire into the supply of labour in this building and other Government premises by means of contractors who deduct part of the workmen's wages. I have raised the question in previous years, and I hope the Government have now made up their minds.

*(5.37.) MR. JACKSON: The subject is under consideration. Her Majesty's Government are most anxious to find a remedy for the present unsatisfactory system, and are in hopes of being able to do so shortly.

*MR. CREMER: Nearly eight months ago we were told the matter was receiving the serious consideration of the Government. It takes them a long time to make up their minds. Will the Government appoint the Committee of Inquiry which they had promised me last year? The question is of great importance to the working classes, as all this time serious deductions are being made from the workpeople's wages.

*MR. JACKSON: I can only repeat the Government are endeavouring to find a solution of the difficulty.

*MR. CREMER: If a new arrangement is effected will the House have an opportunity of discussing it?

*(5.38.) THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): The negotiations which have been going on have not reached such a stage as enables me to make any definite statement regarding them. Of course the hon. Member will have an opportunity of discussing the matter when the Estimates for the year are brought on.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 2 to 15 agreed to.

Resolution 16. [See page 1,234.]

*(5.40.) MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I desire again to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and I do so on account of the extraordinary attitude adopted by the Under Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury towards the House on this Vote yesterday. The House was asked to grant a sum of £2,700 for the expenses of the Swaziland Commission, but Her Majesty's Government declined to enter into any discussion of this Vote, on the ground that Sir Francis de Winton's Report had not been considered and they had not made up their minds as to the policy to be pursued. Nevertheless we were asked to vote the money. I asked Her Majesty's Government to undertake that Sir Francis de Winton's Report would be laid on the Table before the Motion of the hon. Member for Liverpool came on for discussion, and that no final decision should be arrived at by Her Majesty's Government as to the policy to be pursued until after the discussion on this Motion had taken place. But both these requests were refused, somewhat curtly, and the Under Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury laid down the doctrine that this House could not discuss this matter until it had been settled by the Colonial Office. The First Lord said that then, if the action of the Colonial Office was not approved by the House, Her Majesty's Government might be censured. Yes, we might censure the Government, but we could not undo the policy after it had been settled upon, and after despatches had been sent out ordering its execution. I want to know what becomes of the control of the House over the administration of the Colonies. I insist upon the constitutional and indefeasible right not only to control and criticise, but to guide and shape the Colonial policy of the country. I maintain that the doctrine laid down by the Colonial Under Secretary and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury is not a sound one, nor in accordance with the best traditions of the Colonial Office. Every important step in colonial policy; such, for instance, as the suppression of the slave trade in the West Indies and the granting of a Constitution to Canada, has been the result of animated and protracted debates in this House, and if we accept the proposition laid down by the right hon. Gentlemen, the control of this House over the colonial policy of the Empire will be a delusion, a sham, and a farce. Why should the Government refuse to give the undertaking asked of them? After all, they are only an Executive Committee of this House. I maintain that the Government is simply the organ of the majority of this House. That is the sound Constitutional doctrine, and in my opinion the Government ought to be very glad to learn the wishes of hon. Gentlemen in all parts of the House on this most important question. I cannot but think that I am asking nothing unreasonable when I do most earnestly press upon the Government again to say they will not arrive at a decision regarding Swaziland until after the Motion of the hon. Member for Liverpool has been thoroughly debated.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): I must say I am astonished at the definition of Government given by the hon. Member. It is one of the strangest ever enunciated in this House or out of it. The hon. Member must be aware that in any Government, and especially in Party Government, the Ministry of the day are alone responsible not only for colonial, but for Imperial Policy, and if that policy, after being decided on, does not meet with the views of the Parliamentary majority, then it is open to that majority to express its disapproval. But to lay down the doctrine that the responsibility of deciding upon a great colonial or other policy is to be removed from the shoulders of Her Majesty's advisers to the House of Commons, is to lay down a principle which no Government ever has or ever can adopt. I can only repeat the answer I gave last night—that it is impossible for the Government to consent to postpone the consideration of their policy in Swaziland until the subject has been fully considered by the House of Commons. When the Government have arrived at their decision then it will be for the House of Commons to express approval or disapproval of it.

Resolution agreed to.

WOODS AND FORESTS AND LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Department of the Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Nineteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of:—Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir Joseph Bailey, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. W. G. C. Bentinck, Mr. Stormonth Darling, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Henry Fletcher, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Charles Hall, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Samuelson, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Tuite, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five to be the quorum.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown in Session 1889 be referred to the Select Committee.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No 71.]

BARRACKS (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of sums for the purpose of building and enlarging Barracks and Camps in the United Kingdom, and in certain Colonies (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

MOVABLE DWELLINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to provide for the regulation of Vans, Vehicles, and Tents used as Dwellings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Elton, Mr. Matthew Kenny, Mr. John Kelly, and Colonel Makins.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 170.]

ACCUMULATIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Bill to amend the Law relating to Accumulations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Elton, and Mr. Neville.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 171.]

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS.)

Select Committee appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the Department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.—(*Mr Herbert.*)

IRELAND—CASE OF HENRY O'CONNOR.

On the Motion for adjournment,

MR. SEXTON: I desire at this the earliest possible opportunity to bring to the notice of the Attorney General for Ireland a fact which has just come to my knowledge. Very recently, in Ireland, Henry O'Connor, the sub-editor of the *Leinster Leader*, was tried before two removable magistrates upon a charge of having published in a newspaper a report of the proceedings of a branch of the National League. He was convicted and sentenced to a month's imprisonment. The magistrates refused to state a case, but the matter was brought before the Court of Queen's Bench on *mandamus*, and the conviction was squashed, while the Court, to mark their sense of the conduct of the magistrates who had been guilty of the illegal imprisonment and conviction, ordered process against them. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Irish Government will consider the desirability of granting compensation to O'Connor, who was kept in prison five days. And as one of the magistrates, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, was the person who, at Clongorey, within the last few days, convicted Father Kinsella and 17 artisans and sent them to prison on a charge of disobedience to a precept which it now appears was not legally served, I wish to know if the Government will give a particular scrutiny to these proceedings with a view to ordering the release of Father Kinsella and the 17 artisans from prison?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I think the hon. Member will see that the questions he has asked are of such a nature that I could not answer them now. I would ask him to give notice of them.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 27th February, 1890.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of Standing Committees, That they have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. L.) appointed the Lord Herschell Chairman of the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., and the Earl of Kimberley Chairman of the Standing Committee for General Bills; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PARTNERSHIP BILL.—(No. 25.)

SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I need only say that it is a Bill which has been committed to one of the Grand Committees, the Law Committee. It is for the very desirable object of defining some branches of the law applicable to partnership. That is the scheme of the Bill—not a very easy task—in the first place; then to settle the legal relations between persons who are partners and persons dealing with them; then to settle the relations of the partners themselves; and then to deal with the question of dissolution and the consequences of it. I do not know that I should assist your Lordships by going further into a question which is so highly technical than is necessary for the purpose of describing its general object. The draft of the Bill has been most carefully prepared, and I may state that I have had the very valuable assistance of Lord Justice Lindley in framing the various clauses. I have no doubt that the measure will be thoroughly considered in Committee by your Lordships' House.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I need hardly say that I do not intend in any way to oppose this Bill; but, on the contrary, I heartily support the proposal for its Second Reading, inasmuch as it is substantially the measure which I asked your Lordships to read a second time at the close of last Session of Parliament. My noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack on that occasion intimated that, in his view, any measure of this description ought to be introduced by the Government of the day, and by them alone; and that any attempt at codification by any private Member was a usurpation of the prerogatives of the Government. I dissented on that occasion from the view of my noble and learned Friend, and I repeat that dissent to-day, seeing that the only successful measure of codification has been one that was introduced by a private Member. But if the Government of the day are willing to undertake the task, I need hardly say that I am well satisfied, and that I will give them every assistance in passing it into law.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 27th February, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

ARTISANS' DWELLINGS.

MR. SALT (Stafford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is able to produce any statistics, or to lay any Reports upon the Table of the House, that will give reliable information as to the effect of the erection of artisans' dwellings, and of street improvements, during recent years, upon the poorest and most crowded portions of the population, who cannot afford to pay more than 1s. or 1s. 6d. per week for house accommodation?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have endeavoured to collect information on this subject, and have made inquiries in various quarters, but they do not enable me to produce statistics, or to lay a Report upon the Table of a complete or reliable nature. I have no better information than was elicited by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, by whom, as my hon. Friend is doubtless aware, the subject of street improvements

is dealt with, and full use is made of previous inquiries by the Select Committee of this House in 1881-2.

THE STAFF COLLEGE.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that, though officers after entering the Staff College are permitted to study and pass out in Turkish, no provision is made for award of marks in Turkish at the entrance examination of the College; and whether, in view of the importance of encouraging the study of a wider range of modern languages, he will consider the advisability of placing Turkish on the same footing as that now occupied by Hindustani and Russian in the entrance examinations of the Staff College?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincoln, Horncastle): No provision is made at the Staff College either for the study of Turkish or for passing out in that language. The object of the College is primarily the advancement of knowledge of specific military science rather than of languages. Great importance is, however, attached to the knowledge of languages, and rewards of considerable value are offered to officers passing in them, but not through the Staff College.

In reply to a further question by Sir R. PAGET,

*MR. E. STANHOPE said he should be glad to have the study of the Turkish language placed on the same footing in regard to War Office appointments as Hindustani and Russian.

THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANIES.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table all correspondence that has passed between the Board of Trade and the four southern Railway Companies with reference to the return of the running of their passenger trains recently presented to Parliament; whether he will find out if it is the custom of the southern Railway Companies to keep analyses of the punctuality of their trains, abstracted at regular intervals, for the information of the officers and the directors; and, if not, whether he will ascertain from what sources the figures in the above return were compiled; and, in the case of the South-Eastern Railway in particular, whether the times of arrival were taken at Cannon Street and Charing Cross respectively, or only as far as London Bridge?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have no objection to lay on the Table the correspondence with the four southern Railway Companies with regard to the running of their trains. I understand from the South-Eastern Railway, the London and South-Western Railway, and the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Companies that they do not make any abstracts or analyses of the punctuality of their trains. The figures in the Return were compiled from the guards' daily reports. The South-Eastern Railway Company further state that the times of arrival were taken at Charing Cross and Cannon Street respectively, and not at London Bridge.

BOMBAY—FACTORY LABOUR.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether any action has yet been taken on the Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the grievances of the factory workers in Bombay; whether he is aware that the average time worked in the Indian cotton mills is 80 hours per week, as against 56 hours in Lancashire, and that great indignation exists among the Lancashire operatives at the competition to which they are exposed by labour working 80 hours per week in one part of the Empire while they are restricted by law to 56 hours; whether he is aware that, on 24th October last year, a petition was sent to the Indian Government by the Bombay factory workers asking for a reduction of their excessive hours of labour, and that in the future they claim that all mill hands be allowed one day's rest on Sunday, and that half an hour's rest be allowed them at noon; that all mills should commence work at 6.30 a.m., and cease working at sunset; and that compensation should be afforded for accidents; whether he is aware that very young children are employed 80 hours per week, to the extreme detriment of their health; whether he is aware that one mill manager writes—

"That he had seen children so small, working 80 hours per week, that he had taken them up in his arms, put them in the scales, and found them to weigh from 42 to 45 pounds only,"

and that factory managers in Bombay who have had experience of slavery in South America say that such slavery is mild compared with that which exists in the factory system of Bombay; and whether the Government will undertake that the recommendations of the Factory Commission shall promptly be carried out?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): My answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative. A Bill on the lines stated last Session in Parliamentary Paper 162 was introduced into the Indian Legislature on the 31st of January last. My answer to the second paragraph of the question is that the hours of labour of adult males in India are as unrestricted as they are in Lancashire. My answer to the third paragraph is that such a petition may have been received by the Government of India, who would give it every consideration, but it has not been forwarded to the Secretary of State. My answer to the fourth paragraph of the hon. Member's question is that according to the existing law no child can be employed in Indian factories for more than 54 hours a week, and the Secretary of State cannot understand how such a case as that described in paragraph 5 can have occurred. But if the hon. Member will furnish his authority the Secretary of State will cause inquiry to be made. In regard to the last paragraph of the question the Bill for commending the Indian Factory Act in the sense I have indicated is now before the Indian Legislature.

*MR. S. SMITH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the Bill now before the Government of India raises the ages of children entering mills from 7 to 9 years, and allows them to work 11 hours a day, from 9 to 12, while in Lancashire they only work 5½ hours a day?

SIR J. GORST: I am afraid that I cannot answer any question as to the contents of the Bill in question without notice. The hon. Member had better put a notice down on the Paper.

*MR. C. GRAHAM (Lanark, N. W.): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that no restriction in regard to the hours of labour exists in India? Is it in his power to advise the Indian Government to introduce some law whereby Her Majesty's subjects in different parts of the Empire shall not be reduced to slavery?

SIR J. GORST: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give me notice of that question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—THE *LAINETER*.

MR. JARVIS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawnt to the prosecution of William Laine, captain of a Foreign ship named the *Laineter* (as reported in the *Shipping Gazette* of 17th February), who was charged at King's Lynn with breaking the Merchant Shipping Act by carrying a deck cargo of 32,000 cubic feet of pitch pine, which would weigh about 32 tons; and why the Board of Trade was content with so small a penalty as £5 and costs for the infringement of English Law when he was liable to a penalty of £5 per ton, and it is probable that a much larger sum had been made by breaking the law?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My attention has been called to the newspaper report to which the hon. Member refers with regard to the prosecution of the captain of the *Laineter*. It is in more than one respect inaccurate. The deck cargo consisted of 3,200 (not 32,000) cubic feet, and the maximum penalty under the Act is £100. The representative of the Board of Trade did not press for a heavier penalty than £5, because it was the first offence of the kind for which the master had been summoned. He was prosecuted summarily, and the magistrates in their discretion imposed that penalty and costs.

RABBIT COURSING.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the continuance of the practice of rabbit coursing, particularly to what took place at the Crown Inn at Saltford on 3rd February, as narrated in the *Bath Chronicle* of 13th

February, in which the proceedings are thus described—

"Each round being a match between two dogs, a couple of terriers were let loose and set on a rabbit, which they seized. One dog was tearing the live rabbit on the side of the head and body, whilst the second dog fixed its teeth in the flesh on the other side, both dogs pulling at the rabbit in opposite directions, till the unfortunate animal was torn, mangled, and worried to death. In some instances the rabbits' backs were broken by the dogs; and again a mutilated and half-dead rabbit was carried round the field for five minutes in the dog's mouth. About a hundred rabbits were maimed and subsequently worried to death in this manner;"

and whether he will now re-consider his statement of 9th August, 1889, and introduce legislation to render such practices illegal?

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question I should like to ask him whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the North of England coursing, and especially rabbit coursing, conducted under recognised and established regulations, affords pastime to large masses of the industrial population who are unable to indulge in more expensive forms of sport; and whether he considers it desirable, on *ex parte* statements, to commit the House to an opinion on the subject?

MR. BUCHANAN: May I further ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether he has not received Petitions on the subject not merely from the West of England, but also from the North of England, complaining of the gross cruelty which goes on in connection with this so-called sport.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have directed the Chief Constable to make inquiry and report as to the allegations contained in the paragraph quoted. Legislation on the subject of cruelty to wild animals is surrounded with difficulties, and I cannot promise to introduce it. I feel confident, however, that public opinion is growing on the question, and will not tolerate that cruelties should be permitted in the name of sport. With regard to the question put by my right hon. Friend, I am not acquainted with the habits of the population in the North of England with regard to rabbit coursing.

Mr. Buchanan

PRESUMPTION OF LIFE LIMITATION (SCOTLAND) ACT.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he has received communications complaining that "The Presumption of Life Limitation (Scotland) Act, 1881," is in great measure inoperative; and whether he will introduce a Bill this Session to amend that Act?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I have recently received a communication to the effect stated in the question of the hon. Member. I cannot at present give any undertaking as to the introduction of an amending Bill this Session, and this must depend upon the progress of other business.

POST OFFICE ORDERS.

MR. LEATHAM BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the Junior Lord of the Treasury whether it is a fact that a post office order signed by an agent of the Government is not a negotiable security; whether the Government are aware that a serious case has occurred in New Zealand of an advance of money having been made against post office orders, the payment of which money was repudiated; whether the Government is aware that the credit of the Post Office has suffered severely in the Colony by the above case of Mr. Cairns, of Auckland; and whether the Government will take any steps to remedy the grievance?

*A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. MAXWELL, Wigtonshire): With the permission of the hon. Member, I shall reply to the question. The Post Office is not in possession of any information as to the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member; but if he will be good enough to give the Postmaster General the particulars of the case which he has in view he will be happy to cause inquiry to be made on the subject. Under the regulations governing the exchange of money orders between the United Kingdom and the colonies money orders are not negotiable. They are payable only to the persons in whose favour they are drawn by the senders, unless they are passed through a bank. This is not so much a matter for the British as for the New Zealand Post Office, which has the power to make its

own regulations, subject, of course, to any agreement made with this country.

BI-METALLISM.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is true that repeated applications were made to Mr. Giffen by the Royal Commission on Gold and Silver to assist them in their investigations into the theory and practice of Bi-metallism; and whether Mr. Giffen declined to give such assistance; and, if so, upon what grounds?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There is nothing in the Report of the Commissioners which in any way suggests that they considered that Mr. Giffen did not render them all the assistance they required from him in their inquiry which is not, I think, accurately described by the hon. Member as an investigation into the theory and practice of Bi-metallism. As a matter of fact, he gave two days' elaborate evidence, besides assisting them in other ways in his official character. I am, however, informed by Mr. Giffen that he was subsequently asked to go beyond this and to appear before them as the champion of Monometallism. He considered this to be outside his official duty, and was left free by Lord Stanley, then President of the Board of Trade, to decline the request, which he did, mainly for reasons of a private character.

*SIR W. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): Before Mr. Giffen published a series of letters in the *Times* commenting on the Report of the Royal Commission, did he ask and receive permission of his official superiors in the Board of Trade?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I understand that Mr. Giffen, when he accepted the office which he at present holds with great advantage to the Public Service, stipulated that he should be allowed to write on subjects outside his official duties, and his stipulation was conceded. He therefore did not ask my permission before publishing these letters; but it appears to me that the publication of the letters has been very much to the advantage of the Public Service.

IRELAND—THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen the statement of the Educational Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, just issued, dealing with the system of education in the Queen's Colleges, and the relation of Presbyterians to Queen's College, Belfast, in which it is stated that—

"The education imparted in the Queen's Colleges" is "undenominational and unsectarian;" and "as to the Queen's College, Belfast, Presbyterians have no rights or privileges whatever in connection with it that Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Methodists have not;"

whether he is aware that, in consequence of the growing prosperity of Queen's College, Belfast, some of the class-rooms are now too small and need to be enlarged, and other improvements are necessary to the efficiency of the college, and whether, considering the serious disadvantages under which the college thus labours from want of proper accommodation and equipment, he will consider the propriety of recommending a Government grant to promote such enlargement as the success of the college and the growth of Belfast render necessary?

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.): I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary if his attention had been recently drawn to the urgent necessity that exists for a grant to be made to the Queen's College, Belfast, for the purpose of extending its accommodation and perfecting its equipment; and considering that large Government grants had lately been given to the Scotch Colleges and the Royal University in Dublin, and having regard to the fact that the City of Belfast contributes so largely to the Imperial revenue, would he give some assurance that an outlay would be sanctioned adequate to extend the accommodation so as to enable the Professors to discharge their duties to the students under their control in some other way than, as at present, in detachments?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I will answer the question of the hon. Member for East Belfast at the same time. I believe it to be the fact, as stated in the question, that the deficient accommodation in Queen's College, Belfast, is a source of inconvenience, and I am also aware that the college, like the city in which it is situated, is growing in size and prosperity.

If the alterations desired by my hon. Friends are merely of the relatively restricted kind contemplated as being from time to time necessary under the Statutes by which the Queen's Colleges were established, questions relating to them should be addressed to the Minister who answers for the Board of Works. If, on the other hand, some larger scheme is contemplated, such as I myself would desire to see carried into effect, I am afraid it will not be possible for me to make proposals on the subject to Parliament until some agreement is arrived at with regard to the difficult problems connected with higher education in Ireland.

CROFTER EMIGRANTS TO MANITOBA.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the statements in the Canadian newspapers, that "great destitution exists among the crofters recently settled in Manitoba;" whether the Rev. Dr. Robertson, the superintendent of the North-West Presbyterian Missions, has appealed to the public in Canada for aid to these distressed settlers; whether the statement of the Rev. Dr. Robertson, that some of the crofter settlers are from 65 to 70 years of age, and some were in bad health before leaving Scotland, are accurate; whether St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at Toronto has opened a fund for clothing and money to relieve the destitute crofters; and whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: When the statements referred to in the first part of the question appeared in the newspapers the Colonization Board at once telegraphed for information, and the reply stated that there was no foundation for the reports. The Government are not aware that any such appeal as is mentioned in the second part of the question was made. The statement in the third query is inaccurate. Only one emigrant is over 60 years of age, his age being 64. The crofters were apparently in good health when they started, and are now reported to be in vigorous health. The Government have no information to show that a fund has been opened at Toronto as suggested; but the clothing of some of the crofters has been supplemented by contributions from Winnipeg. The Government do not think it necessary to take any action on the reports referred to.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENTS IN IRELAND.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the following letter, alleged to have been sent to the editor of the *Carlow Nationalist* in reply to an application made by that gentleman to the Commissioners of Irish Fisheries for advertisements for his newspaper:—

"Office of Irish Fisheries,
"Dublin Castle, 21st Feb. 1889.

"Sir,—I have received instructions to inform you, in reference to your letter of the 18th ultimo, that you are under a misapprehension in supposing that the advocacy of particular political opinions is any reason for giving or withholding Government advertisements, and that, if such advertisements have been withheld from the *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, it was solely because that paper continued to violate the law.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,
"M. P. DOWLING.

"P. J. Conlan, Esq., *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, Carlow."

Whether he will state the name of the official or Member of the Government who instructed this letter to be written; whether he will explain how the *Carlow Nationalist* continues to violate the law; and whether any instructions, and, if any, what instructions have been issued to the Government Departments in Ireland to inquire into the character of the contents of newspapers in that country before giving or refusing those newspapers public advertisements?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The letter mentioned was written by direction of the Government. The newspaper in question continues to violate the law by publishing the alleged proceedings of the local branch of the National League, which has been suppressed in that district as an unlawful Association. Government advertisements are not given to any newspaper which violates the law. Departments are so instructed.

MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered any of the questions I put to him. Have any instructions been issued by the Government on this subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought I had answered the hon. Gentleman's questions when I stated that I was responsible for the action of the Government. I stated that the *Carlow Nationalist* had offended against the law by reporting the proceedings of a suppressed meeting.

MR. CLANCY: If the *Carlow Nationalist* violated the law, why has it not been prosecuted?

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): As this is a matter which occurred about a year ago, may I ask how long the official boycotting of an Irish newspaper is to continue, and by whose authority this course of action has been decided upon?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Instead of being a year ago the last offence was committed on the 8th of February.

MR. SEXTON: This year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not inquired into the facts; but if the hon. Gentleman says there is any doubt I will do so.

FAIR RENTS.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that nearly 50 tenants living in the district of Rush, County Dublin, lodged nearly two years ago applications to have fair rents fixed, and have since been unable to get their cases heard by the Land Commission; and, if so, whether any steps will be taken to expedite the hearing of the cases of those tenants, and of other tenants in the County of Dublin who have served originating notices?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that there are but 57 cases outstanding from the whole union of Balrothery, County Dublin, which includes the Rush district referred to, in respect of which applications to fix judicial rents were received prior to the 31st of December, 1888. A Sub-Commission will again sit for cases from this union at an early date. The Commissioners are making every exertion to have outstanding cases disposed of.

DEATH FROM VACCINATION.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that Emily Maud Child, an infant, whose parents live at Arthington, near Leeds, was vaccinated on 26th March, 1889, when three months old, and died on 1st July, 1889, but previously to vaccination the child was perfectly healthy; and whether a medical examination proved that the parents were perfectly healthy too; and at the inquest subsequently held, the jury found a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, that "the deceased died from syphilis acquired at or from vaccination;" whether the mother specially requested that calf lymph might be used in the vaccination; whether the gentleman who performed the operation, according to his own words at the inquest, "avoided the question by saying it would be pure lymph;" and whether the Local Government Board has made any inquiry into this case; and, if so, whether the evidence so obtained will be laid before the Royal Commission on Vaccination now sitting?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am aware of the facts as regards the child referred to in the question. The child was, as I understand, vaccinated on the 26th of March, 1889. The age is recorded as four months. According to the evidence at the inquest the child was healthy prior to vaccination, and there was no evidence before the coroner that the parents were not healthy. The medical evidence at the inquest was that the weight of evidence was in favour of the view that the syphilis was acquired and not congenital. The verdict of the jury was as stated. The facts as regards the request of the mother, and the statement of the vaccinator as to the lymph, appear to be substantially the same as those given in the question. An inquiry has been made by an Inspector of the Board with regard to the case. His conclusions are not the same as those arrived at at the inquest. He states that the child in question was the only sufferer from subsequent syphilis among all the children he reached and whom he saw that had been vaccinated with the same or any other lymph in the whole course of the vaccinator's March vaccinations; and, further, that the entire family to which the alleged vaccinifer belonged were, as far as he could discover by examination of them, free from any syphilitic taint or suspicion of such taint. The Report of

the Inspector will be at the disposal of the Royal Commission on Vaccination.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman explain what we are to understand by the term "pure lymph?"

*MR. RITCHIE: I am afraid that it would take up too much of the time of the House to enter into an explanation.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF JOHN DALY.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the nature of the inquiry he has instituted into the prison treatment of John Daly, and what is the result; and, whether, having regard to the admitted fact that an overdose of belladonna was administered to him, any independent medical inquiry has been or will be made with regard to the nature of his medical treatment and condition?

MR. MATTHEWS: The inquiry will be conducted by the prison visitors, who are quite independent of the Prison Department, and I hope it will commence at the end of this week or the beginning of next. The inquiry will, in the ordinary course, include the whole question of the prisoner's medical treatment and condition.

MR. SEXTON: Will the evidence taken by these visitors and the Report be laid upon the Table, and what opportunity will be afforded for calling attention to this matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think the hon. Gentleman ought to postpone that question until the Report has been made.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the offence for which this man was in prison?

MR. SEXTON: No matter what he was in prison for, I wish to give notice that on the earliest opportunity I shall press for the production of the evidence and Report of this inquiry.

TORY ISLAND.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the difficulty and delay in the establishment of a signal station at Tory Island is caused by the price, namely, £480, demanded by the landlord for an acre of rocky land from Lloyd's, who are willing to erect and work the station; and whether the Board of Trade have compulsory powers for obtaining land for such purposes; and, if so, will they exercise those powers in this case?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Lloyd's have informed me that the proprietor of Tory Island has demanded excessive terms for the land necessary for a signal station, but there is also some difficulty about the cost of a telegraph cable. Powers to obtain compulsorily land for signal stations have been granted by Parliament to Lloyd's, and not to the Board of Trade.

THE RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he intends to submit to Parliament, in pursuance of Section 31, Sub-section 4, of "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," a Report of complaints made to the Board of Trade under that section, and of the other particulars referred to in that sub-section?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I expect shortly to lay a Report before Parliament in compliance with the provisions of the section to which the hon. Member refers.

THE TURKISH COURTS AT ALEPPO.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the complaints of the continued denial of justice, practised in and through the Turkish Courts at Aleppo, to Mrs. Barker, a British subject owning property there, of which she has been violently dispossessed, and thereby reduced to destitution; and whether the Government will take prompt action in the case?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N. E.): Mrs. Barker has had, during her protracted litigation, every assistance from the Embassy at Constantinople, and from the Consulate at Aleppo. She has adduced no proof of the alleged corruption of the Turkish Courts. She has had recourse to two processes in respect of her complaint, one in the Criminal Court on

account of violence on the part of her opponent, in which she was successful, the other in a suit concerning the right to property, in which she has failed. She will continue to receive advice and assistance; but her case cannot be withdrawn from the legitimate jurisdiction of the Turkish tribunals.

THE WATERFORD ARTILLERY.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is a fact that during the non-training period the battery sergeant-majors and sergeants of the Waterford Artillery are obliged to show their kits once a month, and shake out their shirts, socks, &c., side by side with the trumpeters, and in view of the non-commissioned officers and men of the Cavalry in the barracks; if it is usual for battery sergeant-majors of the Royal Artillery or colour-sergeants of the line to show kits with the men of their corps; if it is true the non-commissioned officers of the corps in question made a representation on the subject complained of in 1885, to Colonel Shortland, R.A., Commanding Auxiliary Artillery, Cork District; whether he gave orders it should be discontinued; and whether this was done while he remained in command?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The marching order kits of all the staff of the Waterford Artillery—which includes five trumpeters—are examined together once a month in a room in barracks, but not in view of the Cavalry. The inspection of their other clothing takes place at their quarters. Colonel Shortland is in India, but I cannot find that any formal representation was made to him. The adjutant communicated with him, and apparently some relaxation in the rules for inspection was made. Lately the commanding officer has found it necessary to be more strict again, as several non-commissioned officers were found to be parading without complete marching order kits.

THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the effect of the decisions in the matter of rents in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, pronounced by the Crofter Commissioners, upon the electorate for the School Boards; whether he is aware that the numbers entitled to vote according to Clause 12, Sub-section 2, of the Education Act of 1872 has greatly diminished; and that in one case, namely, the parish of Lochs, with a population of upwards of 6,000, the electorate for the current year has fallen down to 33 persons; and whether the Government will introduce a measure to assimilate the School Board with the Parliamentary franchise?

DR. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I have also to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that in Barvas parish, in Lewis, owing to the rents being reduced below £4, only two crofters now have votes, whereas 67 had votes formerly for School Board elections; whether he is aware that the said elections are now in the hands of 13 other voters, who are mainly large farmers and estate officials and servants; whether only five crofters have votes in the parish of Lochs, with a population of 6,000 persons, 19-20ths of whom were crofters; whether a similar state of matters exists all over Lewis and the Highlands generally; and what steps the Government propose to take to put such elections on a popular basis, instead of being, as now, in the hands of a few well-to-do people?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I propose to reply to this question and that of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty in the same answer. While the result of the reductions of rent in the Lewis has been to diminish to a large extent the number of persons entered on the valuation roll as owners or occupiers of the annual value of £4, and therefore qualified under the Act of 1872 as School Board electors, the reduction in the number has not, according to my information, been so great as is indicated in the questions of the hon. Gentlemen. The numbers in several school districts are as follows:—

	1888	1890
Barvas	172	98
Lochs	133	70
Uig	178	145
Stornoway	901	991

The existing constituencies contain a considerable representation of the crofting element, as there are numerous crofts still

above £4 rental. It is only in a small number of parishes that the number of electors has been reduced in anything like this proportion, and the circumstances do not seem to justify a disturbance of the statutory qualification which is general over Scotland.

METROPOLITAN ASSESSMENT RETURNS.

MR. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Inland Revenue Board adhere to the terms of their letter with reference to Metropolitan Assessment Returns, addressed to the City Remembrancer on the 17th March, 1885, which states—

"I am now directed to inform you that the Board of Inland Revenue will not enforce penalties upon those who do not fill up Question No. 4, and further as regards No. 7, that they will be satisfied with a simple statement as to whether a premium has or has not been paid as consideration for the tenancy;"

and, if not, will he explain for what reason?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The Board of Inland Revenue do adhere to the terms of their letter of the 17th of March, 1885.

WRONGFUL CONVICTION—CASE OF FEELY.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the remarks made by the Recorder at the last Sessions of the Old Bailey, at the close of the trial of the man Seeley, who was found guilty of perjury in giving evidence against four innocent men, who were convicted on his false statements; whether complaints have reached him that Sergeant Adams, of the L Division, prevented witnesses from entering the Court to speak on behalf of prisoners; if he will cause an inquiry to be made into the matter; and if the four men convicted on Seeley's statement are still in prison; and, if not, have they received any compensation for false imprisonment?

MR. MATTHEWS: The whole of this difficult and intricate case, including the conduct of Sergeant Adams, is now under consideration, and I am not in a position to say what will be done. The name of the man is Feely and not Seeley.

THE FOOD AND DRUGS AND MARGARINE ACTS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, relative to the Return of cases under the Sale of Food and Drugs and Margarine Acts, which have been brought before the magistrates sitting at the Wandsworth Police Court during the past year, and to the small fines inflicted in the various cases, whether the Local Government Board have in several of their Annual Reports drawn attention to the varying and insufficient penalties imposed upon offenders under these Acts; and whether, having regard to the importance to the public of the efficient administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs and Margarine Acts, he will take such steps as he may deem advisable, with a view to uniformity of practice of the Police Magistrates in the Metropolis in dealing with offenders against the Acts in question?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to those passages in the Annual Reports of the Local Government Board which comment upon the smallness of the fines frequently imposed in cases under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts. I propose to draw the attention of the Chief Magistrate to this subject and to the complaints of the hon. Member, and to request him, in conference with his brother magistrates, to arrive, if possible, at some common understanding with a view to secure uniformity of practice in the administration of these Acts.

EMIGRANTS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the number of emigrants who have left the United Kingdom for Western Australia during each year from 1880 to 1889?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): It has been impossible to give these particulars at so short notice; but an endeavour will be made to obtain them at an early date.

THE TRADE MARKS PROTECTION ACT—COLONIAL LEGISLATION.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of

Trade what colonies and other possessions have adopted the Trade Marks Protection Act, and what colonies propose to introduce legislation in the same direction?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The list of colonies and other possessions which have legislated, or proposed to legislate, in the direction indicated is a somewhat long one to read to the House, but I will send a copy to the hon. Member. India and 29 colonies have legislated; in seven others legislation is proposed Cyprus has rejected it, and we have no answer from New South Wales.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what colonies have not adopted it?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Cyprus is the only one which has rejected it. We have had no answer from New South Wales. I believe that they are the only two colonies which have not adopted it, or taken steps in that direction.

ROYAL NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether in any cases, and, if so, in how many, the capitation grant of 30s. had been drawn by members of the London Corps of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers who did not possess certificates of efficiency, and to what cause this was due; and whether it is contrary to the Regulations; and, if so, who is the official responsible for the breach of them?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The capitation grant of 30s. has in no case ever been drawn for any member of the London corps of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers who has not strictly complied with all the conditions for efficiency as laid down in the Admiralty Regulations. If any "efficient" member should not be in possession of his certificate of efficiency it is in consequence of his not having applied for the same. The certificate of efficiency is not issued annually as a matter of course. It is signed by the officer-instructor, the commanding officer of the battery, and the commanding officer of the brigade. The capitation grant is paid by the Accountant General, on the basis of the list of efficients rendered by the commanding officer of the corps through the Admiral Superintendent.

IRELAND—THE ARREARS ACT, 1882.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) what was the amount paid to Mr. Percy Magan, J.P., for the Counties of Westmeath, Roscommon, and Wexford, under the Arrears Act of 1882, on account of arrears alleged to be due by his tenant, Bernard Clogher, of Cartron, County Roscommon; (2) in the schedule sworn to by Mr. Magan, what was the amount alleged to be the annual rent; (3) in the same schedule, sworn to before Mr. C. Hancock, J.P. for Westmeath, on 28th November, 1882, what was the amount of arrears alleged to be due on 1st November, 1880; (4) is a landlord entitled under the Arrears Act to return in the schedule a reserved penal rent, being double the ordinary rent he was in the habit of receiving, or to receive a year's rent calculated on such reserved penal rent; and (5) when a landlord has received money under the Arrears Act, to which it can be shown he was not entitled, what steps can be taken to have such amount recovered and restored to the public fund from which it was paid?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: (1.) The Land Commissioners report that the amount referred to in the first paragraph was £15. (2.) The annual rent given in the schedule verified by the joint affidavit of the landlord and tenant was £15. (3.) The amount of arrears set forth was £30. (4.) The rent which the tenant was legally liable to pay during the period in which the antecedent arrears (as defined in the Arrears Act of 1882) accrued, formed the basis for the payment to which the landlord was entitled. No reference was made to a reserved penal rent in the case in question. The tenant, in his affidavit, stated that the arrears mentioned were justly due. (5.) Provision is made under the 7th section of the Act to meet any claim which may have been falsely made.

MR. HAYDEN: May I call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that he has not answered the fourth paragraph of my question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give any further answer than I have given.

GALWAY DOCKS.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether complaints have reached him that the new dock lately constructed at Galway is totally unlighted at night; that the previously existing dock, also called the new dock, is very imperfectly lighted; and there have been three deaths by drowning within the last six months; is there evidence in the possession of the Harbour Commissioners to show whether any of the frequent drowning accidents at Galway Docks were occasioned by the defective lighting; is the Irish Board of Works responsible for the existing state of affairs; and will he get the opinion of the Galway Harbour Commissioners on this last point direct from the Galway Board?

*MR. JACKSON: I have no information as to the first four paragraphs of the hon. Member's question. With regard to the latter part, I understand that the Board of Works has been in communication with the Galway Harbour Commissioners as to improving the lighting, and I am sure that any representation of the Harbour Commissioners will receive the most careful consideration.

MR. JOHN SLATTERY.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the imprisonment of Mr. John Slattery, of Cork, for six months (in default of giving bail), if he can now state under what section of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act Mr. Slattery was convicted?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): As this is a question relating to the administration of the law in Ireland I may be allowed to answer it. Mr. John Slattery, of Cork, was tried under the 2nd section of the Crimes Act of 1887, on a charge of using intimidation towards one Richard Quinlan. The magistrates held the charge proved, and made an order that the defendant should give security to be of good behaviour, or in default of bail be imprisoned for six months.

*MR. FLYNN: Is the power to hold to bail for good behaviour derived from the Crimes Act?

*MR. MADDEN: No; it is derived from the Statute of Edward III.; but as proceedings are being taken to test the legality of the decisions of the magistrates I think it is undesirable that I should enter further into the subject.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman say how often this decision has been come to under the Coercion Act?

MR. MADDEN: If the hon. Member wishes for statistics on the subject, and will put a notice on the Paper, I will consider whether it is practicable to give them.

*MR. FLYNN: As an appeal is pending, will the right hon. Gentleman order the release of Mr. Slattery on bail?

MR. MADDEN: It is not necessary for me to give any special direction, nor am I competent to do so.

*MR. FLYNN: Then there is practically no appeal at all?

MR. MADDEN: I did not say so. I said that proceedings were about to be taken to bring the matter before the Superior Courts. I understand from the newspapers that that is so; but I have no further information on the subject.

WEST AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now state when it will be possible to lay upon the Table of the House the Agreement concluded with France for the settlement of West African questions?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The Agreement concluded with France for the settlement of West African questions was distributed to hon. Members in a Parliamentary Paper on the 13th of the present month.

THE BEHRING SEA FISHERIES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is correct that the Behring Sea dispute has been settled, and that Sir Julian Pauncefote has conceded the right of Americans to exclude British sealers from the waters of the Alaskan Company; and, if true, that damages to British vessels are to be settled by arbitration, and that a close time for the capture of seals is to be

fixed alike for American and Canadian waters?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The statement that the Behring Sea question has been settled is not correct. The negotiations are still going on.

CRETE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any recent information as to the position of affairs in Crete and the prospects of a restoration of tranquillity in that Island; and, in particular, whether the Turkish Government intends to make any modification in the recently issued Firman?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The latest Reports from Her Majesty's officers in Crete, founded on personal observation in a lengthened tour, state that the general state of the districts was quite quiet. "A stranger," one of them says, "would have been unaware that anything of an unusual nature had been going on." Inquiries made in every village showed an absence of complaints, except of a petty character. There would appear, therefore, to be in general a cessation of the acts of pillage and violence, before reported as having been committed by contending parties. On the other hand, there have been cases of policemen and detached troopers being shot; and inflammatory reports are disseminated in the towns, including some charges of atrocious conduct by the troops, which in some instances, which the British Consul and the British senior naval officer had an opportunity of investigating, proved to be entirely unfounded. Telegrams of the 20th and 27th of February state that certain refugees in Greece, though implicated in recent events, on returning to Crete have not been molested by the authorities, and the Turkish Consul General at the Piræus has published a notice that all refugees, except 16 persons named, may freely return to Crete. The Government have no information of any intention on the part of the Porte to modify the late Firman; but the Vali of Crete has issued a Circular explaining its provisions, and the British Consul reports that if the views of the Vali are carried out, little cause of complaint would be left with regard to the Firman, but that the people are stirred by the action of politicians. The general result at present is more hopeful.

MR. BRYCE: Is the information in the possession of the right hon. Gentleman based entirely upon Reports of the British Consul, or does he derive it from any other source?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It is also based on the Reports of the senior medical officer, who has been through the country. Papers will shortly be laid before the House.

MR. BRYCE: How late will those Papers go?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: To a very late date indeed.

DIVISION OF RATES.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the *Times* report of his speech of Friday last is correct, from which it appears that he said—

> "With regard to the question of the division of rates. The Government entirely agreed there should be a division between the owners and the occupiers, provided there was proper and adequate representation of the owners They were anxious to deal with the subject when time and opportunity could be found;"

if so, whether the Government will introduce a Bill for the division of rates between owners and occupiers, or give facilities for the Second Reading of the Tenancies Rating Bill, which provides for such division on the principle to which the Government agree?

*MR. RITCHIE: It is impossible for the Government to add to their programme of legislation a Bill on the subject referred to in the question. They cannot undertake to give the hon. Member facilities for the Second Reading of his Bill.

IRELAND—THE CLONGOREY ARRESTS.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Tuesday last armed emergency men entered Mrs. Kelly's yard, and refused to leave, though requested by the owner to do so; whether the police in charge, instead of protecting the owner, arrested eight workmen who were engaged on the premises; and whether he can state by what authority emergency men, armed or unarmed, can

enter upon premises in legal possession of the owner?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that, so far as the police are aware, no armed emergency men entered Mrs. Kelly's yard on Tuesday last, nor did anything occur calling for police interference on behalf of Mrs. Kelly, who, as a matter of fact, was not on the premises. The police arrested four men that day, not eight, as alleged in the question. The men were arrested for refusing to desist from working after repeated cautions, and were subsequently discharged, to be summoned.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the police acted legally or illegally in breaking into the house of Mrs. Kelly; and whether, as the illegality in respect to the service of the precept is now admitted, the Government will order the release of Father Kinsella and the other persons now in prison?

*MR. MADDEN: I understand that the police had a warrant; and, if so, they had legal power to force open the door. Even if the service of the precept were wrong, that did not affect the question of unlawful assembly, because the way to test the legality of the precept was not to collect a number of persons to disobey it. I do not, however, wish to discuss the case, as the trial for unlawful assembly is pending; but if the hon. Member forces me to give an answer I can only say that, in my opinion, an assembly to forcibly interfere with a precept cannot be justified because of some technical informality in the service of that precept. It is extremely undesirable to discuss the point, and I must respectfully decline to give any further answer.

MR. CLANCY: Was not the forcing of the door absolutely illegal, seeing that the officers refused to produce the warrant when requested to do so by the persons inside?

*MR. MADDEN: My information leads me to infer that the forcing of the door was not illegal, as the police officers had a warrant in their hands at the time.

MR. CLANCY: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that the warrant was asked for, and that the police officers refused to produce it?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mr. Carew

THE CASE OF MR. HENRY O'CONNOR.

MR. CAREW: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the conviction of Mr. Henry O'Connor, sub-editor of the *Leinster Leader*, for publishing reports of League branches, was yesterday quashed in the Court of Queen's Bench, Dublin, with costs against the magistrates who tried him; whether, after sentencing Mr. O'Connor to two months' imprisonment with hard labour, the magistrates were asked and refused to state a case, on the ground that the point raised was frivolous; whether Mr. O'Connor was kept in prison until a *mandamus* to compel the magistrates to state a case was obtained from the Court of Queen's Bench; whether one of those magistrates was Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, who, on Friday last, sentenced Father Kinsella and the other Clongorey prisoners to two months' imprisonment, and refused, when asked, to state a case on their behalf; and, whether the Government will take any steps to compensate Mr. O'Connor for his illegal detention in gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the facts are as stated in the first three paragraphs of the question, except that the Division of the High Court in which the case was heard is not correctly stated. It is not the fact that one of the magistrates was Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald. With regard to the last paragraph, I must wait for further information, the only facts within my cognisance in addition to those stated in the question being that the judgment of the Exchequer Division was on a purely technical point—one of the Judges stating at the time that there could be no moral doubt as to the substantial truth of the allegation, of which, in the opinion of the Court, strict legal proof had not been given.

SCOTCH SCHOOL BOARDS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that School Boards in Scotland must obtain the sanction of the Scotch Education Department prior to the sanction of new schools, and whether application was made to the Department for sanction to the erection of a Board school in Lenzie prior to its erection; whether the School Boards

concerned, in their application for such sanction, included, in the number of children requiring school accommodation, the total number of children of school age in Lenzie District; what was the number of children of school age in Lenzie District at the date of application; upon what date did the Department proceed in sanctioning the erection of school buildings to accommodate 560 children, seeing that the average attendance is only 201; what is the cause of this small attendance at this school; whether the school fees charged in Lenzie Board School are complained against as not being within the reasonable reach of children of the working classes resident in that district; whether the School Boards have made any provision, and, if so, what, and where, in Lenzie District, for providing free education in the compulsory standards; and whether provision for free education in schools outside the district of the children's residence (especially in the face of there being vacant places for 300 children in Lenzie School, specially built for the accommodation of children resident in Lenzie District) is a compliance with the condition precedent set forth in the Minute of the Department of 26th August?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: School Boards in Scotland must obtain the sanction of the Scotch Education Department to any loan for the erection of a new school. A long correspondence took place with regard to the school at Lenzie, extending from the year 1884, when a memorial was presented by the inhabitants of the district urging the necessity of a school at Lenzie, which was a rapidly-increasing district, paying large school rates. The two School Boards of Cadder and Kirkintilloch ultimately assented to the Petition of the inhabitants, and in the year 1887 presented an application for sanction to a loan for the provision of a school for the children residing within the districts of these two Boards at Lenzie, where they certified that there were 133 families at that date for whom no efficient school was available. This loan finally received the sanction of the Department in August, 1888. The Department do not know the cause of the present attendance at the school. I have already stated, in answer to the hon. Member, what representations have reached the Department with respect to the school fees at Lenzie Academy, as well as the assurances received from the School Boards as to the supply of free places for the district, upon the faith of which this school was sanctioned as a fee-paying school; and I have also stated that the Department is prepared to consider any statistics showing that hardship exists, or that the representations of the School Board were unfounded.

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS AT BUCKINGHAM.

*CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether, in view of the letter addressed by the Board on the 30th of January last to the Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority, observing on the urgent need of a pure and sufficient water supply, on the absence of a hospital for infectious cases, and of proper means for disinfection, and also on the grave structural defects of the sewers, and wholly insufficient action of the Authority, the Local Government Board can compel this Authority to exercise their powers for the protection of the public health of their district; and, if so, whether the Board intends so to compel this Authority?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The Local Government Board, in the event of formal complaint being made to them under Section 299 of the Public Health Act that the Sanitary Authority have failed to provide their district with sufficient sewers or with an adequate supply of water, can direct a local inquiry on the subject; and if the complaint is substantiated can issue an order limiting the time within which the Sanitary Authority shall discharge their duty. If the authority fail to comply with the requirements of the order, the Board can apply to the High Court for a mandamus. In the case referred to in the question, the Board have not received any such complaint, and cannot therefore at present take the action indicated. If such a complaint were received it would meet with the Board's prompt attention. The Board are clearly of opinion that not only are the Authority failing in their duty, but that, as they have informed them, they are incurring serious responsibility in

neglecting to exercise the powers with which they have been entrusted by the Legislature for the protection of the public health of their district.

H.M.S. *VICTORIA*—THE 110-TON GUNS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the *Victoria* is to be commissioned next month; whether the 110-ton guns have been strengthened to the satisfaction of the Admiralty; and, if so, whether orders have been given that they are not to be fired with the full charge; and what are the precise orders upon that point; and whether the Government will institute an independent inquiry into the utility and efficiency of these monster guns?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The *Victoria* is to be commissioned next month. The two 110-ton guns of the *Victoria* have been strengthened to the satisfaction of the Ordnance Committee. No orders have been, or will be, given that they are not to be fired with the full or maximum charge. Only three ships in the Navy are armed, or are proposed to be armed, with these guns. The precise orders as regards practice are laid down in Regulations issued in July, 1888. The utility and efficiency of these heavy guns is so undoubted that there is no intention of instituting any further inquiry into the subject. In an official letter just received, dated February 5, 1890, the captain of the *Benbow* reports that—

"The 110-ton guns mounted in that ship do not show the slightest sign of any weakness in their construction, and the officers and men have complete confidence in them."

EXCISE PROSECUTIONS.

MR. NEWNES (Cambridge, E., Newmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that an exciseman at Great Wilbraham, Cambs., induced a carman named Dockerill to sell him half a pound of tobacco, and then issued a summons against him, with the result that Dockerill was fined £25 at the Bottisham Sessions on the 21st of October last; whether the Excise officer acted in accordance with his instructions; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into all the circumstanees of the case?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Commissioners of Inland Revenue inform me that the facts are these:—Complaints were received from local tradesmen in the neighbourhood of Great Wilbraham that illegal hawking of tobacco was being practised, and orders were given to the Excise officers to endeavour to prevent such infractions of the law. An Excise officer, having reason to believe that the carman Dockerill was one of the offenders, asked him if he did not sell tobacco, to which Dockerill replied in the affirmative, and then sold the officer half a pound. The magistrates who tried the case at first imposed a penalty of £50; but, with the consent of the Board of Inland Revenue, mitigated it to £25.

THE NEW EDUCATION CODE.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education when the New Code will be laid upon the Table and in the hands of Members of the House?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The right hon. Gentleman will be the first to appreciate the circumstances which have retarded the preparation of the Code. It will be formally laid upon the Table of the House within the usual period; but it will not be ready for distribution until a later date.

THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Reports of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the question of further reductions in the Staff of the Supreme Court of Judicature?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Reports for which the right hon. Gentleman asks are those not of an ordinary Departmental Committee, but of a confidential Committee appointed to advise the Government on certain points. Under these circumstances, I regret it is not in my power to give the information asked for; but I shall be glad to show the Reports to the right hon. Member confidentially. Perhaps, however, it would meet his views if, before the

Supreme Court Estimate is discussed, there is laid on the Table a statement of what has been done, and what remains to be done, to carry out the recommendations of former Committees presided over by the Lord Chief Justice and the Master of the Rolls, which were referred to in the debates of 1888.

THE HORSE AND WHEEL TAX.

SIR RICHARD PAGET: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his reply on the 10th August last to the hon. Member for North Herts—"that he did not at present see his way to meeting the views of the County Councils" (namely, as to the supplying the deficiency of county resources, caused by the abandonment of the Horse and Wheel Tax); whether he is now prepared to consider the propriety of dealing with the matter, and affording some assistance to the ratepayers in meeting the charge for maintenance of main roads, which is now borne exclusively by the rates?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): It appears that there is a growing regret at the loss of the blessing which I intended to confer on the ratepayer two years ago. I doubt whether that feeling is yet strong enough, or widespread enough, to admit of a revival of the Wheel and Van Tax. I do not think that it is perfectly correct to say that the ratepayers pay the cost of main roads exclusively, as there is the excess of the sum produced by licences as a set-off.

SIR R. PAGET: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to inform us what further expression he desires to receive in order to satisfy himself of the desirability of introducing a measure?

*MR. GOSCHEN: As soon as I can ascertain from the ordinary channels of information to which Ministers have recourse in order to ascertain the general feeling that there is the slightest chance of carrying a measure, I should be glad to introduce a Bill; but it would be useless to attempt to carry any measure of the kind unless there was a general agreement upon it. Perhaps the hon. Member will be able to persuade his colleagues in some of the boroughs that such a measure ought to be passed.

DUBLIN HOSPITALS BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government intend to introduce the Dublin Hospitals Bill during the present Session?

*MR. JACKSON: It is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation dealing with the Dublin Hospitals.

MR. SEXTON: Will the Bill be introduced soon?

*MR. JACKSON: As early as possible.

SOLDIERS IN UNIFORM AT THEATRES

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on the evening of the 7th January last, three non-commissioned officers of the Royal Horse Guards were refused admission, by the manager of Her Majesty's Theatre, to a box which had been specially given them by a General Officer commanding in the district; that the ground of such refusal was that the men were in uniform; and whether it is in his power to take steps to provide that soldiers in uniform shall, when frequenting places of public entertainment, enjoy the same rights and privileges as the civilian, and shall no longer be subjected to disabilities and vexations on account of their wearing the uniform of Her Majesty's Army?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: My attention has been called to this case, and I should like to express my entire agreement with the view expressed by the noble Lord in the question—that it is intolerable that any disability should attach to wearing the Queen's uniform. I have no direct power in the matter, and the best means of dealing with it effectively require consideration. But, after consultation with the Lord Chamberlain, I propose, as a first step, to send him a Memorandum setting forth the views we entertain, and he has undertaken to circulate it to the theatres within his jurisdiction.

TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT ETTINGSHALL.

SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, when replacing the Post Office at Ettingshall, he would give the locality

the advantage of a Telegraph Office at the same place, bearing in mind the considerable works in the immediate neighbourhood, employing large numbers of workmen ?

*Sir H. MAXWELL: I am informed by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General that he will be glad to inquire whether the circumstances will justify the establishment of a Telegraph Office at Ettingshall.

THE TITHES BILL.

Viscount CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury when we may hope to have the Tithes Bill in our hands ?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I hope in the course of a few days to be able to circulate it.

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES) (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE).

Ordered, That the Army (Ordnance Factories (Supplementary Estimate), which was presented upon the 26th day of this instant February, be referred to the Committee of Supply, to be printed. (No. 72.)

MAJOR GENERAL DOWNES (CORRESPONDENCE).

Address for—

"Copy of Correspondence between the Secretary of State for War and the Colonial Office with regard to the employment of Major General Downes."—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*)

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to provide a close time for Hares in England, Scotland, and Wales." [Hares Preservation Bill [*Lords.*]

And, also, a Bill, intituled "An Act to abolish the Office of Secretary of Presentations, and to provide for the performance of the duties attached to that Office." [Crown Office Bill [*Lords.*]

MOTION.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS).

Select Committee on Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons) nominated of,—Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr H. Anstruther, Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Thomas Fielden, Mr. Flower, General Goldsworthy, Colonel Hamilton, Mr Herbert, Mr. Cowley Lambert, Viscount Lewisham, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Richard Power, and Mr. Sheil.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Herbert.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1889-90.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class VI.

1. £8,101, Supplementary, Superannuations and Retired Allowances.

(4.30.) Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I should like to receive from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury some information in reference to the offices of the Supreme Court. The reason I press for it is this: There was in 1880 a reorganisation of the offices, and the result was that a large number of persons drew considerable salaries without doing any work, the Government not being prepared to superannuate them nor to utilise their services. Two have since died, and three have been placed on the pension list, but for a long time they were kept on the books on full pay. It may be that there may be difficulties of the same kind hereafter, and it is to be hoped that some different arrangement will be made. I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will inform us what has been done in regard to this matter.

(4.31.) The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson, Leeds, N.): I am afraid I am hardly prepared to discuss the general question of re-organisation; but I may tell the hon. Gentleman that the re-organisation which has taken place has no elements in it likely to lead to difficulty such as he has described. It was no part of my duty to call on the gentlemen referred to to perform duties other than those for which they were originally engaged, and as those duties had lapsed they continued to draw their salaries as stated.

*(4.32.) Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): There are two questions I wish to put to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Trea-

sury. One is as to pensions granted to two officers, one of £1,333, and the other of £1,233. I observe that the services rendered appear to have been about the same; but there is a difference of £100 a year in the pensions in the case of one who had served 27 years, against the other who served 36 years. I should like to know the reason for that. I should also like to hear from the hon. Gentleman what are the intentions of the Government with regard to the whole question of superannuation. The Commission appointed to inquire into the matter made an elaborate Report upon it and a Bill was brought in during the last week of last Session, when, however, there was not time to pass it into law. We have, I think, a right to ask Her Majesty's Government to deal with the matter this Session. The question is a very grave one, and one that involves the country in a very large expenditure.

MR. JACKSON: I should prefer, if the right hon. Gentleman will allow it, that any discussion which it may be desirable to raise on the general question should be deferred until the introduction of a Bill, or until the general Estimates are reached. I believe it is the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce a Bill on the subject. With regard to the question the right hon. Gentleman asked about two varying pensions for apparently equal services, the explanation is to be found in the additional allowances for professional qualifications.

Vote agreed to.

2. £828, Supplementary, Pauper Lunatics, Scotland.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.—(No. 112.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*(4.43.) THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): This Bill is introduced for the purpose of granting Responsible Government to Western Australia. It is, in form and substance, identical with the Bill passed in another place last year, and which for want of time we were unable to pass through this House. The delimitation of territory which the Bill proposes to give to the Responsible Government is the 26th parallel of south latitude. To the Responsible Government will be granted the whole area of the country; but within this delimitation certain regulations will be made relative to the sale or disposal of land, and this question with regard to the sale or leasing of land we propose to refer to a Select Committee representing all shades of opinion in this House. That being so, I do not think the House will want me to go into all the details of the Bill, but I wish especially to call attention to two or three clauses which are of great importance as embodying what I may call vital principles. The principal clauses of the Imperial Bill are:—Clause 3, vesting in the Local Legislature the management and control of Crown lands south of the 26th degree of south latitude; Clause 4, reserving to the Home Government the management of Crown lands north of the 26th degree of south latitude and providing for the application of the fund arising from the sale and lease of such lands; Clause 7, reserving power to Her Majesty to subdivide the colony hereafter; and Clause 8, reserving for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure any local Act that may hereafter be passed restricting the immigration of British subjects. This clause is, in my opinion, one of the most important in the Bill, because I have often heard it urged with great force that power should be reserved by the Imperial Legislature to prevent a newly-enfranchised colony from prohibiting immigration. This clause absolutely prevents any such action by the colony, inasmuch as any local Act which might be framed—I do not suppose one ever would be—to prevent immigration could not become law without receiving in the first instance the assent of Her Majesty through the Secretary of State, There is another clause of great importance. We all know that in connection with our colonies one of our first duties is to protect to the utmost of our power the aboriginal races, and it has always been the endeavour—I hope the successful endeavour—of this House so to protect them. This duty has not been overlooked in this legislation. In Clause 70 of the local Bill passed by the

Western Australia Legislature it is enacted that :—

"There shall be payable to Her Majesty in every year out of the consolidated revenue fund the sum of £5,000 mentioned in Schedule C to this Act, to be appropriated to the welfare of the aboriginal natives, and expended in providing them with food and clothing, when they would otherwise be destitute, in promoting the education of aboriginal children (including half-castes), and in assisting generally to promote the preservation and well-being of the aborigines. The said annual sum shall be issued to the Aborigines Protection Board by the Treasurer on warrant under the hand of the Governor, and may be expended by the said Board at their discretion, under the sole control of the Governor, anything in the Aborigines Protection Act, 1886, to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided always, that if and when the gross revenue of the colony shall exceed £500,000 in any financial year, an amount equal to 1 per cent. on such gross revenue shall, for the purpose of this section, be substituted for the said sum of £5,000 in and for the financial year next ensuing."

I think this clause not only affords ample protection to the aboriginal natives, but it also affords the ways and means of providing substantially for the relief of any natives who may be destitute, and for the education of those who may need it. I would point out to the House that in no other Australian Constitution Act does this clause exist, and therefore this is a distinct advance on all other enactments; and I believe the House will regard the provision with special favour. I have heard it stated that one of the objections to this Bill is that the population of the country to which it is proposed to give Responsible Government is quite out of proportion to the area inhabited by it. I am quite prepared to admit that there is a vast discrepancy between the existing population of Western Australia and the large area over which they will have responsible control; but I would ask the House to remember that that must have been and has been the case with every one of our Australian colonies. At the inception of Responsible Government in those colonies there was naturally a very large disproportion between the population and the area which they were called upon to govern. But what was the result? Responsible Government having been granted, the discrepancy became less and less; the colonies did all in their power to increase the resources of the country; and as a result labour flowed in from other countries and prosperity followed. I hope and believe that will again be the result now, and I am warranted in that belief by a comparison of the condition of Western Australia now with the condition of Queensland when that colony was endowed with Responsible Government. Queensland was separated from New South Wales by Order in Council and established as a distinct colony in December, 1859. It had Responsible Government from the first; its area was 668,497 square miles; its population, exclusive of aboriginals, was, in December, 1859, 25,000, as against 40,000, the population of West Australia now, and in December, 1887, the population was 367,000. Its revenue and expenditure in 1860 were each about £180,000; they are now upwards of £3,000,000. In 1860 there were no railways or telegraphs; there are now over 2,000 miles of railway and 16,000 miles of telegraphs. I think that these facts afford an almost unanswerable argument against the views of those who say that Western Australia ought not to have Responsible Government because the population is so very small in proportion to the size of the territory. We can go even further. Recollect what the development of Australia has been and the comparatively short time in which that development has taken place. It is only 102 years ago since Australia became part of these dominions, and what changes have taken place in that vast continent in that time! Surely, if we are to reason by the light of facts, we are not justified in withholding Responsible Government from Western Australia on the bare ground that the population and the area are not in proportion. In addition to the fact that we have seen a rapid development in the different Australian colonies after the assumption by them of full responsibility, we must bear in mind that the great question which is at present agitating Australia is that of federation. The realisation of the project may be near or far distant, but the idea does exist, and it is welcomed by the Government, because they, in common with most politicians, believe that union represents strength. If Responsible Government, which exists everywhere in Australia except in Western Australia, be still withheld from that colony, it is evident that federation must of neces-

sity be delayed. Again, we must remember that views with regard to granting Responsible Government to Western Australia have been expressed with absolute unanimity by nearly every portion of the Australian Dominions, to the effect that Responsible Government should be granted to Western Australia. Telegrams and despatches, the result of Conferences, have reached us from every part of Australia, all in the same direction. Five successive Secretaries of State have now expressed a similar opinion, and now that the Legislative Council of Western Australia has confirmed that opinion and passed a Bill, Her Majesty's Government ask the House of Commons to ratify its decision and to grant its request. There is one very important argument which I ought to impress upon the House. It is that the present system of Government in Western Australia is really not an efficient system. The Government is nearly always in the minority—a condition of things much to be regretted. I will shortly explain the Constitution under which the country is governed. The present Constitution comprises—

"(1) The Governor; (2) the Executive Council holding office during pleasure, and composed of heads of Departments and one unofficial member; (3) a single Chamber—the Legislative Council—consisting of 26 members, nine nominated by the Crown and 17 elected; the nominated members include the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General, the Commissioner of Public Works, the Surveyor General, who also are the official Members of the Executive Council. The Legislative Council has the fullest powers of discussion; private Members have the power of introducing measures (not being money Bills); the Governor takes no part in their debates, communicating with the House by message, and has the power to veto Bills.

"This Constitution dates from 1870, when a local Act, passed under the power conferred by the Act 13 and 14 Vict., cap. 59, sec. 32, introduced elective members and increased the size of the Council. It was admittedly a transitional stage in the progress of the colony towards Responsible Government, and it was not long before the question of taking the final step began to be raised."

The Government, as I have already observed, is in many instances in a minority, and that is a condition of affairs which cannot conduce to the good government or the well being of any country. I think that is a proposition which does not require any proof. Hon. Gentlemen will see from the constitution of this legislation that I was not incorrect in stating that in many instances the Executive Government must be in a minority, and that is a condition of affairs which cannot conduce to the good government or the well-being of any country. These, Mr. Speaker, are the main arguments which I think will induce the House to grant full Responsible Government to Western Australia. Australia may be said to be a type of what British energy, British independence of character, British intelligence can achieve. I do not think the whole history of the world can point to any such magnificent effects of colonisation as are shown in our Australian colonies. They have another advantage. They are the only colonies, or the only important ones, which have never been the cause of any war to this country. Not a shot has been fired in defence of Australia. It was founded in peace, it has grown in peace, and peace has always been maintained within its borders. Sir, that is a very important element to consider when granting such vast powers as these for which I am now asking the House. It is one which, as I said before, cannot be sufficiently accentuated. But we may reasonably ask whether this great prosperity of Australia—a prosperity which has changed primeval forests and wildernesses into great cities and vast fields teeming with cattle—has produced any countervailing disadvantage. When we consider this prosperity, which has been developed surely and steadily, may we not ask ourselves whether any prejudicial results have accrued with regard to the relations between Australia and this country? The answer is, no. We find that the people are thoroughly contented and essentially loyal. Prosperity has not engendered either ingratitude or disloyalty. The pulsations of the heart of the Old Country vibrate in the arteries of the new; and when the time came for a practical test to be given of the loyalty of the Australian people, when England herself was involved in war, and danger threatened the old country, there was no hesitation on the part of the colonists, and New South Wales sent her contingent to serve side by side with their English brethren on the fields of Egypt. Surely, then, we need no further argu-

ment in favour of granting greater powers of self-government to Western Australia. I have proved, if proof were needed, how loyal she is to the Mother Country. I have shown that Western Australia is as much entitled to Responsible Government as the other portions of that great continent, and I ask the House, in full confidence, to ratify the decision of the Legislature of Western Australia, and grant that responsibility of government which they now ask by reading this Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Baron H. de Worms.*)

*(5.7.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Sir, if the Government desire to press on this Bill, I am very glad indeed that they have given us a fair opportunity of considering it. I am not quite sure that the House, as a body, was conscious that the measure was going to be discussed, looking at the state of the Benches around; but, at any rate, it is a source of satisfaction to find that the Government have given us a night on which we can discuss the subject. For my own part, I do not profess to know why the Government should have put this Bill in the very fore-front of their business, giving it precedence over every other measure. But I desire, on this, the Second Reading, to make a protest by way of caution, and to say that in assenting to the present stage we must not be taken as assenting to the principle of the Bill, which is the alienation from this country of the only temperate lands that now remain to us—of a territory as large as Europe—by handing it over to a handfull of colonists. I accept the suggestion that this matter shall be threshed out before a Special Committee, and I think that in making that suggestion the Government are treating us fairly. At the same ime I feel we shall be placed in a difficult position when we have read the Bill a second time, for the House has not the same command over a measure when it is asked to read it a third time that it has over it on previous stages. It must be thoroughly understood that in reading the Bill a second time we claim the right to the fullest discussion in Committee, and the fullest discussion when the Bill comes back again to the House. We must not be asked to part with the measure with any undue haste. I am a little suspicious of the extreme rapidity with which the Government seem anxious to deal with the measure. We have very little information as to the nature of this enormous territory, which comprises about 1,100,000 square miles. I have tried very hard to get information, but have not succeeded, and I cannot but complain that Blue Books have not been circulated.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The Blue Book was circulated, as the hon. Member will find if he refers to the Pink Paper.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: It is only the less important Blue Books which are referred to on the Pink Paper, and I venture to say that nineteen-twentieths of the Members of this House have not seen the Blue Book dealing with this question. Now, I desire to say that while I recognise the propriety of referring this matter to a Select Committee, I have considerable doubt as to whether the Members who act on the Committee will have a fair opportunity of dealing with the subject. What I am afraid of is that all the evidence that will come before the Committee will be of a one-sided character. The Government, at home and abroad, are committed to the Bill, but I believe the people of Albany are not inclined to support it. The dominant party in Western Australia, of course, are in its favour, and so are the regular Opposition. But the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Munro) is, I am told, himself a large landowner and is naturally interested in the measure. We do not hear both sides of the question. I do not want to say anything disrespectful of the people of Ireland, but in this matter we are in the position in which we have often found ourselves when asked to spend money in Ireland. There is another view of the matter which seems to me to be a very serious one. We have the interests of the colonists on the one side, and to some extent the interests of the British Empire on the other—at all events we are not directly, so to speak, in the same boat with the colonists in this matter—and we are entitled to look to the Governor of the colony as the representative of British interests and as a man who is bound to safeguard British interests. I think it,

therefore, a matter very greatly to be regretted that the Governor of this colony, Sir F. Napier Broome, has taken the part of a strong partisan on this question. There is no doubt great temptation for a Governor to be carried away by the popularity which results from strongly and entirely espousing colonial interests. We have heard something of circumstances which make us think that Western Australia has been not altogether a happy family. We have heard of the Governor and the Chief Justice, and the Attorney General, carrying on a sort of triangular duel; but, after all, the Governor who has espoused the cause of the colonists in this matter has left the colony in a blaze of glory. He seems to have begun by writing a very long letter to the *Times*, and he has accused the Members who opposed this Bill of something very like ignorance and obstruction. He has made use of expressions which I do not think a representative of Her Majesty's Government ought to have used. For instance, he said the tinkers and the tailors and apothecaries who hang about the towns should not be sent out to the colonies against the wish of the colonial Legislature, and that Western Australia is too poor to be answerable for pauper emigrants. I do not think he ought to make use of such expressions, for no one has proposed to do anything of the kind. At an entertainment given to him when he left the colony he said unkind things of the Members of this House, and writers in the Press in this country, who did not agree with him, and he seemed to be of opinion that Members of this House who were foolish enough to believe that the Return presented to the House last year, showing that single individuals held millions of acres in the colony, was accurate, were almost fools and idiots. It seems to me to be a matter of very considerable regret that the Governor of the colony should have taken this strong partisan view, the more so because I think this Governor has to a certain extent sacrificed his independent position by accepting the post of paid delegate to this country. I have said we ought to obtain some knowledge of the physical aspect of this territory. I hoped we might have got it from the Australian Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr. Forrest. But what I find is that this officer has made himself a strong political partisan in the matter. It was even proposed to delegate him to go to the eastern colonies and get up an agitation there, and this proposal would have been carried out if the Secretary of State had not stepped in. Mr. Forrest has taken a great deal of trouble to show what fools are the Members of this House, and the writers in the Press, but the great object of a letter which has been written by him has been to get rid of the statistics presented to the House last year, showing that the land was held in enormous blocks. He tells us that as a matter of fact a great many of these holdings have accumulated in consequence of money having been advanced on mortgage by banks, and so on. There may be some truth in that statement, but we certainly ought to be entitled to believe in the Return presented to Parliament, and all I gather from Mr. Forrest's letter is that the lands are very much in the same position as what are called tied public houses. He tells us we have been casting unjust and unfair reflections on the people of Western Australia, and talks about the people of Greater Britain having equal rights and privileges with those who remain at home. Equal rights and privileges, certainly, but I think we have some right to an interest in these colonies, and that the few persons who own large tracts of land in Australia should not have it all to themselves. His arguments may be good or bad in the mouth of a delegate of Australia, but it seems to me to be very regrettable that this officer, whose duty it was to give us statistics, has given us instead mere polemical arguments. I find that all the statistics given in regard to this great territory are compressed into about half a page of the Blue Book, and they are of the vaguest, most general, and most attenuated character. The officer by whom they are prepared admits that a small South-Western part of Australia has fine territory, and excellent rainfall, very productive land, and very fine forests. He admits that the rainfall goes up to 45 inches, but I understand other people to say that it reaches 60 inches. I may mention, as an instance of the very loose way in which the statistics are presented, that in the next division we are told that the highest rainfall is 20 inches, the lowest

10 inches, and the average 10 inches, which, of course, is a physical impossibility. I find that the size of this South West territory is 126,000 square miles. It is, therefore, 50 per cent. larger than Victoria, considerably larger than the whole colony of New Zealand, and considerably larger than these British Islands. We are told that this part of the colony is already occupied. Well, you have some 30,000 people there, and I find from a subsequent part of the Return that of the 30,000 some 20,000 are in the towns, leaving only some 10,000 occupying territory considerably larger than the British Isles. A resident, writing recently to a newspaper, tells us that the greater part of the land is occupied by squatters with very many thousands of acres each, and with flocks of sheep and cattle, and that side by side with them are the blacksmiths, the shoemakers, the wheelwrights, and other country tradesmen, each with a piece of land of his own, and with his own cart and bullock. These seem to be the only small proprietors. Beyond this territory it is admitted that there is an enormous eastern territory, extending to I think more than half-a-million miles, of which this Return tells us absolutely nothing. I find the rainfall is unknown, the average temperature is unknown, the highest temperature is unknown, the lowest temperature is unknown, and everything is unknown. I will ask the Government whether they propose that this land shall be handed over to a handful of colonists without any knowledge whatever of its condition or any explanation of any kind, or whether they are going to give us time to investigate the matter fully in the first instance. The Land Commissioner, I find, has given us certain statistics with regard to the amount of land which has been alienated. This is naturally not large because the price paid for it is 10s. an acre, whereas it can be rented at a farthing or half a farthing an acre, the consequence being that people prefer to rent on terms which some of them say are practically perpetual, the leases being renewable. I find that whereas the population of Western Australia in the last 31 or 32 years has only increased about 50 per cent., the quantity of land alienated has been something like 20 times what it was 30 years ago. On the 1st of January, 1860, the alienation amounted to 5,275,000 acres, whilst on the 1st January, 1889, it amounted to 108,000,000. Supposing there are 20,000 or 21,000 people living on the land the result is that, on the average, 5,000 acres per head of the population have been alienated, or 25,000 acres per family. We are told that this is not a permanent alienation, but that the leases run only to the year 1907. That is no doubt true, but we have other statements coming from residents and others to the effect that the leases are renewable and that they are practically perpetual. I admit that when I come to look at the letter of the land laws the leases are not as good as freeholds, but on the other hand there is an enormously large compensation clause. There is no limitation whatever as to the nature of the improvements for which tenants are to receive compensation in the event of the land being taken over. The tenants may also take up small holdings, and may thus take the eyes out of the territory, so that it will be impossible to find others to rent or buy the rest of the land. We may be pretty sure that dummy holding which has been well-known in other parts of Australia is not likely to be unknown in Western Australia. If we turn over the country to the Legislature of Western Australia they will, of course, be able to alter the land laws as they please, and it is an extremely difficult thing, unless you have a very strong administration, to stop dummy holding. My own belief is that whatever they may put on paper these great holdings are practically or very nearly perpetual holdings. The experience of other colonies in Australia has been that whatever arrangements are made the great squatter—the great land king—always manages to get permanent possession of the land. The real truth of the matter is that our emigrants to Australia, having got out of touch with the land in this country have not got into touch with the land in Australia. You have there little homesteading population—no popular cultivation of the land. The population prefers the privilege of wage-earning in a country which is the paradise of wage-earners. The consequence is that these Australian colonists are drifting into two classes—one consisting of the

enormous land kings and the other of the wage-earners, there being very little of that peasant proprietary system which has been so successful in America, and which I think might be as successful in Australia also, if we kept the thing in our hands and did not make the colony over to this handful of squatter kings. There is one Return which puzzled me very much indeed. It is a Return of leases and licenses forfeited for non-payment of rent, and to be offered for sale by public auction at the Crown Land offices at Perth on the 11th October, 1889. There we have an enormous list of prodigious holdings to be sold by auction in this way on account of non-payment of rent. I do not know why they should be sold by auction. I should have thought the natural thing would be to let the leases lapse, and to let them return to the hands of the Government. In one division I find that a gentleman named William McKinnon has had no less than four plots of 500,000 acres each, for each of which he has been liable to pay £250 a year, or half a farthing an acre. He had not paid this amount, and the land therefore is to be sold. There is another man who has got 20 blocks of 20,000 acres each, and the New Zealand Prime Minister has got 64,000, at half a farthing an acre, which is going to be sold. The Motion of which I have given notice suggests that this matter should not be settled until the Committee on Colonisation has come to some conclusion. I do not suggest that it is desirable that the Committee on the Western Australia Bill should be hung up until the other Committee has reported, but if the Colonisation Committee should think it desirable in the interest of this country to propose some measure promoting colonisation, they would find, if this Bill had been already passed, that the steed had been stolen, and that their labours had been thrown away. Therefore, I think we ought not to hurry this matter too much. I protest against the way in which the alienation of the rights of this great country is carried out in the form of a Bill by which Western Australia is to receive while we are to give. For my part it would be much more proper that the Bill should originate in this House. Then in the local Bill there is the question of the Franchise. I had the opportunity of discussing this matter with the Governor of the Colony the other day, and he said—

> "At any rate you could not for a moment think of interfering with the Franchise; that is a matter which must be absolutely settled by the colonists."

I do not know that at all. Suppose you find the colony is in the hands of a small oligarchy, are you going to allow them to regulate such a matter? I believe that at present the colony of Western Australia is in the hands of a small oligarchy, and that this Bill is drawn in anything but a popular manner. It is proposed to exclude all the poorer colonists and all the natives. I certainly think that if we are to make over the government to the colony we ought to take care there shall be sufficient popular government. We are told that gentlemen have come over here from Australia as delegates, and must not be kept waiting. I entirely repudiate that view. Let us hear these gentlemen, let us give them the amplest opportunity of having their say, but I protest against our being hurried on that account. This is a very serious matter with regard to which we want a great deal of information. The Colonial Office are very anxious to get the Bill passed, but with all respect to the Under Secretary for the Colonies and Lord Knutsford that Office has meddled and muddled greatly in colonial affairs. The Under Secretary talks a great deal about the affection of the colonies to this country, and specially mentioned Queensland. That was a most unfortunate selection to make in connection with the assertion that the colonies are loyal to this country, because if there is one colony more than another which has shown a nasty spirit towards the Mother Country it is Queensland. Queensland had also been engaged in a very objectionable labour traffic, little to be distinguished from slavery. I admit that the colonists of Australia, taken generally, are kith and kin and enterprising men, and are entitled to be heard fairly and respectfully, but at the same time we must have some regard for the interests of the Mother Country. It is all very well to ascertain what the colonies want, but there must be some consideration paid to the wants of the Mother Country. We are bound to look to the interests of the population of

Great Britain and Ireland, and not to yield everything to the colonists. I believe this is not a question of the interests of this country only, but of the colonists as well. We must give some thought to the way in which the land of Australia has been alienated and to the way in which the great territorial aristocracy has been created. I will not, however, move my Amendment, but I think it is most desirable that the matter should be thoroughly threshed out.

(5.57.) MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): There are two great dangers which we should be prepared for in the Bill now before us, and if it were not that the Bill is to be referred to a Select Committee, where we shall have the opportunity of discussing the matter fully and of guarding against those dangers, I certainly should move the Instruction of which I have given notice. The two points to which I wish to call attention are these. There is an enormous amount of open sea, and Western Australia enacts laws and imposes duties which are very much to the prejudice of vessels under the British flag. That is one of the points to which the Committee will have to direct their attention. But the other question is one with which I am, perhaps, more familiar, having had considerable experience in the Dominion of Canada, and it concerns the land. There is the danger that the Legislature, when it becomes a Representative Government, instead of dealing with the land as it is doing at present, namely, giving leases for short periods, which leases can be done away with, will deal with it in such a way that there will be no opportunity afforded of any of it passing into the hands of emigrants. Now, in Canada that is completely met under the Land Laws and there is no such alienation. Leases are granted of grass lands, but they are terminable at any time by the Government. We must, when the Bill comes into Committee, take care there shall be a provision in the Bill under which it will be rendered impossible that there shall be any alienation of these lands during the time when there is this very small population. These points will, I hope, be fully and fairly dealt with in the Select Committee, and if there is anything that escapes the vigilance of the Committee it will be dealt with when it returns to this House. It is not my intention to move the Instruction of which I have given notice.

*(6.0.) MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I am sorry my hon. Friend behind me (Sir G. Campbell) imported so much irrelevant matter into his speech. Why did he give so much time to the opinions and actions of Sir F. Napier Broome? Nor do I think my hon. Friend has much reason to complain in reference to the last Blue Book. All he has to do is to sign his initials to the Pink Paper, and I consider the system is a great boon to Members. Surely our colonial policy by this time is well settled; whether for good or evil, we have made up our minds and come to a conclusion founded on painful experience that as soon as a colony can walk alone we must give it Representative Government. It would be as absurd to withhold it when the colony is ripe for it as to attempt to keep a young man in the leading-strings of his infancy. Whether the colony will make a good use of the concession or not is a different matter; it may or it may not. But I cannot help thinking that colonists on the spot are entitled to say that they know what is good for them much better than the Colonial Office, many thousand miles distant. The question therefore is, Has Western Australia arrived at the particular point when it should have Representative Government? On this matter I would commend to the attention of my hon. Friend the latest Colonial Statistical Abstract, and he will find that in the years from 1874 to 1888 the progress of Western Australia has been something phenomenal. The railways increased from 34 miles in 1874 to 417 in 1888, the lines of telegraphic communication from 762 to 2,966. Trade and revenue progressed in a similar ratio, and last, but not least, looking at the Stock list in the *Times*, I find the colonial securities of Western Australia stand as high as any other Australian colony, and are second only to New South Wales. I would point out, too, that since the question was last under discussion in the House, it has entered on a new phase. I refer, of course, to that great federation movement, and which, from the bottom of my heart, I wish every success. It will open a new era of prosperity for Australasia, from

which the Mother Country will benefit. We cannot forget how, 23 years ago, Canada became a federation, since which time, Canada's prosperity has increased by leaps and bounds. I hope the same thing may hereafter be said of Australia. I mention this because it has an important bearing on this question. It is the movement of federation that has made the question now before us an Australasian instead of a West Australian question, for it is perfectly certain that a federated Australia must attract to itself every inch of Australian territory. This is the meaning of the support Western Australia has received from the other colonies. Under the circumstances, we must make a virtue of necessity, and do what we have to do with a good grace. The land has been referred to, and no one is more anxious than I am to reserve an outlet for our surplus home population. But let me call attention to the small number of emigrants Australia has attracted in the last few years. I have looked at the Returns for 1888 and I find that only 31,725 persons have gone out as emigrants to Australia, as against 293,081 to the United States. So it seems that the United States attracts nine times as many emigrants as the whole of Australia. I am sorry this should be so. I would much rather that our own flesh and blood went to build up and strengthen our own colonies. And how many of these 31,000 went to Western Australia? I asked that question of a gentleman well able to give an opinion—Sir F. Napier Broome—and he says only 200 emigrants went to Australia last year from this country. Only 200 persons! exactly one-fifth of the number of persons by which it is said the population of England and Wales is increased in a single day; and, probably, not more than half the number of those who proceed in a single day from the port of Liverpool to the United States. Under the circumstances I should have thought this matter of land, as regards our own emigrants, became a matter of secondary importance. One other matter there is I should like to mention. It seems to me that when we are giving up everything south of the 26th parallel of latitude, we are giving up everything worth having. Is it then worth while to retain a hold on any part of the country at all? I am told that as to the northern part it is such that no European can work there. The riches and natural resources of the country may be great or not, but they must be developed by Asiatic labour. Is that a burden it is quite wise for us to undertake? Is it wise to saddle ourselves with the settlement of the thorny question of Asiatic labour in view of the advent of great Australasian federation? I should have thought the wiser course would be to at once wash our hands of the whole thing and to hand it over, this *damnosa hæreditas*—northern part—subject to certain conditions, to the control of the Representative Government. I have always found it is better to do spontaneously, and with a good grace, that which ultimately you will be obliged to do. As soon as we get federation we must do it. As to the other matters raised by hon. Gentlemen, they are really such as should be dealt with in Committee.

*(6.10.) SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): There are a few remarks I should like to make to remove a misconception before it proceeds further. The Bill is not as some Members seem to think, a Bill dealing with the alienation of land in Western Australia. It is a Bill for altering the constitution of Western Australia. That I take to be the main and chief principle of the Bill, and in regard to alienation, very much misconception exists in the minds of hon. Members and the public. These lands are, at present, or the great proportion of them, in the hands of the Crown. I believe that of over a million square miles less than 3,000 have been alienated, that is to say have become private property; and in the transfer to be carried out by the Bill there will be perhaps 300,000 square miles likely to become private property. Now, the wish of the hon. Member opposite is not to hurry with the Bill because he wishes first of all to know the value of this land. Let me here remark that Western Australia is essentially a new country of which we know very little. But we do know this, that it is a part of Australia of which, like other parts, we cannot know anything of the agricultural or commercial value until it is occupied. The Reports of explorers and those who travel through the country are to my mind worthless for our purpose. We can only find out from the experience of settlers

what the land is worth. There is a large area in New South Wales, as there is in other colonies, but I refer specially to New South Wales, which was reported upon by explorers a few years since. The first exploring party nearly perished from thirst. The second party were so impeded by floods that they reported the existence of an inland sea. The third exploring party carried boats with them on waggons and brought them back without using them and were astonished to find the country rich in grass lands, and surmised that the previous party had gone in the wrong direction, for the country proved to be most fertile. That may or may not be the case in Western Australia. But what I wish to point out is that even under the present land regulations of Western Australia, which undoubtedly are not oligarchic but democratic, there has been very little progress towards the alienation of land, the reason for this being the paucity of population. Population is not there, and therefore lands have not been alienated. Another point that has been referred to is the division the Bill makes of the present colony of Western Australia into halves. To my mind that division is a most important matter. I could myself have wished to see the division in Clause 7 made substantial and not permissive, because, I think, in granting certain land revenues and rights to a small population in a large area, we ought, as far as possible, to confine the area to that portion of the colony immediately affected or controlled by the residents there, and in the present case I should like to see Western Australia defined, not only by the 26th parallel, but also by the meridian of say 120, and so you would have a small portion of Western Australia, say 250,000 square miles, handed over to a population of 50,000. It is well, I think, to sever this great area, especially the tropical portion from the new Government soon to be set up and for this reason: I confidently believe that Australian federation is a matter for the near future, and I think one of the greatest problems will be how Australia, with the aid of the Mother Country, is to deal with that large area within which white labour is not possible. I do not think that it would be desirable that the large area in the north of Western Australia should be handed over to the residents of Perth; it should be held in trust by the Imperial Government with a view to coming to an arrangement with the other colonies as to what should be the future position and control in that territory. I need not now add anything further, except to say that I hope in Committee the Government will be prepared to consider the two important points raised, according to their promise last Session. I hope they will restrict the area of Responsible Government, or else lay down such regulations as my hon. Friend (Mr. Staveley Hill) suggests, that in some way or other it shall be made clear to the inhabitants of Western Australia that they shall have, from their local knowledge, full control of the lands, provided they do not check immigration of British subjects. I hope in the Select Committee these questions will very speedily be settled, for the general reason that federation is coming, and because when once an Australian colony tries Responsible Government progress is very fast—much faster than before Responsible Government is conferred, and especially in the direction of increased immigration. We know from experience of the history of other colonies that immigration proceeds for the first few years after establishment of Responsible Government on a scale that is not reached afterwards.

(6.20.) MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): Few will object to the principle of local self-government for Western Australia. My hon. Friend behind me (Sir G. Campbell) has referred to the territory of the United States as a precedent, but I think his analogy hardly holds good, because the States are all of them coterminous, and there is not the difficulty of the Supreme Government being administered thousands of miles away across the ocean. But although I think we are justified in giving local self-government to the colony, it may be observed that the population is very much smaller than the figure under which the United States Government has given local self-government to a territory. I believe Dakota had a population of 600,000 or 800,000 before it was formed into a State. On the other hand, as to the argument of the Under Secretary from the fact that we have given self-government to the other Australian colonies, with au-

thority over vast areas, farmed by by a very limited number of settlers—some 20,000 or 30,000—I do not think that is a precedent to follow for handing over half-a-million square miles in Western Australia to 42,000 inhabitants. The question before us to-night is not that of self-government; it is a question of what area shall be handed over to the new self-governing colony, and I think the feeling in the House is that the area proposed to be handed over is far too great for the number of inhabitants there. The whole population of the colony is practically in the south-western division, which has an area of 67,000 square miles; you have there a population of 39,000 out of the whole population of 42,300. That may be held to be too small a division, and you may select a larger division such as was suggested just now, but I hope a very strong protest will be made against the proposal for handing over half, and that the best half, of Western Australia, containing half a million square miles, to this very limited number of citizens. Australian interests are great and entitled to full consideration, no doubt. I do not agree with all that my hon. Friend has said in regard to the Australian colonies, and I think if we try to solve the problem of the attitude Queensland has taken up, we are more likely to find a solution in the policy formerly pursued in regard to New Guinea and the South Pacific Islands than in the reasons my hon. Friend has given. There is no Member on this side of the House, I believe, nor I should think on the other side, who does not wish to see our Australian colonies in that state of prosperity described by the Under Secretary to-night, but, at the same time, we also have our interests there. The whole of the rest of Australia, except Western Australia, has certainly not had the responsibility of discharging the duties of government towards that area of the continent which we have had, and therefore, I think, as regards the future we may be entitled to some consideration as well as the self-governing colonies there. Our interests are not the same as they were in the "fifties," to which the right hon. gentleman referred. There were then immense unoccupied areas all over the world open to emigration, but that position is now very much changed, and one of the few areas left to us is this area of half a million square miles it is proposed to hand over to the new colony. I think there is something in the contention of my hon. Friend that this question might very properly be considered by the Colonisation Committee before it is definitely decided what land policy we should pursue in Western Australia. I think the proposed area is much too large. I object to the best part of this million square miles being handed over in the manner proposed. If there is a case for the Bill in the form in which it stands now, I venture to think it has not been placed before the House by the Under Secretary to-night. Once more I say our unanimous desire is that local self-government shall be extended wherever it is demanded, but not that vast unoccupied areas should be handed over to the self-governing colony. Vast territories have so been treated in the past, and never should have been so handed over. This is what is being done now, under this Bill. An immense amount of country in Western Australia, which may become available for colonisation, is thought to be desert now, but may be made to smile in that fruitful manner described by the Under Secretary. Many an area of which nothing is known now may in the future support an abundant population. In the interest of the vast number of emigrants who annually leave our shores, I protest against the proposed arrangement.

(6.27.) MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's): I think on this side of the House many will feel not only surprised but gratified by what has fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy. The hon. Member, though he did not move his Amendment, expressed himself as against the principle of Home Rule for Australia, divided from us by 14,000 miles of sea, though he is willing to concede the principle to an island lying close to our shores. I was much gratified to hear the statements of my hon. Friend (Sir G. Baden-Powell), and also of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ferguson), in regard to the Land Question. They are jealous of our territorial sovereignty in that country. I quite agree this is a question whether or not we shall grant a Constitution to Western Australia. Upon that I think we are

all agreed. The question to solve has reference to these unoccupied lands. It is entirely a question of how much land we shall give to a population of 42,000, some of whom, I believe, are descended from the convicts formerly sent to the country. That, I believe, is a fact, and with facts we have to deal. I listened with considerable attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies on introducing the Bill, and with all he did say I find myself in agreement. But, at the same time, he omitted a most important subject, saying hardly anything about this Land Question. We may be told that the Land Question can be considered in Committee. I protest against that suggestion, because I venture to think that the question of the land goes to the very root of the principle of this Bill. I do not want to detain the House for any length of time, but I wish to draw special attention to this point. We are asked to assent to the general principle of the Bill. I am in favour of the principle of granting Home Rule and self-government to Western Australia; but I want a little more information as to the reason why the land is to be divided in the manner in which it is proposed in this Bill. I should like to know whether it is not possible, while granting a Constitution to Western Australia, to retain a larger portion of that enormous area of 1,060,000 square miles under our own control? We find that that enormous area is practically divided into equal parts, the Northern of which is to be retained under the control of the Imperial Government, while the Southern is to go in its entirety to the Government of Western Australia. I happened to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies privately what the reason was for making this division, and he told me that there was no reason beyond the fact that it was proposed by Western Australia itself. I am not surprised at all to hear that Western Australia proposes the division, for the simple reason that they are taking all that is worth having, and they are giving away all that is not worth having. If hon. Members look at the map they will see that almost the whole of the land to be retained by the Imperial Parliament—or, at any rate, 19-20ths of the area—is marked as sandy desert in a tropical clime. Of course, there is a certain amount of sea-board, but it will be of no practical use to this country, and on the area we propose to retain it would be almost impossible for us to settle colonists. Now, is it not possible to get a better division of the land than this? I am rather inclined to agree with what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said when he suggested that if we could not get anything better than this, it would be as well to allow Western Australia to take control of the whole of the area. Why should we be troubled with a sandy desert and with a lot of responsibility when we can hope to gain no benefit whatever from the land itself? But at present I do not want to go so far as to urge that. I prefer, instead, to press for an explanation of the reasons for this particular division. We must remember that the population of the colony is only 42,000, whereas the colony of Victoria has only an area of 88,000 square miles, and yet it is one of the most progressive colonies in Australia. Why cannot the small population of Western Australia be satisfied with a smaller area of land? They can have a Constitution in the fullest degree, but why should they have reserved to them such enormous tracts of land? That is what I want to know. We all know that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are fond of making free with the land of this country, and I am therefore glad to find that there are some among them who are jealous about the territorial rights of our colonies. We have in this country, as everybody knows, a population of over 37,000,000. We are sending out a constant stream of emigrants to our colonies, and surely it will be to our advantage to retain under the control of the Imperial Parliament tracts of land for colonisation purposes. Is it absolutely necessary, in order to satisfy the demands of Australia, that we should hand over to them the whole of this land? Could not some better division be made? Could not the dividing line be drawn from north to south instead of from east to west? Let us, at any rate, retain a portion of the land which is worth having, and of which we could make some use. These are the questions which I have risen in order to ask. I may add that I am inclined to agree with

the suggestion which has been made that this Bill should be submitted to the Colonisation Committee, who could go into the Land Question, and would possibly be able to elicit some very valuable information.

*(6.36.) MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea): The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy in his speech found great fault with Sir Napier Broome because he so warmly advocated the passing of this Bill, and I suppose that if Sir Napier had taken up an entirely different line my hon. Friend would have praised him. But I agree with Sir Napier, and I am strongly in favour of the Bill for reasons which I will shortly give. It may not be in the knowledge of many hon. Members that Sir Napier Broome will not be Governor when the colony, under this Bill, gets a representative form of Government. Sir William Robinson has already been appointed his successor, and among the many who have held responsible positions in connection with our colonies I think no better man could have been found than Sir William. He is exceedingly popular, and, no doubt, will be still more popular when Western Australia obtains local government. And now I come to the Land Question. I am satisfied from my knowledge of the colonies, of which I have made a study, that the land would be better managed by the Western Australians than by the Colonial Office in this country. It is impossible for us in this country to deal with subjects in places so remote, and it is not the fault of the Colonial Office. The truth is, we have not the means of obtaining the requisite knowledge. And yet my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy proposes that a large proportion of the land in Western Australia shall remain in the hands of the Colonial Office, although he admits the impossibility of the Colonial Office properly dealing with these subjects. I never heard anything more illogical than the argument he used. I have seen with great regret that so very few emigrants have gone to Australia from this country of late years, but I think the reasons are quite clear. The older colonies are unfavourable to assisted emigration, but I hope that Western Australia will favour it. If so, I believe that a considerable number of people will go out from this country. I have expressed a wish to sit on the Committee dealing with this Bill, and if I am on it I shall ask the Representatives of the colony whether they will not agree that a certain portion of the revenue derived from the sale or rent of the land shall not be devoted to assisting emigration from the United Kingdom. I know there is a strong objection in Australia to immigrants from China and India. I sympathise with it; and I hope to see Western Australia occupied almost entirely by people of English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh blood. Lord Norton, who once held the office of Under Secretary for the Colonies, wrote with reference to this matter of the disposal of these lands—

> "It is worth while to note that the disposal of colonial lands through a central Government has always been more wasteful and the grants far more detrimental to central, as well as local interests, than disposals made on the spot."

I agree with that, and believe that the best the Colonial Office could do would be worse than the worst the Western Australians would do for themselves. And now, as to the Franchise Question. Many on the Opposition side of the House may think that the £10 franchise proposed for Western Australia is too narrow, but such a franchise will include every house in the colony, and it practically means universal suffrage. I hope that perhaps the day is not far distant when Western Australia will follow the example of the other Australian Colonies and adopt manhood suffrage. And now with regard to the northern territory. Some years ago the northern territory of South Australia was surrendered by the Crown to the colony, and it has proved rather a tax to the latter. Why, then, should the Government be so anxious now to retain the northern and tropical portion of Western Australia? I think we shall make a great mistake if we do not give the whole of the territory of Western Australia to the colony. Every one of the Australian Colonies is strongly in favour of the Bill before the House, and that is a fact of very great weight in itself. I look forward to the day when all the Australian Colonies will be federated, and that is why I think that Western Australia should have, as nearly as possible, the same form of government as the other colonies. I am very glad

that this discussion has taken place, but I think these matters could be better dealt with in Committee.

(6.43.) MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I am glad that this discussion has been of so very satisfactory a nature, and that it has not in any way been coloured by Party politics. I think that the hon. Member who has just sat down stated a true fact when he said that, when dealing with Western Australia, we are practically dealing with the whole of Australia, because on this question there is a common and almost unanimous feeling among all the Australian Colonies. They have thrown in their lot with Western Australia, and are anxious to assist that colony in obtaining the advantages of self-government which are asked for in this Bill. I think that if we give Western Australia Responsible Government we should do it with no niggard hand. What have we done for Western Australia, in the matter of colonisation for the last quarter of a century. Only about 200 colonists go out there from this country every year. How can we say, then, that by our methods of dealing with Western Australia we are opening it for the reception of emigrants from this country? Although it is not closed for colonisation, we, as a Government, are not doing anything towards getting it occupied; and, I should like to know, are we likely to do more if we have the northern tropical parts of the land left in our hands? It appears to me well worthy the consideration of the Government whether it would not be better to hand over the whole of the land to our kinsmen in Western Australia to deal with as they choose. I hope, Sir, we shall give autonomy to Western Australia without putting any clauses in the Bill that will limit the freedom which they desire. I think we may be quite sure that our Australian kinsmen are not likely to act in any hostile way towards England or towards the Empire. We may trust them perfectly well to continue the work of colonisation, for they are much more capable of dealing with it, living as they do on the spot, than we are who live far away.

*(6.47.) MR. W. A. MCARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell): I am extremely anxious that this Bill should go to a Select Committee at the earliest possible moment, and that it should be passed into law. I desire to say a word or two, however, not because I think there is much more to be said on the general question, but because I think it is time that somebody connected with Australia should raise a protest against the extraordinary speech delivered by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy. I think it will be news to a great many of our Australian fellow-subjects to find that there is at this time of day a Member of this House prepared to taunt the Australian colonists with disloyalty, and prepared to insinuate that the only object of the land legislation in the new colonies of Australia is to put money into the hands of big squatters.

*SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I did not say that that was the only object.

*MR. W. A. MCARTHUR: The hon. Gentleman ascribed motives of the most sordid kind to every possible movement of these colonies in the direction of self-government. He poses here as the representative of omniscience. I do not deny that he has had great experience, but I do deny that he has had Australian experience. If I were to attempt to reply to the speech he has delivered to-night, it would probably take me until 11 o'clock, because there was a mistake in almost every sentence. I will give but one example. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy said he doubted whether Queensland could not have taken some better way of showing their loyalty than they had done in relation to the questions which had recently arisen. He said he could not understand their petty spirit, and he further stated that Queensland was engaged in a most unfortunate traffic.

*SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I said "had been" engaged.

*MR. W. A. MCARTHUR: I am within the recollection of the House. The hon. Member implied that the Local Government had not put the scandalous labour traffic down. It seems to me that Queensland has some cause for dissatisfaction against this country in regard to the action taken respecting the New Hebrides and New Guinea. But let that pass. May I point out that the hon. Member did not state that the labour traffic in Queensland has been absolutely stopped by an Act of

Parliament which comes into force this year or next?

*SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I said Queensland had been engaged in a very nefarious labour traffic. I did not say it was so engaged at this moment.

*MR. W. A. McARTHUR: The hon. Member carefully refrained from informing the House that the Local Legislature had long ago seen the evils of the traffic and taken steps to put an end to it. At this moment the traffic is virtually stopped. I wish now to say a few words on the Land Question. Sitting as I do on this side of the House I naturally hold very strong views as regards aggregation of large masses of land in the hands of single individuals; and if I thought it was likely, or that it was in the interests of the Western Australian people themselves to retain large tracts of land in the hands of private persons, and to prevent emigration, I should be among the first to oppose this Bill. But I would put this question to hon. Members as men of business: What is the good of the land unless people occupy it? The land alone would be worthless to a native of Western Australia. He could not cultivate it; he could not raise flocks of sheep and herds of cattle upon it unless he had people to assist him, and therefore the land would be absolutely valueless; and it is only by colonising it that the people of Western Australia can hope to make it valuable. But there is a far wider question than that. Who is it that has made the land of Western Australia valuable? Has it been hon. Gentlemen like the Member for Kirkcaldy? Has it been Members who sit in this House and never trouble themselves about the colonies until legislation of this kind is proposed? No, Sir; it was made valuable by people who ran great risks and underwent great hardships; who toiled and worked to make the land what it is, and who have made the colony a possession of which we may well be proud. The hon. Member says we ought to wait until Western Australia has been thoroughly explored. What sort of assistance have we given in the past in the work of exploration? How many Englishmen have gone out to carry it on? The exploration has been done solely by Australian settlers—by people sent out by the Western Australians themselves—without the assistance of any Englishmen and without the assistance of any Member of this House. Somebody has said in the course of this debate that the northern territory ought to be separated from the southern portion of Western Australia, because it is land situated in the tropics, and, consequently, not fit for English people to work upon. But supposing that the Western Australian Legislature passed a law excluding the Chinese or labour from the Pacific Islands from the southern part of the territory, does any one suppose that the country would force the importation of that labour, or even allow it into the northern part of the territory? I do not believe that it would be allowed, and therefore I say that the argument that if we separate the colony into two parts there will be the possibility of coloured labour being employed in the north, is an argument which will not hold water. I am in favour of handing over the whole territory to Western Australia. The Australian people themselves are in favour of it. Indeed, the Australians ask for it, and I ask is it possible to withstand a demand of that nature? The growth of the Australian Colonies has reached such a pitch that it is practically impossible for this country not to concede a demand made by United Australia. I do not believe that any Government in existence could seriously contemplate for one moment the possibility of doing so if they desired to maintain intact our Australian connection. These colonies are loyal colonies, and have now acquired such a position that you can no longer afford to treat them as children, and you will be running great risks if you strain their loyalty by yielding to the advice of Scotch gentlemen who have studied this question in the armchairs of their libraries instead of accepting the counsel of practical people who live on the spot and know exactly what they want and what best they can do with their own country when they once get the form of government they require.

*(7.1.) SIR J. C. COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow): As this Bill is to go before a Select Committee, I will not trouble the House with any lengthened observations upon it. Still, I would say the importance of this question must be obvious when it is remembered that the Bill proposes to

hand over a territory equal in area to the whole of our Indian Empire, and, indeed, as great in extent as half the aggregate territory comprised in the 38 States of America. This enormous area it is intended to hand over to a population smaller than that of an average London parish. I quite admit, and cordially re-echo, what has fallen from the hon. Member who just sat down, namely, that we must recognise what has been the result to the colonies of our policy in the past in making over large tracts of land to a small number of individuals without reservation, a policy which I am afraid it is too late now to reverse. I also agree with the hon. Gentleman in thinking that the reservation of the sub-tropical portion of West Australia would be practically a useless, if not also a dangerous, reservation. I fully share the opinion expressed by other speakers that we are very near the time when we shall have a federated Australia. Let me draw the attention of the House to this consideration, namely, that if this reservation is made as provided for in the Bill, and we afterwards get a federated Australia, we shall have a large portion of the north-west corner of the continent left out of the federation, and administered by the United Kingdom. That is a position which, I think, would be practically untenable, as it would become a source of irritation and trouble. I also think that, looking at the rapid growth of the population of India and the difficulty of providing for any overflow from that country, we may have serious trouble there, and that it would be only right and prudent to provide some tropical territory to which we might shift the surplus population of the Indian Empire, and so give relief to the overcrowded centres of that country. But we shall certainly get into difficulty if, with a Federated Australia, we attempt to utilise for such a purpose the northern and reserved territory of Western Australia. There is one point which I do not think has been touched upon in this debate, and it is mainly upon that subject that I venture to trouble the House. There are some 3,000 miles of coast line in the colony we are now dealing with, and we have not reserved a single portion of it in the temperate zone for the use of our vessels for the protection of the commerce of India and that part of the world. I think we are bound to look ahead in this matter. It so happens that in the south-west corner of that colony we have one of the most important strategic possessions that could be used as a base for the operations of our fleet in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific. That point is King George's Sound. There has for years been correspondence between the Mother Country and the Australian Colonies with regard to the establishment of the necessary naval base at King George's Sound, but no agreement has as yet been arrived at. One of the difficulties is the want of money and how the necessary means may be found. This being so, instead of reserving the northern territory, we ought to take steps for making some Imperial reservation with regard to the Port of Albany and the district of King George's Sound, so as to provide the necessary revenue for maintaining in the future the naval power required in the interests of our commerce. This, to my mind, is a very material point, and I think it is rendered all the weightier by this consideration, namely, the growth of the commercial interchange between India and Australia, and New Zealand, and Tasmania, which has been excessively rapid. In all probability, we shall find, even in the near future, that that trade will have attained proportions of great magnitude. The coast line we are going to part with flanks our sea roads of communication in that part of the world, and I apprehend that it is hardly right for the Ministers of the Crown to propose to make over the heritage that should be held, not only for the use of the millions of our people who may desire to emigrate there in the future, but, generally, for the naval interests of the State. I attach great importance to the fact that under the provisions of this Bill it is proposed to put beyond the power of recall any facilities to provide for our having a port to which we may have secure access for all future time.

*(7.8.) MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvon, Arfon Division): I desire to call attention to a point which, I am sure, all who have an interest in emigration and are watching its progress will regard as one of great importance, and one as to which it is necessary that any legislation upon the subject should be carefully safeguarded. It is evident to those who have watched what has been going on in

America that there is a growing disposition to interfere with the freedom of emigration even from the Mother Country, and even though at present in South Australia we have no fear of any such action, because it is largely in the interest of Australia to encourage emigration rather than to discourage it; nevertheless, we have to look ahead and prepare ourselves for the difficulty we are almost sure to be placed in some 20 or 30 years' hence in dealing with the increased population of this country. We have learned a good deal from what is going on in America. In that country those who have to deal with questions of this sort, being afraid that the excitement of local feeling might lead to imprudent hasty action, have taken the precaution to provide by a clause in their State Constitutions which enables them to meet the difficulty. There are means of altering any such clause; but in order to do so a considerable time and a very large majority is necessary. What I would offer as a practical suggestion to the Government is, that in Clause 8 of this Bill, which deals with the Emigration Question, instead of putting it in a way that seems almost to encourage the South Australians, as soon as their temporary interests have been served, to deal with this matter in a manner that might be unsatisfactory to ourselves, it ought to be laid down as a part of the Constitution of Western Australia that there should be no interference with the emigration of the surplus population of those kingdoms either now or at any future time. Of course, if they want afterwards to check the inflow of the Chinese or any undesirable immigrants there should be no difficulty in their getting a measure passed through this House to alter their Constitution in that respect; but I think it only just to the people of this country, who bear so large a share of the burden of taxation for the maintenance of the Navy necessary to protect the Australian and other colonies, that we should reserve to our own people their rights of colonisation and carefully guard against that selfishness of labour which seeks to set up a monopoly of its own, for there is undoubtedly a selfishness of democracy as well as of aristocracy, although I do not say that the selfishness of the one is quite the same or as great as the selfishness of the other. In America, however, we have seen that selfishness in action, and I do trust that care will be taken to make it a part of the Constitution of Western Australia that they shall not be able in the future to debar their fellow countrymen from emigration to their shores.

*(7.14.) MR. S. GEDGE (Stockport): I think abundant reason has been shown why we should be either very slow to pass this Bill, or else take care that it comes from the Select Committee in a greatly improved form. None of us would object to give Responsible Government to any colony that can demonstrate its ability to run alone. The question is, when is a colony able to run alone? A few people may establish a colony in some small island and be entitled to a Responsible Government; but that case is different from one in which we are asked to give Responsible Government to a small population whose territory includes upwards of a million of square miles. We are told that, apart from the intrinsic merits of the case, we ought to comply at once with the request for a Constitution on the part of the colony of Western Australia, and it is urged as a reason why we should accede to that request that all the Australian Colonies have united in asking the British Parliament to grant the form of Constitution proposed in this Bill. I find in the Colony of Tasmania the House of Assembly ask that

"Her Majesty will be pleased speedily to extend to Western Australia that full measure or Responsible Government under a Constitution similar to that of Your Majesty's other Australian Colonies."

Then it goes on—

"And that Your Majesty will be pleased to direct that any territory which in Your Majesty's wisdom it may be deemed expedient to exclude from the new Constitution may be reserved for settlement under a similar form of government for the use of the British people, thus advancing the cause of Australian federation and unity, and adding Western Australia to the group of loyal and autonomous Australian Colonies."

The Houses of Assembly of other colonies have sent Addresses couched in similar terms. I agree that by all means we should give a Constitution to the 40,000 people in the south-west corner of Western Australia. By all means let them have a Constitution over the lands that they have made valuable, besides, if you like, land in the neighbourhood, but I see no

reason why, because these 40,000 people have cultivated 170 square miles and so made them valuable, out of 1,000,000 square miles, we should give them a Constitution by which they would have entire control over those 1,000 000 square miles. That is a very different thing to what is proposed by the other colonies; and, if the Bill goes to a Select Committee, I think they ought to confine the new Constitution to a moderate portion of the territory, say even 20,000 square miles out of the 1,000,000. To give 40,000 men dominion over 1,000,000 of square miles, with its enormous seaboard, would be to take away our heritage. I represent a constituency containing a very much larger population than that of Western Australia—a large proportion being working men. There is a strong feeling among them about this gradual giving away of our inheritance in the land which belongs to Great Britain, and giving to a few, who happen to be the pioneers, an advantage which is very unfair to the working men of this country who look to the future, when the teeming millions of England will turn to the colonies for places of settlement. They regard as selfish the policy of those colonists who wish to keep to themselves these large tracts of land and the labour and wages to be obtained in the colonies. It seems to me that we shall not be standing in the way of Australian federation if we limit the Constitution of Western Australia to a small portion of the territory in question, as we shall be doing the very thing which the other colonies recommend.

(7.20.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S): Mr. Speaker, I think that the debate which has taken place has been very interesting, and has amply justified the sensible course, at the end of last Session, of those who urged that the Bill should not be passed immediately, and also that of the Government in proposing to refer it to a Select Committee. There are differences in the point of view taken on this Bill, some hon. Members dealing with it from practical knowledge of Australia and sympathy with colonial feeling, while others have treated it on considerations of general policy. I think the general views which have been expressed may be reconciled with the experience of those who are practically acquainted with the development of the Australian Colonies. Interesting data have been furnished us by my hon. Friend the Member for St. Austell. My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy, and those who followed him on the land question, have confined themselves to pointing out the difficulties which may arise in giving control over this large area to this extremely small population. We must all feel impressed by the somewhat thoughtless way in which, in some other colonies, public land has been wastefully dealt with. I contend that the excitement experienced in some of the Western States of America, arising from the way in which land grants were made, and land titles taken up, particularly in California, shows what difficulties may spring from a faulty and wasteful use of land in the beginning of a colony. It also seems to me that my hon. Friend in dealing with this land question omitted to consider another side of the subject, namely, who manages the land now, and have we any better security for its wise management under a Colonial Parliament? Hon. Members of colonial experience say that our present system does not really offer any greater security for the development of the country, or for the distribution of it amongst poor working proprietors, than would be afforded under a Colonial Legislature. The moral, therefore, seems to be that we want all these matters gone into fully and thoroughly by a Select Committee before another step is taken. I should like to suggest to the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who will to some extent be charged with the preparation of the evidence on the part of the Government or the scheme to be laid before the Committee, that he might direct the evidence, first, to the question whether the colony is ready for representative self-government; secondly, what the methods and limitations for for that self-government should be; thirdly, what rules and regulations should be laid down with regard to the distribution of land and for the control of emigration, bearing in mind particularly the valuable suggestion thrown out by the hon. Member for Carnarvon; and, finally, the question which was referred to by the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley—the possible

provision for controlling and maintaining for Imperial purposes any harbour or strip of land on the coast. I do not mean to say that this last is a question which at first sight seems to have much possibility of being practically dealt with; at the same time, naval defence is a matter of great and growing importance, and would deserve to be brought before the Committee. I should like, in passing, to refer to a serious dereliction of duty on the part of the Government in the appointment they made to a very responsible and important post, that of Attorney General for Western Australia. They appointed a former Member of this House, of whom I will say no more than this, that I do not think anyone who knew him in this House would say that he was the proper person for so very delicate a position. I will not say more than that; but everyone who sat in the Parliament of 1880 can appreciate the grounds for the remark. It ought to be borne in mind that the difficulties which occur in the colonies very often arise from the unwise selection of the authorities sent out to them. There is another question, which does not exactly arise on the Bill, but may arise at no distant date, to which the attention of the Committee might be usefully directed. Supposing it is decided not to deliver over to the Colony the whole of the territory hitherto called Western Australia, on the ground that the Colony is too small, and that it is not a good service to render the Colony to give it heavy powers, duties, and responsibilities before it is ripe for them—as has been shown in America in respect of the State of Nevada, whose admission to Statehood everyone now recognises as a mistake—what will we do with that remaining territory. Very likely we may have a Federal Government for the whole of the Australian Colonies, as in the United States of America. With the probable advent of that Government, it seems to be deserving of careful consideration whether the management of these remaining territories could not be better undertaken by a responsible Federal Government for the whole of Australia or Australasia than by the Local Government of the Colony.

*(7.29.) MR. A. MCARTHUR (Leicester): I do not desire to prolong the debate, and will only make a few observations. The waste land in the Australian Colonies (which would otherwise be utterly useless) is let to squatters at a nominal rent, sometimes as low as a half-penny or a penny per acre. But there is a condition that a certain amount of stock must be put upon it by the person who occupies it within a certain period, or his lease is forfeited. This accounts for the enormous tracts of land occupied by squatters, referred to by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, and it is surely better to have it thus occupied, than to have it lying waste. My hon. Friend has also referred to the small number of persons emigrating to the Colonies. The distance of the Australian Colonies makes emigration to them very expensive, compared with emigration to Canada or the United States, where emigrants go in large numbers. One of the principal reasons I had for rising was to deal with the question of emigration. All the Australian colonies that I know are in favour of emigration, or "immigration," as they call it. They believe additional population is wanted, and this applies in particular to New South Wales, where I resided for many years and was a member of the Assembly. I invariably found the Governments of these colonies in favour of emigration. At the same time, it is perfectly true that the labouring population of these colonies have an idea—a very foolish and erroneous one—that if an increasing number of emigrants come into the country the effect would be to lessen their wages. Therefore they oppose emigration with all their might, and these frequently succeed in exercising a powerful influence upon the Government. Formerly grants were made, sometimes as much as £50,000 a year, by these colonies towards the assistance of emigration; but owing to the pressure brought to bear upon them by the working classes that system has almost ceased. At any rate, it only exists to a limited extent. I would only express a hope that some provision may be embodied in this Bill requiring a sum of money to be given in aid of emigration to Western Australia. I do not think the matter should be left as a recommendation to the Government; but I think that we should require a certain sum to be set aside for that purpose. The matter should not be left dependent

on the vote of the Colonial Assembly. Finally, I would only say that I think the measure before the House will tend to the rapid development of Western Australia. I do not think we can expect the colony to develope unless we give it Responsible Government; but by conferring that boon upon it I have no doubt that it will largely increase both in population and trade.

*(7.35.) MR. E. B. HOARE (Hampstead): I think that a great many of the fears expressed by hon. Members on both sides of the House are founded on a misapprehension. Hon. Members seem to think that it would be to the advantage of the labouring population of this country that large tracts of land should remain in the hands of the Government, with a view to the settlement of bodies of emigrants. Now, I believe it to be a fact that there is hardly a single successful working man emigrant in the colonies who went there and settled upon the land. Every man who goes to the colonies and succeeds is a man who goes there and works for wages, who accumulates capital and buys land. If you took a mechanic or an agricultural labourer from this country and put him on a piece of unbroken colonial land he would starve before he made a profit; and the only chance for the successful occupation and cultivation of land in these new countries is to put the land in the first instance into the hands of capitalists, who can hire labour for the purpose of cultivating it. From that point of view I think there is no ground for the fears which have been expressed with regard to the alienation of land in Western Australia by putting it into the hands of large squatters. It is to the interest of the squatters to provide labour, and they are able to do it, and to make a profit under the existing conditions of the country; whereas small cultivators would be unable to succeed without handy markets.

(7.35.) MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, West): I do not rise for the purpose of adding anything to the very interesting debate that has taken place on the principles that are at issue in this Bill. I take it for granted that the Committee to be appointed will give most careful attention to such important questions as the amount of land to be reserved and the conditions to be imposed upon the new constitution. I desire to say just one word in reference to the importance of the matter of emigration. I agree entirely with the hon. Member behind me as to the importance of the question to the people of the United Kingdom. Certainly, it would be most desirable to impose some such conditions as have been suggested, if it could be done with the goodwill of the Australian Colonies, but it must be remembered that we are not dealing with the 40,000 inhabitants of Western Australia alone, but with the whole population of Australasia. Unless we can persuade them that these limitations are reasonable, I think it would be better not to push them at all. It must be remembered that in giving the colonies self-government we have given them practically independence in all that concerns their own affairs. The point to which I wish to refer is indirectly connected with this question, and I expected it would have been referred to by some other Member. I should like to draw the attention of the Under Secretary to the matter, in order that he may give an explanation. I refer to some extraordinary legislation which appears recently to have been passed by Western Australia, which I think concerns the material interests of British subjects. It appears that on the Coast of Western Australia there is a valuable pearl fishery. The Government of Western Australia very rightly thought fit to tax this industry, which they did by imposing an export duty on the pearl shells collected, and also an import duty upon the provisions brought in for the fishermen. Such a course was perfectly within their right. But then it was discovered that the pearl fishers imported their provisions from a distance in vessels which did not come within the territorial limits of Western Australia. The Authorities went for a Bill to impose these same duties upon vessels which kept altogether without the territorial waters of Western Australia. The Colonial Office refused to sanction the Bill, and the Western Australian Legislature went to the Federal Council, and the Federal Council of Australasia passed an Act which gave them this authority. I must say I think that that was a very high-handed proceeding. But, what is more extraord

nary, they say that these duties are only to be imposed on British vessels. Here we have a British Crown Colony actually imposing duties, and, I think, illegal duties, upon British vessels whilst foreign vessels are allowed to go entirely free. I do not pretend that the imposition of legislation of this kind will be a justification for refusing legislation to Western Australia, but I think it is a matter the Committee should inquire into, and we may ask the representatives of Western Australia to give a security that they will not pass legislation of this character, and particularly against British subjects.

*(7.40.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I should not have interposed, especially as the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) has stated the views of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, with his usual precision, and more than his usual felicity, had I not received some statements of importance from correspondents in Western Australia, which prompts me to draw the attention of the House to one or two points connected with this Bill. In the first place, my correspondent calls attention to the property qualification of the Council and the Legislative Assembly. The hon. Member for Battersea (Mr. O. V. Morgan) seemed to think that the qualification embodied in the schedule practically amounts to universal suffrage or household suffrage in Western Australia. If that is the case I should like to know why these provisions have found a place in the Bill. It must be to all hon. Members who are acquainted with the Australian Colonies, a familiar fact that the other colonies have no property qualification for the Members of the Lower Assembly or for the electors to that Assembly. This is one of the main points to which I have been requested to draw attention. I will read a few words from the letter of my correspondent, who is a gentleman of some position in Western Australia, on the whole character of the Bill. He writes—

"Hitherto the Legislative Council of the Colony has been decidedly Conservative. It has consisted of 26 Members, of whom nine have been nominated by the Crown, or Governor, and the remaining 17 have been elected. The electors have been, roughly speaking, £10 householders, and a qualification has been required from the elected Members:—the possession of land of the value of £1,000, or of the yearly value of £50."

And then I would draw the attention of the House to what follows:—

"There has been great difficulty in this poor community, where everyone almost works for his living, in getting 17 men who have the property and are willing to give up two or three months a year to the work. Again, in this semi-Crown Colony, the people have hitherto taken but faint interest in political questions—they have been disgusted with the recent bad management, and generally desire Responsible Government; but they have left the Council to arrange the terms of the Bill. The Bill is narrow to the last degree in several particulars. First, as to two Houses—Lord Knutsford, knowing the impossibility of getting more than a very few decently fit men to take part in legislation and government, at first proposed a single Chamber. Seeing that we have had a single Chamber with three different sorts of Members ever since 1870, when the present Constitution began one would have thought this was reasonable. But the Tories in the Colony took alarm and worked against it, and Lord Knutsford withdrew the plan. The Bill proposes two Chambers—the Council, with 15 Members; the Assembly, with 30 Members. They cannot get 45 men, with the qualification, who will be content to give up one-third of the year to do this duty. Thus the property qualification, which is to be for both Houses, is altogether absurd here. In the first place, it will be evaded in many cases; but the great objection is that it will prevent a number of honest men who may be in all other respects suitable, from giving their services to the public. Moreover, it is provided that this property must have been possessed for 12 months before the election. The intention of this clause is to keep the management of affairs in the hands of the clique who now rule the roost. Again, in no other colony of Australia is there any property qualification for the Lower House. It will be a different Constitution from the other self-governing colonies of Australia, and this at a time when Federation is being insisted upon. It is said all matters such as this can afterwards be amended. Possibly; but they will not be if the present Members have their way."

I am sorry to trouble the House with such a long quotation, but the extract is of importance, coming as it does from the former Attorney General of Western Australia, the predecessor of Mr. Warton. I think it deserves the careful attention of the Members of the Select Committee, to whom this Bill is to be referred. I must say that I think this debate has been amply justified by the many suggestions which have been made, of which none are more important than those which fell from the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool, who presented to us the views of one of the best

authorities on colonial matters, namely, Sir Charles Dilke, in his *Problems of Great Britain*. I venture to think that we should give this colony as democratic a Constitution as possible, so as to enable the poorer inhabitants to take their part in the Government and in the settlement of any questions concerning the disposal of the land. The debate has been marked on all sides by hearty sympathy with colonial self-government. I will not detain the House by any further remarks. I considered it my duty to lay these considerations with regard to the property qualification before the House, and, through the House, before the country, before the Select Committee deals with this important measure, affecting, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has pointed out, not merely the 40,000 people in Western Australia, but the whole of the rapidly increasing population of Australasia.

*(7.53.) Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I view this Bill with very considerable repugnance, but I fully admit the difficulty in which the Government are placed. As the Australian colonies have united in advocating the claims of Western Australia, the Government could not do otherwise than bring forward the measure. I think, however, that the opinion put forward on behalf of Australia in connection with this matter is not the *bonâ fide* opinion of the 4,000,000 of people in that country. I have read many of the Australian newspapers, and I submit that these newspapers to a large extent reflect the opinions of the squatters and richer classes, and entirely hide from the people the fact that the real objection of the Imperial Parliament is not on the score of the granting of self-government to the colonists, but to the million square miles of territory in Western Australia not being utilised for the benefit of the British race. In opposition to the newspaper opinions I refer to I have received a letter from one of the oldest settlers in New South Wales, whose view I believe represents those of a large portion of the people of Australia. He writes—

"To grant Western Australia Responsible Government means government by squatters, syndicates, and colonial banks, instead of Responsible Government, promoting population and the occupation of the soil, as in America."

The evil resulting from such a system as is here described has been exemplified in the case of New South Wales, where, 35 years ago, men who obtained seats in the Legislature for the purposes of self-aggrandisement managed to get 190 millions out of a total of 200 million of acres of the land of the colony into their own hands, leaving only about 10 millions of acres to be occupied by people coming from the Mother Country. Almost the whole of that extensive territory is laid out in extensive grazing farms, from which the owners derive, in some instances, as much as £100,000 a year, while every effort is made to keep out cultivating settlers from this country. America and Canada have dealt with their land upon a totally different principle, the latter colony forbidding any settler to hold permanently more than 160 acres of land. If the same policy had been adopted with the Australian Colonies their population would have been double what it is to-day. Surely it is reasonable, before we grant self-government to the last Crown Colony in Australia, that we should ask for conditions to be laid down similar to those laid down in Canada, namely, that no land shall be permanently alienated that is suitable for cultivation, except to *bonâ fide* cultivators who are willing to settle upon the land and cultivate it. We do not grudge Responsible Government to Western Australia. What we grudge is that a handful of irresponsible people should be allowed to gamble on the land, and establish on it an enormous squatting plutocracy, which, in future years, will create enormous difficulties in regard to the development of our colonies. If there is no other way of dealing with the land except handing it over entirely, I would much rather adopt the suggestion to hand it over to the entire Australian people, if they are willing to manage it as the trustees both of Australia and of England.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee."

(8.1.) Mr. MOLLOY (King's County, Birr): I should like to make a suggestion to the First Lord of the Treasury,

and it is this: There are many Members of the House who have a practical knowledge of Australia, and it is desirable that we should pick out as many of these as we possibly can to sit on the Committee. This is necessary, because the speech which we have just listened to is typical of the kind of knowledge that will be brought to bear on the Committee. The hon. Member speaks of small farms in Australia. The hon. Member's correspondent seems to have concealed the fact that in many parts of Australia it takes five acres to feed one sheep; therefore, when anyone can talk of small farms, it is easy to see how necessary it is to bring to bear on the Committee the practical knowledge of men who have spent considerable time in Australia.

*(8.2.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that it will be the desire of the Government to form a Committee which shall be well informed upon all the subjects referred to it. So far as we are concerned, the Committee shall be constituted of thoroughly practical men.

Question put, and agreed to.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL.—(No. 113.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*(8.5.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): For some time past there has been, I think, a general feeling in the country, and especially among the commercial community, that abuses have arisen under the operation of the Companies Acts for which it is extremely desirable that Parliament should find a remedy without doing anything to restrict the principle of freedom of association for the conduct of industrial and commercial enterprise. I hoped at one time to place before the House a measure not only amending the Companies Acts on all those matters in which they are admittedly defective, but also effecting a consolidation of the law. But the more I reflected on the matter the more I felt that, having regard to the difficulty and complexity of the subject and to the number of other matters with which the House has to deal, any attempt to pass a comprehensive measure of that kind could not be successful. I feel sure that to attempt a large and general measure of that character would be to prevent, or at any rate retard, any real reform of the law. For this reason I have been content to prepare the limited measure which I now ask should be read a second time. It deals with a part of the law which is admitted to be defective, and which the commercial community, at all events, is most anxious to see improved. I hope that hon. Members who take an interest in the subject and may desire other changes, such, for instance, as an improvement of the law relating to the formation of companies and a consolidation of the law itself, will not allow their views to prejudice their consideration of the measure I now bring before the House. I shall continue, on the part of the Government, to bear these subjects in mind, and endeavour to deal with them also at as early a date as possible. I would ask that this measure should be simply considered on its merits, believing, as I do, that should Parliament pass it, it will promote and not impede a further amendment of the law. I cannot more shortly state the objects of the Bill than by reading the statement in the Memorandum which has been circulated with the Bill:—

> "To extend the policy of the Companies Act, 1867, by giving jurisdiction in the winding up of companies to County Courts and other local Courts, and to assimilate, as far as circumstances will admit, the law and procedure in the winding up of insolvent companies to the law and procedure in the bankruptcy of individual debtors, particularly by applying the principle embodied in the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, of separating, so far as practicable, administrative from judicial functions, and of subjecting to public examination persons who are responsible for the loss caused to the creditors by the insolvency."

As to the first of these objects, I have to say that the limit of £5,000 proposed in the Bill must be considered as a merely tentative proposal, made with a view to discussion and consideration, and the Standing Committee on Trade, to which I hope the measure will be referred, can increase that limit or alter its application in any way they think right. As to the second object, I wish to say that the Bill only carries out a principle which has been recognised by Parliament in the Judicature Act of 1875, by which it is provided

that the same rules should be observed in the administration of the assets of insolvent individuals and insolvent companies with regard to the respective rights of creditors and the proof of debts and liabilities. We propose to carry out this principle in the way I have described by adapting the procedure in bankruptcy to the winding-up insolvent companies. Now, it may be asked why this change is necessary? Sir, I very much doubt if any hon. Member will defend the present system as being in any way satisfactory, except, of course, to the liquidators and solicitors who profit by it. The present system is as injurious to the public at large as any system could well be. In the first place, it is injurious to the creditors. Surely the chief object of winding-up proceedings in a case of insolvency should be to protect the salvage; yet there is nothing which the present procedure is less calculated to do. "Winding-up," in fact, is a misnomer, for companies are not wound up. As long as assets remain which can be utilised, not, I am afraid, so much for the creditors as for the persons employed as liquidators and solicitors, so long is the winding-up process continued, and even when the assets have apparently come to an end, the proceedings are kept open in the hope that from some unknown quarter further assets may come, only to go into the same pockets. Why is this? The liquidators and solicitors under the present system are paid by time. The liquidator is not appointed by the creditors; he is often a person self-appointed, or at any rate appointed without the control of the creditors. The result has been that in certain cases the liquidation of companies has been kept going from year to year, insuring a very comfortable annuity to the firms employed, and even to their successors. From a Return obtained by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on December 12, 1888, it appears that of the Joint Stock Companies ordered to be wound up in which the liquidation proceedings were pending, about 22 per cent. had been in liquidation upwards of 10 years, and about 20 per cent. upwards of five years, but under 10. Of the 674 cases, open on the 31st of December, 1886, 147 cases had been pending over 10 years, 125 had been pending over five years and under 10, and 385 had been pending five years and under. There appeared to be one case still pending in which the order to wind up was made in 1863. The result of the system is excessive cost in the process of winding up. This cost is due to the delay which occurs and to the clumsiness of the procedure, which involves constant applications to the Court. This procedure is especially onerous in the case of insolvent companies from the country, necessitating, as it does, the employment of solicitors and counsel, which results in enormous bills. One bill brought to my notice, covering I do not know how many sheets of paper, amounted after taxation to £1,107 for four years' work in winding up a company. It included an item of £57 merely for drawing up the bill and having it taxed, and this case, be it observed, was a short winding up in Chancery. Another defect of the system is the absence of supervision over liquidators. The parties interested can get no information; even Parliament has failed to obtain information when it has asked for it. From the Return of 1888, already quoted, I find that out of 71 cases ordered to be wound up by the Court of Chancery during 1867, 19 years before the date of the Return, it was only found possible to furnish details of receipts and expenditure in 25, showing clearly that there could not have been any proper audit. In those 25 cases the costs were much higher than in similar cases in bankruptcy, though in only three of them did the assets realised exceed £5,000. Compare this with the Stannaries Court, in which there is practically an official liquidator. There, in 1867, 19 companies were wound up. Full particulars of receipts and expenditure were given in each case, and the costs were much less than in Chancery. I do not know whether the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warmington), who has given notice to move the rejection of the Bill, will defend the present system, or find fault with the proposals we make for remedy; but I think I have said enough to show that nothing could be worse or more discreditable than the existing system. I do not say that the procedure established by the Bankruptcy Act of 1883

Sir Michael Hicks Beach

is perfect; but it is infinitely superior to the system which exists in the winding up of companies, both in expedition, efficiency, and economy. Estates are wound up in bankruptcy twice as fast by non-official and three times as fast by official Trustees as they were under the previous law. The Bankruptcy Act of 1883 established an organisation all over the country which, with a slight additional expenditure, might undertake the work imposed on it by this Bill. I think the Bill, if passed, will be of great benefit to the creditors of insolvent companies. But that is not all. Besides the question of salvage, there is also the question of diminishing the number of wrecks, and I have a hope that the Bill may tend to improve commercial morality. It is not too much to say that in the winding up of insolvent companies there are no officials charged with the impartial and independent duty of investigation or the punishment of fraud, so that offences punished in bankruptcy are ignored in winding up. There is a special danger in the recent tendency to convert private businesses into Limited Liability Companies. I saw the other day a long list of small businesses so converted in the past year, and among them there was actually one, with a capital of £5,000, for carrying on a chimney-sweeper's business. Practically, I suppose there is no occupation that is not considered a legitimate field for the enterprise of a Limited Liability Company. What is the result of this? There may, no doubt, be legitimate reasons for such a conversion. But there are in too many cases reasons of quite a different kind; and certainly we should not permit that the Limited Liability Acts should be used by unscrupulous traders not only to resuscitate their own fortunes for a time, but to escape the penalties which would otherwise await them as private traders at the hands of the Official Receiver. I trust the Bill will succeed in exposing and punishing some of the frauds and malpractices which too often prevail in the formation of companies, and thus deterring promoters from attempting them. The principle upon which the Bill is based is that a man who undertakes to manage other people's affairs should have the same sense of responsibility as in managing his own, and that legislation should be deterrent both to fraud and to negligence. I do not propose to enter into the details of the Bill. I only ask the House to affirm the principles on which it is based. Its details are doubtless open to criticism, and may be susceptible of improvement. We shall welcome any suggestions for that end from Members who have special experience, and especially from the hon. and learned Member for Stockton; and I trust that the House will be willing to remit the Bill to the Standing Committee on Trade that this Session may not close without completing a reform which I believe will be of great value to the commercial interests of the community.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

*(8.55.) SIR HORACE DAVEY (Stockton): I do not rise in any spirit of hostility or carping criticism to the Bill, because I quite recognise that the present system of winding up requires reform. But I may be permitted to doubt whether this Bill is likely to effect that reform. The right hon. Gentleman has a little exaggerated the evils of the present system, which is based on the Companies Act, 1862. We have now had nearly 28 years' experience of the working of that Act, and during that period Judges of the greatest eminence have devoted their minds to the simplification of procedure, and to making it as valuable as possible for the objects sought. Judges like the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel, and others I could name, have applied themselves to the work of improving the operation of the Act; and I do not think that the evils of delay to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred exist to anything like the extent to which at first they certainly did prevail. The Judge has practically unlimited powers, which are exercised to bring liquidations to a speedy close, and to bring liquidators to account, as, to my own knowledge, they have often been brought to account to their own sorrow. It is not so simple a matter to wind up a company as may at first sight appear. It is not like winding up the estate of an individual trader who has become bankrupt. Companies which are wound up in the Chancery Division are in very many instances such as have carried on a large

and extensive business, far greater and more extensive than any business carried on by independent traders, and these companies often have assets which are only capable of realisation at any price by careful administration, and by what is called carefully "nursing" the assets. Although it is undoubted that more delay has taken place in the winding-up of companies in times past than was necessary, that is not so now. The House must not suppose it can introduce a millenium of winding-up. A company's affairs cannot be wound-up in six months or a year, or even in many cases in less than two years. I think I recognise one of the companies to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. But the assets of that company were of a very peculiar character, and undoubtedly required a long time for winding-up. I have no doubt that a great many people profited by the winding-up of that Company, but I think the right hon. Gentleman did a little exaggerate the defects of the present system. Whatever may have been the case in the past, Judges, chief clerks, solicitors, and liquidators have combined to do their best under the rules of the present system. But my complaint against the Bill is that it does not effect the reform the right hon. Gentleman has shadowed out. If the right hon. Gentleman had brought in a Bill complete in itself, which would tell those who read it what is the system, method, and procedure, I do not think I have even to make any objection to it, but I must put in my humble protest on behalf of those who have to administer the law. We who sit here in the House of Commons, or the other House, and pass Acts of Parliament, are sometimes a little oblivious of those other people who have to construe and administer those Acts, and on their behalf I put in a protest against the manner in which the Bill is constructed. The right hon. Gentleman said that nothing could be worse than the present system. But the Bill leaves the present system exactly where it is. There is not one word in the Bill which in any way repeals or abolishes the present system. What the Bill does is to make a number of new enactments, sometimes superseding, sometimes overlapping, sometimes partially superseding and partially overlapping, the provisions of the present Acts. I do not hesitate to say that a more formidable task for the unfortunate Judge who may have to administer the new system which the Bill would introduce cannot be imagined. He will have the present system. There is nothing in the Bill in any way puts an end to the Companies' Acts and the rules made under them, which form the present code for winding-up companies; then the Bill makes a number of enactments, some of which are partially identical with the enactments in the Companies' Acts 1862 and 1867; it also introduces other provisions, for example those in reference to examination of persons connected with the management of the company, and the Judge will have to say which set of sections is or is not repealed, and there will be two concurrent systems under this Bill if it becomes law. The result will be to increase the confusion and to throw disturbance into what is now, after the efforts of the Judges and the experience that has been obtained, a working system, and you will, I feel quite confident, raise a number of questions as to the effect which certain enactments in this Bill has upon certain enactments in the present Acts—how far they are repealed or are still in force. That is not all. We have had considerable experience lately of the evil and dangerous effects of a measure which incorporates in it a number of clauses from some other Bill, the result of which is that, instead of finding in the pages and clauses what its enactments are, one has to look to two, three, four, or more Acts of Parliament which are incorporated by reference, but you have to change their language and adopt them to this Act, and then questions arise as to how much is incorporated, how much is altered, and how the incorporated clauses are to be read with reference to the existing law and the enactments in the Bill itself. I am not speaking on behalf of a popular Party or one who receives much consideration in the House of Commons, but I do wish to enter a protest—and I hope my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General will support me—on behalf of those who have to construe Acts of Parliament which we pass—sometimes with a light heart. I can assure the House that it is no easy task for those who have to advise upon or Judges who have to administer the

Sir Horace Davey

law to construe Acts of Parliament under this system of legislation by reference. Remember that where there are difficulties it leads to litigation, and litigation means expense. I will venture to make an appeal to the President of the Board of Trade on this matter—and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am making it in no carping spirit. It is that he will give us a Bill which we can all understand—an Act which even laymen can take into their hands and read and understand. At present anyone reading this Bill would, in order to understand it, have to refer back to the Act of 1862 and find out how far the clauses of that Act are repealed or incorporated. As a fact, nothing is expressly repealed in this Act. There may be provisions impliedly repealed, but I think we are entitled to ask that the law in regard to the winding-up of companies should be put in such a state that those who have to advise upon or administer the law—solicitors, counsel, liquidators, as well as laymen and creditors—can understand it when they read it. It is a question which ought not to be left in doubt what is the relation of this Act to the Act of 1862 and the existing Companies' Acts. As this Bill now stands anyone reading it is compelled to go back to the Act of 1862, which is not repealed, and the winding-up clauses of which are consequently still in force. First he would have to see how the company can be wound up, and he would have to bear in mind such points as consulting the creditors and the contributories; then he would have to find out what were the powers of liquidators under the Act of 1862 and compare them with the powers conferred under this Bill, and then would arise all sorts of questions *re* cases where they differed as to whether any of them were repealed. I will go a little further. The Act of 1862 provides a means by which directors, managers, and auditors can be examined and brought to book, and anyone acquainted with winding-up proceedings in the Chancery Courts knows that this was proved a most powerful and successful provision. But you have something new here. You have in the 9th section similar powers, but it is not the same power as in Section 165 of the Act of 1862; in some cases it is wider, in other cases it is less wide. Yet Section 165 remains unrepealed. Who is able under these circumstances to advise an unhappy creditor who wishes to find out the law as regards directors and others guilty of malfeasance by comparing Section 165 of the Act of 1862 with Section 9 of this Bill. This is merely an illustration of the evils and great inconvenience to all concerned through legislating in this manner. Let us for goodness sake have an Act of Parliament which embodies in itself all the provisions which are applicable to the subject, in the interests not only of those who have to administer the law, but also of those who have to obey the law and whose interest it is to understand the law. As to the incorporation of the bankruptcy clauses, I think it is a very great improvement on the present system of winding-up, by providing for an official audit of the liquidators' accounts. At the present time, as we all know, creditors do not take enough interest in these things to audit the accounts; they prefer to write off the debt and take such dividend as is offered. They may be right, or they may be wrong from a commercial point of view, but I entirely approve of the provisions to be incorporated in this Bill, securing an official audit of liquidators' accounts, and I should even go further than the Bill, because I would impose upon liquidators the duty not only of rendering accounts to the Board of Trade, but also of sending a printed copy of the accounts, or an abstract of them, to every creditor. If the creditor chooses to throw them into the waste paper basket, that is his look out. The Bill, I admit, looks very seductive, but again I have to complain that, if it is passed, it will not give all the necessary information on this point; it will be necessary to refer to the Bankruptcy Act itself. And these provisions from the bankruptcy laws are incorporated "so far as applicable." Who is to say how far they are applicable? Of course the Court—and it will be a nice task for the Court to take clauses which are drawn *alio intuitu* and apply them to a totally different state of things. Why could not we have these clauses, so far as capable of being adapted to the winding up of companies, printed over again in the Bill as the clauses which the Government think ought to be applicable, and why should not the

Government draftsman adapt the clauses to the case of the winding-up of companies instead of leaving the unhappy creditor or contributory to get the Court to do so at his own expense? The criticisms I have made upon the Bill I have put forward in no spirit of hostility, for I recognise that the system of winding up at present in use is capable of great improvement, and I cordially approve of the institution of an efficient audit being provided for liquidators' accounts. I also think that the means of bringing fraudulent persons to justice may be very much improved. But I do plead for a Bill which we can understand. I cannot understand the present Bill, but before it is passed into law I earnestly hope that it will contain the whole provisions of the law with regard to winding-up, and that those responsible for this measure will take the trouble to go through the whole of the present code and repeal all provisions which are intended to be no longer applicable.

*(9.16.) MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W:): My reason for placing the Motion which stands in my name upon the Paper was not because I am averse to any improvement in the present law, but because I wish to render an emphatic protest against any important Amendment of the law being rushed through without ample explanation. And I am glad to say that I have succeeded in obtaining from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade an explanation of the reasons which moved him to introduce this measure. I am bound to say that those reasons are not entirely satisfactory, and I gather that his information has been dawn from one source only. I should think it had been drawn from persons who might be creditors of a company, but who have otherwise had no experience of the mode in which the business of winding-up companies is conducted. It is a great pity that a Bill which proposes to amend the procedure of winding-up companies should be prepared by persons—if it was so prepared—who are not familiar with the working of the present system. The present system, Sir, is a code in itself. Tfiere is, in the Act of 1862, a set of clauses exclusively confined to the mode in which companies shall be wound up. And the right hon. Gentleman has, in this House, rather given currency to the opinion that the only persons to be considered in the winding-up are creditors. I think the attention of the House ought quite as much to be directed to a most unfortunate body of persons who are called contributories; and who are in the first instance shareholders. The right hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, allow me to say that he is wrong if he thinks that he can prevent the fraud unless he begins at the right end. Fraud is much more rife at the birth of companies than it is at their burial, and if the right hon. Gentleman wishes really to prevent fraud in regard to Joint Stock Companies, I would humbly request his attention to a Bill which is to be presented to this House, and which deals with that subject; and ask him to give his friendly assistance to prevent directors going scot free who have been parties to prospectuses containing false statements on the plea that they did not know that the statements were false. Then I think we may have some sort of guarantee that fraud will not be so prevalent as it is now. As I understand it, although the right hon. Gentleman had not the courage to say so, this is, in truth, a retrograde step. Probably his researches have not gone so far as to enable him to tell the House of the system that was in operation before 1862. That system was then a system of bankruptcy, and it was because of the crying scandals associated with it, and because it was more costly than winding-up in the Chancery Court, that the Companies' Act of 1862 was framed. There are, undoubtedly, a great many points on which the present procedure could be amended, and I agree that the right hon. Gentleman has hit one. When the Act of 1862 was passed, it was considered that the persons directly interested, viz., the creditors and the contributories of a company being wound up should themselves take such an interest in the procedure as to see that the official charged with the winding-up did his duty. Unfortunately that has not been so, and there has been no controlling officer. The learned Judges have more than once regretted that omission, and in some instances have endeavoured to supply it by calling in the aid of an officer, who acts partly under the direction of the Court and partly under the control of the Attorney General. The Official

Liquidator is now bound to do very much what the right hon. Gentleman said he ought to do, but there is no one to see that he does his duty. He has now the duty of preserving an accurate file of every proceeding that occurs in the Court. He must keep every account and every paper connected with the winding-up. But, unfortunately, that enactment in the Companies' Act of 1862, unless you have a conscientious liquidator (and notwithstanding the observations of the right hon. Gentleman there are many most conscientious), becomes a dead letter. I know a great many windings-up of Companies where liquidators, persons of great experience and high character, have, although there is no one to compel them to do their duty, kept a perfect record, which has been open, free of expense, to everybody interested. Therefore I welcome the amendment of law, by the installation of an officer whose duty it shall be to see that the liquidator does his duty, although I confess that end is to be secured by means most cumbrous. My learned Friend the Member for Stockton says there will be difficulty in construing the Act of Parliament. Yes, Sir, but persons who are charged with the winding-up of companies are not expected to have to go to learned counsel like my hon. and learned Friend. They expect to find their duty written in the Act of Parliament under which they are acting; and if this Bill is passed, this point will at once strike a liquidator. He will say "I have two sections dealing with the same subject. Which am I to obey?" My hon. Friend puts only one case that he may have to obey one or the other; but that is not quite the full fact. He may have to obey both, for there is nothing in this Bill to say that the provisions, so far as liquidators are concerned, are not cumulative, and in addition to the powers given to liquidators under the Companies Act of 1862. Thus you put on the officials whom you are going to create the new difficulty of ascertaining how they are to discharge their duties. But not only does this Bill deal with procedure; it also amends the law, and it does so in a most unsatisfactory fashion. There is to be, according to the Bill, what is called a Report, and that Report is to be made by a prescribed officer who is to have the right of making the Report on information that is given to him unsworn. He may get it from any documents, and he is to be allowed, without having submitted any part of the information to the test of an oath, to brand the directors or other people as men of fraud. That is a new and altogether unheard of proceeding in the jurisprudence of this country: that any official shall be able to charge with or to say that another man has been guilty of fraud and breach of trust without that charge having been investigated and put to the test of an oath. Not only that, but I think the framer of this Bill had a notion that there was no such people as contributories. I do not think the word contributory is to be found in the Bill from the beginning to the end. This is the way in which the Bill is prepared. A man is to be deemed a fraudulent man for issuing a false prospectus—to whose damage? The fraudulent statement in a prospectus as a rule—in 99 cases out of 100—is not to the prejudice of the creditors, but it is to the prejudice and damage of the poor people who believe in the statements and on the faith of those statements subscribe for shares. By the 9th clause of the Bill it is provided that if any person among other things "signs or makes himself responsible for any false or misleading prospectus, notice, statement, or balance-sheet," to the prejudice "of the company or of the creditors of the company" he is to be made liable to contribute such sums as the Court thinks just. But what is he to pay for? Is he to pay for the damage done to the company or to the creditors? But they are not the people who are damaged by the fraudulent statement. The people damaged are the contributories. The company gets the benefit of the fraud, and it is the money the shareholders contribute because of the fraud that goes into the coffers of the company. It is absurd to say that the company is damaged by the fraudulent statement in the prospectus, and it is very unlikely that the creditors are damaged because fraudulent persons usually take care that such companies shall exist for such a period as that those who are creditors at the date of winding-up are creditors of a comparatively recent date and were not creditors at the time when the company was

started. The person who wants protection is the contributory, not the creditor or the company itself. It is said that the Bill has been introduced to amend the law in that respect, but I do not think it will have that effect. I am only noticing this in order to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to this matter. Let me make a suggestion. I have not the experience of my hon. Friend the Member for Stockton, nor have I the experience of the hon. Gentleman who advised the President of the Board of Trade, but I venture to think it will be much easier to take Part 4 of the Act, 1862, which constitutes the code of procedure with regard to the winding-up of the companies, and to introduce it in this Bill with such Amendments as the right hon. Gentleman thinks fit This is another suggestion I am able to make for a reason which perhaps he does not know. If the right hon. Gentleman will alter the title of the Bill or extend the ambit of it so as to make it a measure not simply amending the procedure of the winding up of companies, but dealing also with the law as to the liability of directors and others issuing prospectuses or notices for applications for shares, then I think that the right hon. Gentleman can rely, not only on the cordial co-operation of both sides of the House, but on the efforts of all those in the House who have the advantage of being practically acquainted with the law of companies.

*(9.32.) MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, that should any part of the Bill be open to observation, it might be alluded to at this time. There is one part to which I think it is especially desirable to call attention before the Bill is read a second time. I cannot help adopting to a great extent the view of my hon. and learned Friend, that the Bill does not seem to be framed on an exhaustive examination of the existing law of winding-up. Those who know anything of the law of winding up are aware that by the Companies Act there are two modes of winding up—voluntary and compulsory. This Bill only deals with the compulsory mode, but there is a well-known process of carrying on the voluntary winding up of a company under the supervision of the Court. It seems to be assumed by the promoters of the Bill that every company which fails to carry on its business does so because of misfeasance, but in cases where companies become either insolvent, from causes not culpable, or are unable to carry on their business it is often found convenient to adopt an amicable mode of winding-up, and then if difficulties arise to obtain an order for carrying on liquidation under the supervision of the Court, and as the Bill is now framed it may become the object of interested persons to begin proceedings for voluntary winding-up, in order to save themselves from coming within the more penal provisions of the Bill. I think this point ought not to be lost sight of when the Bill is considered by the Standing Committee.

(9.35.) MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Sir, no one will dispute the great evil for the remedy of which this Bill is proposed for consideration, but I question whether it is advisable to deal with the subject in the piecemeal, scrappy manner proposed by this measure. Only a small portion of the Company Law is dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman's Bill, and yet the changes proposed are very important and in some respects radical. The proposal of the Government complicates that which is already more or less complicated and difficult, and it distributes the work connected with the winding-up of companies in a manner which will unquestionably lead to a great many appeals and a great deal of unnecessary litigation, and whether the time now occupied in winding-up companies will be shortened is a point on which I feel considerable doubt. In the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, you had a complete revision of the law, and a codification of it which was a model of drafting, and which has left very little room for doubt or ambiguity. There is another aspect of the matter which strikes me as worthy of consideration. It is proposed by this Bill to throw upon the County Court an additional amount of work. The County Courts, as revised in 1846, were in the first instance intended only as Courts for the recovery of small debts, and in the year 1865 their jurisdiction was extended, so that equity cases to the amount of £500 were included. Since 1865 we have had considerable additions to the jurisdiction of the County Court— the Labourers and

Workmen's Act, 1875; the Employers' Liability Act; the Married Women's Property Act; the Agricultural Holdings Act; and last, and greatest of all, the Bankruptcy Act, under all of which there are questions which have to be decided in the County Court. The amount of work thrown on the County Courts is out of all proportion to that which was at first contemplated, and I think it might be worthy the consideration of the Government whether the County Courts as now constituted and —I say it with all respect to the existing Judges—as now manned are in many cases the fit Courts on which to heap up the immense accumulation of judicial business now being borne by them. Certainly this Bill will considerably increase the work of those Courts. It is perfectly true that under the Building Societies' Act, 1874, and the Industrial Provident Societies' Act, 1876, a certain amount of winding-up business does now come within the province of the County Courts. But this Bill will very considerably increase that amount of work. What is likely to be the result of this proposal? Not only will there be a considerable number of appeals, but there is likely to be a disinclination to meet many of the difficulties which will probably arise as the outcome of this Bill. You may have a block of business because of a very natural postponement of questions arising in the County Courts. The County Courts Act of 1888 gave extension of jurisdiction with regard to matters of settlement, besides which power has been given to remove cases below £100 to the County Courts. 'In the very first six months of that Act there were between 600 and 700 cases removed from the High Court to the County Courts. Two Metropolitan County Court Judges had each between 50 and 60 cases removed to them. I am sure if the right hon. Gentleman inquires into the matter he will find there is ample ground for re-consideration as to whether it is wise to extend the jurisdiction of these Courts, not only with regard to this particular Bill, but with regard to the varied business which is now thrown upon them.

*(9.43.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I am sure, Sir, on both sides of the House there will be a general concurrence in the objects of the measure as set out in the Memorandum. The principles set forth there are good, but they seem to me to be carried out in a very unsatisfactory, defective, and misleading manner in the Bill itself. A very short time ago one of the Judges of the High Court called the attention of the Legislature to the danger and difficulty involved in the modern process of drafting Acts of Parliament by incorporating other Acts, and the Judge severely condemned this most unsatisfactory mode of legislation. But the system had grown under the administration of the present day to quite an intolerable extent during the last two or three years. We shall have placed upon the Table next week, the Civil Service Estimates for the coming year, and the hon. Members will find that a very large sum is paid for the work of preparing Bills, in addition to which there was a large sum last year for extra assistance in drafting particular Government Bills. As a plain matter of business, considering the amount which we pay our draftsmen, we are entitled to a different class of article from that which is placed on the Table of the House. We are entitled to know what is within the four walls of the Bill, and what it proposes to deal with, not only in the interests of the public and the suitors, but in the interests of the judges themselves. The Bill should contain what the law is. We shall hear the Attorney General shortly, but you have already heard in this debate one of the first advocates at the English Bar, one of the most scientific lawyers of the day, the hon. and learned Member for Stockton (Sir H. Davey), saying that he cannot understand this Bill. For my own part, I do not understand the Bill; and if it be passed in its present form it means a a crop of litigation. 'The gist of the whole thing is that the procedure with respect to the bankruptcy of a trader is one thing and the winding-up of a company is a totally different thing. The principle may be the same, but the procedure must inevitably and necessarily be very different. If the Attorney General will turn to page 6 of the Incorporated Statutes, he will see one of the many clauses which I say I cannot follow:—

"Subject to the provisions of this Act the liquidator shall, in the administration of the property of the company and in the distribution thereof amongst its creditors, have regard to any directions that may be given by resolution

of the creditors at any general meeting, or by the committee of inspection, and any directions so given by the creditors at any general meeting shall in case of conflict be deemed to over-ride any directions given by the committee of inspection."

There is already a Code under the Companies' Acts, providing how the property of the company is to be dealt with. I am speaking in the presence of lawyers, who will contradict me if I am wrong, but I am certain that a conflict will arise immediately there is any attempt to put that clause into force. Another peculiarity of the drafting of the Bill is the enormous power resting in the hands of the Lord Chancellor for making rules. Everything is to be done by rule. The House is deprived of its legislative control, and it is put into the hands of some rule, making authority which constructs a Code which Parliament might or might not approve. On page 3 you have the first time of its introduction put into the Bill some prescribed officer, who is to do something, and who is to become the liquidator of the company. And then there is to be a meeting of creditors, and no one seems to be worthy of consideration in this Bill except the creditor. When you call a meeting of a bankrupt's creditors, you do not care about the man himself; he is there. But in the case of joint stock companies, in the majority of instances, the creditors are paid in full. It is the poor unfortunate shareholders who are swindled; they are the people imposed upon by prospectuses. There is not a single line to provide for these gentlemen; not a word about calling the shareholders together. They are to have no protection, though I think they are really persons for whom Parliament is bound to provide. There is another important omission in this Bill to which I would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention. These three modes of winding-up—a voluntary winding-up, a compulsory winding up, and a voluntary winding-up under the supervision of the Court. This Bill does not apply at all to a voluntary winding-up, and possibly two-thirds of windings-up are voluntary. Now, I am sure the President of the Board of Trade wants to pass a satisfactory Act which will work, and we are anxious on this side of the House to give it every assistance we can. The course I would suggest is that the Bill should be read a second time and then remitted to the draftsmen to put in what is to be the law. We have already the Code of 1862; we must not have two Codes in force at the same time. Clause 9 is a very oppressive clause, for it makes the Report to be *primâ facie* evidence of misconduct. There is to be no verification or cross-examination. You have simply to say A or B has done what? There are several things, of course, which A or B must have done—fraud, misappropriation, misfeasance, and breach of trust. Suppose a director has been a party to the carrying on of the business of "a company after having reason to believe it was insolvent." What is meant by "having reason to believe?" Or suppose he has been a party "to any rash or hazardous speculations." Who is to decide whether a speculation is rash or hazardous? What one may think prudent another may think rash or hazardous. I think there are a great many defects in the Bill itself, so far as the phraseology of it and the scope of it are concerned, and I think it has graver defects in respect of the incorporation of the existing law. Another defect is the power given to the Lord Chancellor; and we know that it is not the Lord Chancellor and that it is not the Board of Trade, but a subordinate of the Lord Chancellor and a subordinate officer of the Board of Trade to whom you will practically delegate the power of legislation. I think, if we give this Bill a Second Reading, that we ought to have an understanding from the Government that the Bill will be re-considered and put in workable shape before it is sent either to the Committee on Trade or the Committee on Law, which ever the Government may think fit.

*(9.53.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Sir, although in the exercise of the privileges of debate, some of the observations of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have been of a technical and some of a severe description, yet I accept them in the spirit in which they were intended, and I believe it is the wish of hon. and right hon. Gentleman opposite to assist Her Majesty's Government in amending the law as far as they can. I wish at once to join in the just tribute of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton to the great experience and ability

of my hon. Friend the Member for Stockton (Sir H. Davey). I am prepared to say, in this or any other place, that if he had one opinion and I another on any point of law connected with this Bill I should be perfectly satisfied I was wrong. At the same time, while conceding the advantage he possesses over me, I venture to think that he has gone a little too far when he says that he cannot understand this Bill. One other observation I must notice. It has been said that this Bill has been prepared by persons who have only considered one side of the question, and without obtaining information from others. That is an absolute and entire mistake. I must take the blame of any defects of the Bill, of course, so far as the legal points are concerned. The best authorities and the persons most skilled in these matters have been consulted. One word on behalf of the draftsmen. The right hon. Gentleman has had experience of the Government draftsmen, and whatever may be said as to the mode of drafting, I do not think we ought to under-rate the extreme learning and ability or industry of those gentlemen, having regard to the burdens put upon them. Let me say a few words in reference to the leading points. The first and main objection taken to the Bill is that it does not codify the law; codification means dealing with an Act of Parliament of 270 sections, or the winding-up part consisting of 99 sections. I say, without the slightest hesitation, that if we had undertaken to codify and amend the law at the same time it would have been hopeless to try and carry the Bill in this or in any one Session. On that point I appeal to the authority of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who, speaking in answer to the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, said that it is utterly impossible to pass a consolidating and amending law at the same time; that it is necessary first to amend the law and then to codify it.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: What my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian objected to was the introduction of any Amendments into a Consolidation Bill. He said a Consolidation Bill should be a Consolidation Bill pure and simple.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: In another form of words that is exactly what I am attempting to convey to the House. As to the codification of the law, if we are to wait for that, pressing evils will long remain unredressed. The right hon. Gentleman has taken exception to the power of the Lord Chancellor to make general rules for carrying into effect the objects of this Act, and repealing or modifying general orders and rules applying to the winding-up of a Company.

*SIR H. DAVEY: What I pointed out was that they did not repeal the winding-up sections which are over-ridden.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. Member referred to these sections, and he subsequently referred to the rules. I accept his explanation of what he intended, but he directed the attention of the House to the fact that we had not dealt with the existing rules. Well, I am sure, so far as the rules are concerned, the hon. Member will be the first to say that nobody could have framed them and that nobody could say what rules are to be repealed and what are to stand until an amending Bill has been passed. If there is objection taken to temporary officials having to do with the framing of rules, I would point out that that matter is always safeguarded by legislation; but under the circumstances it cannot be said that the Government have been guilty of an omission in not introducing a provision for the amendment of the rules. Then is it or is it not prudent to write at large in the Bill clauses as they are intended to stand, or is it prudent to refer to previous Acts where these clauses appear? As to the incorporation of the Act of 1862, it practically depends on this main consideration whether we have still got left as operative and unrepealed a body of law in itself sufficient to be self contained, or whether that which we are engrafting on the old system becomes in itself the main body of the law. I think it is scarcely just after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, to suggest that this Bill is drafted in a cast-iron shape as if intended to be the final view of Her Majesty's Government, because in his opening remarks my right hon. Friend said he was aware that the clauses made changes in the phraseology and scope of previous legislation, but that his desire was to get the assistance of experts in the matter, so that the provisions might be moulded in the best form. Whatever may be the strictures passed in Clause 9, those who have had experience in the matter think that

amendment of the law in that direction is required, as the number of persons who defraud companies and make away with their assets is increasing. The hon. Member for Monmouthshire said we had made a great mistake as sub-Section 9, Clause 9, relates to matters in regard to which the Legislature should give a remedy to shareholders. If he looks at Sub-section 9 he is right, but I think, in fairness to the much abused draftsman, he should have observed the governing words, "And that loss and damage has been thereby caused to the company and its creditors."

*MR. WARMINGTON : Those are the words I pointed to. A company is one thing, and the shareholders another.

*SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: It is only in cases in which the act complained of has caused damage to the company and its creditors that the remedy is given, therefore, it is absurd to say we intend to transfer a remedy that ought to be given to the shareholders to the company and its creditors. I am simply endeavouring to show that there is some ground for supposing there was an evil the framers of the Bill desired to meet. The hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. A. J. O'Connor), whom I admit has rendered himself thoroughly acquainted with the subject, thinks we are overloading the County Courts. The President of the Board of Trade indicated in his speech that the limit of £5,000 has been introduced as a figure on which discussion may take place, though the point is essentially one for consideration in Committee. It does not affect the principle of the Bill. As to the objection that certain clauses are not written out at large in the measure, I say at once that I should be prepared—though there is no necessity for the re-modelling or re-drafting of the Bill before it is considered—if the Grand Committee who deal with the Bill are of opinion that certain provisions in the Bankruptcy Act, or certain powers of the Companies' Act, should be incorporated or applied to the procedure here contemplated, to take the responsibility of writing out those clauses and putting them in the Bill. However, I do not think the Committee will desire that to be done. I am certain that if the President of the Board of Trade had come down to the House with a Bill consisting of 40 or 50 clauses, there would have been much greater opposition to the Second Reading. It seems to me that a wise discretion has been exercised in putting the Bill in such a shape as will accomplish the amendment of the law at which the Government aims. The hon. and learned Member for Stockton has referred to the 27 years' experience which we possess of the working of the Act of 1862, but it is perfectly clear that that experience has brought out some defects, and that the decisions of the Judges show that there are matters which require amendment. But it seems to me that before we attempt to codify the law we ought to cut out the rotten branches and endeavour to engraft new. Therefore, I think the argument based on experience is a strong justification of the course which has been adopted by my right hon. Friend in endeavouring to introduce into this Bill particular matters of amendment which he desires to press forward without entering upon a gigantic scheme which would eventually come out in the shape of a Bill for codifying the law. Voluntary liquidations are advisedly excluded from the Bill, and as to contributories, their omission is not due to carelessness, but it was thought, rightly or wrongly, that they ought not to be included as Members of the Committees proposed. I think the House will agree with me, however, that these are matters for discussion not on the Second Reading of the Bill, but in Committee. If I have failed to notice any point that has been raised during the debate, I hope it will not be thought I have done so out of any disrespect to hon Members, and, in conclusion, I have only to express a hope that a Bill which is brought in to introduce improvements into the law in some important particulars will be allowed to go before the Standing Committee.

*(10.10.) MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil): It seems to me that this Bill is framed for the express purpose of encouraging litigation. There is not a clause which does not refer to one or two other Acts of Parliament that it is intended to incorporate. Under Clause 8 no power is given to the "prescribed officer" to report whether or not the officers of the company, whoever they may be, are knowingly or wilfully guilty of any of the offences referred to in the Act. The clause first appoints the

prescribed officer as a judicial officer and afterwards transforms him into a prosecutor. The intention of Clause 9 seems to be to prevent people having anything to do with companies, either as officers or as shareholders. There is no allegation in Sub-Section (a) that it is necessary that there should be any intent whatever to mislead. It seems to me to be a principle of the English law that no offence is to be attributable to a man unless there is intent of some sort or other. Suppose a man came from America and brought with him a report from a banker stating that on a certain property there were 5,000 head of cattle, and in consequence of that report certain persons became shareholders in a company; the mere fact of the report not being true would render them liable to make good the default of other people of which they were totally ignorant. Sub-Section (b) as to the misapplication of money seems to be intended to be read with Sub-section (e), which refers to rash or hazardous speculations. This, in my opinion, would put a stop altogether to the formation of companies for the carrying on of speculative business. Another sub-section provides that if a company postpones payment of any debt they will be unable to give a mortgage because that would be giving undue preference. I consider that the Bill ought to be consolidated with the Companies' Act, and with the Bankruptcy Act, if necessary, so that we could have one Act dealing with the whole subject. As it is, the measure could not be safely construed except on the advice of the highest legal practitioners. On that account alone I regard it as objectionable. Every measure of this kind ought, in my opinion, to be complete in itself, so that an ordinary layman may take it up and understand it without having to read through a number of other Acts.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—*(Sir M. Hicks Beach.)*

*(10.12.) SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, having regard to the views which have been expressed, he will consider the expediency before the Bill goes to the Standing Committee of inserting in it the clauses which it is proposed to incorporate in language fitting the case of winding-up. Surely there is great practical convenience in that course.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I quite appreciate the wishes of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and should be glad to meet his views. His suggestion can, I think, be carried out before the Select Committee, but there are obvious reasons why it may not be desirable to have to move two Motions at this stage. I trust the House will consent to send the Bill to the Grand Committee to-night.

*(10.13.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he will move these Amendments in the Grand Committee, and of course we accept that. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Bill had not better go to the Grand Committee on Law instead of to the Grand Committee on Trade.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir; both my hon. and learned Friend and myself are on the Grand Committee on Trade.

Question put, and agreed to.

COMPANIES (MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION) BILL.—(No. 114).

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

BARRACKS (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(10.15.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It will be agreeable to the House that at the earliest moment I should place the Committee in possession of the main facts in connection with the barracks scheme of the Government. The Bill is of a financial character, and it is therefore right that some explanation should be given at this stage. It will not surprise any Member of the Committee that a Bill of this description should be necessary. Up to this time there has never been an attempt to devise a general scheme for the distribution and arrangement of our camps and barracks, to apply to them generally the principles of modern sanitary science, or to adopt the barrack system to the altered circumstances of the country. I may remind the Committee that last year

I placed the necessity of a large barrack scheme on three grounds. The first was that of economy. Our present haphazard system cannot be defended on the grounds of economy. The second ground was military efficiency. Nobody who looks into the matter can doubt that our military strength and the training of our troops is dribbled away by the way in which our troops are dispersed throughout the country. The third ground was the health and comfort of the men. Independently of other considerations I can, on sanitary grounds alone, make an overwhelming case in favour of dealing with this matter in a large and liberal spirit. First, I will refer to the great camps of the country. These camps originated mainly just after the Crimean War. There was then great want of accommodation for our troops. To meet pressing requirement huts were run up hurriedly of wood and other perishable material, and in spite of every effort these huts, intended only to last for a few years, are getting into a worse and worse condition. The huts at Aldershot are 35 years old, and in a very bad state. I will try to summarise the Reports which I have received from the General Officers Commanding, the medical officers and others. Those Reports state that the roofs of the huts, which are 35 years old, are flattening down, and the lower frames are rotten. More than 500 have had to be propped up. In addition to the state of the actual huts, the ground on which they stand is becoming so foul as to render them unfit for habitation; £7,000 a year are now being spent on repairs, the sum is annually increasing, and is quite insufficient to keep them in a sanitary condition.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): Whose Report is that?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: It cannot exactly be said to be any one's Report; I have summarised the facts from the reports of the General commanding at Aldershot; medical officers, and other people. I now come to Shorncliffe. The report is that the position of the huts in this camp is very exposed, and though in two of the lines a casing has been added, it is impossible under present conditions to keep the huts wind and water-tight, and some of the quarters are scarcely habitable at all. In the other lines where hardly any casing has been added the state is even worse. Again, the huts at the camp on Woolwich Common were built 30 years ago, and these also are in a most unsatisfactory condition. The wood-work is rotten, and the stables have to be propped up. Then to pass to the permanent barracks—the first place among them must, of course, be assigned to Dublin. A large expenditure is necessary at Dublin in order to put the barrack accommodation into proper condition. The defects are absolutely notorious, and I fear that to accommodate the present number of troops it will be absolutely necessary not only to spend a good deal more money than has been spent in the sanitary improvements we are making, but to spend a considerable sum of money in providing new barracks in the vicinity of Dublin for the troops. Then there are the Galway Barracks, which are also notorious throughout the United Kingdom. I have two Reports on them. The first was made in 1859, and in that the Commission on Barrack and Hospital Improvement stated—

> "We wish to express our decided opinion with reference to the Shamble and the Castle Barracks and Hospital that they are amongst the very worsts pecimens of public establishments we have ever seen."

The second sanitary Report, which I have recently called for from Galway, states that the Castle Barracks are all old, are in a cramped and confined space, and are very difficult to keep in proper condition. The Shamble Barracks are in much the same state. The rooms are old and unfit for the troops, and are only occupied by a headquarters on account of the limited accommodation in Galway. These two barracks have been repeatedly condemned. Then as to the barracks at Portsmouth, every one knows that one of the two barracks there has been evacuated altogether by troops and is being used for stores, while the other has been pulled down. These barracks have been condemned over and over again, and when they were pulled down the Reports of the medical officers and general officer were found to be amply and fully justified. I could go on giving similar instances, but I should only weary the House; I think I have established enough for my immediate purpose. I am not for a moment casting blame on those who are responsible for barracks—the Royal Engineers. I believe that the Royal Engineers have

done the best with the money provided for them. The difficulty is that in times when there has been a cry for a reduction of the Estimates the inclination has been to cut down the expenses for those things which, though necessary to be done, it cannot be said must be done at any particular time. Therefore, over a long period of years the Royal Engineers have not had put into their hands more than enough money to keep the barracks going, and they have never had enough money to deal with them on a really large and effective scale. Indeed, for some years past it has been obvious that the great reconstruction required could not be carried out by means of the annual Estimates only. I hope the Committee will think that on sanitary grounds I have made out a fair and reasonable case for the Government's being absolutely bound, if they wish to consult the health and comfort of the soldier, to make better provision in many cases for the housing of the troops, and upon a reasonably large scale. After having come to the conclusion that the sanitary state of barracks necessitated action, the next step was to frame a general scheme, showing what would be an ideal distribution of the troops in the United Kingdom. Such a scheme has been prepared by the Quartermaster General, and has undergone the most careful examination and consideration. In that scheme the endeavour has been to provide for all the objects for which an army is maintained in this country. There is the necessity for protecting fortresses and the capitals; the necessity for keeping a certain number of troops within reach of large masses of population; the necessity for continuing to use the barracks which are sufficiently healthy at the present time; and the necessity for having troops, as far as possible, within reasonable reach of a good rifle range. I do not pretend to say that an ideal scheme drawn up with those objects could be attained, even with the considerable expenditure which the Government propose. It could not, because there exist barracks in various situations which, although inconvenient, could not be abandoned altogether at the present time. But the advantage is that everything now proposed for the accommodation of the troops can be considered in reference to the largest and most comprehensive scheme ever laid down. The main object to be gained in trying to approximate to the ideal standard is the concentration of the troops. I do not mean merely that sort of concentration which will bring together in a single barrack a whole battalion which is at present scattered in various quarters at great inconvenience and loss of efficiency; but I mean the bringing into a station more than one battalion, more than one regiment, more than one battery, or even more than one arm of the Service. The first concentration is that of the Royal Artillery; and that, I am glad to say, has to a great extent already been effected. I have been advised that it is of the highest importance to the efficiency of the Royal Artillery that it should, as far as possible, be grouped together in groups of three, or at any rate two, batteries, and that it would lead to considerable economy in the working of our system, and accordingly we have endeavoured to accomplish that object. At present the depôts of all horse and field artillery are concentrated at Woolwich. We propose to make concentrations at Aldershot, Newcastle, Colchester, Sheffield, Hilsea, the Curragh, and other places. In several of these places the concentration has already been effected; but it has been done by taking over a part of certain infantry barracks, which has led to a demand for increased infantry accommodation. Some concentration will also take place with regard to the cavalry; but that arm of the Service must be mainly dealt with by bringing together scattered portions of the same regiment; and in putting cavalry in places where they can be more efficiently trained than is possible in the middle of a town. But the main concentration we have attempted is of infantry; and with regard to that it must be said that such concentration ought to be in camps The time for placing troops in the middle of large towns has gone by. The conditions under which they were so placed have passed away to a large extent; but I do not for an instant suggest that the Government propose to move the troops from all the large towns where they are at present stationed; but, as far as possible, they should be placed in camps where they can be properly trained, and not in the middle of dense populations, for that is bad for the towns, and certain to

impair the efficiency of the troops. Accordingly we look largely to extension of accommodation in camps where large bodies of troops can be exercised together, and the most careful consideration has been given to the place where such concentration can be best attained. Various places have been passed under review. The question whether Salisbury Plain is a suitable place to build barracks has been gone into. We considered also the claims of Cannock Chase, and we examined the suggestion made by great authorities, that it would be desirable to make a concentration to some extent in some place in the North of England, such as Strensall. But after careful consideration I have come to the conclusion, with the unanimous support of all my military advisers, that the great concentration ought to be at Aldershot. At Aldershot there is already a large quantity of land in the possession of the Government, and there exists a camp of great practical utility to the Army. Here, I am sure the Committee will forgive me if I venture to bear testimony to the great foresight and wisdom of the late Prince Consort. I believe it was largely due to him that the camp was established, and I am sure if he could now know the great advantage of the camp he would feel amply repaid. My belief is that it is both an economical and efficient system to establish our main camp at Aldershot and to extend the camp which now exists. There are at Aldershot at the present time three regiments of cavalry, eight batteries of the Royal Artillery, six companies of Royal Engineers, and nine battalions of infantry. The Government propose to add to these a battery of Royal Artillery and six battalions of infantry. To accomplish that object we shall have to re-construct a large portion of the existing camps, and we propose to continue the work now being carried on and complete the existing camps. If, however, the work is only carried on at the present rate I believe none of the Members of this Committee will live to see the completion of the work, and, of course, if we are going to add a large number of troops, very considerable additions to the camp will be required. The question then arises, whether we have sufficient land for our purpose. We believe that by a comparatively small addition of land, which can be obtained at a reasonable rate, we can provide not only ample accommodation for all the troops I have mentioned, but also a splendid exercise ground, much better than that which exists at present. Mainly in order to obtain that land, but also for other minor purposes, we have inserted powers in the Bill enabling us to purchase land compulsorily. Here I may say we have also the opportunity by arrangement with the Home Secretary of acquiring Woking Prison; and we intend to take advantage of that opportunity, so that at a comparatively small cost we shall have a barrack at Woking which will accommodate an infantry battalion, near a railway station, and within easy reach of Aldershot. The whole of the work thus described at Aldershot cannot be effectively carried out at a cost of less than something like £1,500,000. With regard to Shorncliffe, the barracks will be adapted mainly for cavalry and Royal Artillery, but something will have to be expended in the repairing of huts; indeed, the camp would require almost complete re-construction. At Woolwich the huts will also have to be repaired to a considerable extent, and for that provision will be made. There is one other camp in England to which I must refer—namely, that at Colchester. I know the condition of that camp is not altogether what we desire; but, upon the whole, and comparing it with other camps, I think the necessity for permanent re-construction is not so strong as in the cases already described, and that what is absolutely necessary at Colchester can be done out of the annual Estimates. At Portsmouth, as we have abandoned one barrack and utilised it for stores and pulled down another, it is absolutely necessary to build a barracks for the Royal Artillery and also complete the existing infantry barracks to enable them to contain a full battalion. At Plymouth the main complaint is the dispersion of the troops in a number of small places, so that the battalion is not brought together and enabled to be got in a thoroughly efficient state. The object of what is to be done there is by re-construction at the Citadel to accommodate a full battalion of infantry, and by certain other small re-constructions to concentrate other troops. The cavalry barracks at Manchester, I am satisfied, ought not to be main-

Mr. E. Stanhope

tained there. I have seen most of the places I have spoken of, and endeavoured with my own eyes to satisfy myself of the facts I am relating to the Committee. The Manchester cavalry barrack is surrounded by houses close up to the walls, and some of the houses in a low quarter of Manchester absolutely command the barrack windows. I believe the efficiency and certainly the health and comfort of the troops will be benefited by their removal to barracks in some place not too far from Lancashire—some place from which we can easily move them if they are required in any large centre of population. I am not able to pledge myself as to where that place will be. There has been a good deal said in favour of Lichfield. Upon the whole that seems a suitable site, especially as the War Office already possess land there; but on this matter I desire to maintain a free hand until further inquiries have been made. I need only mention one other place in England—London. There is, undoubtedly, a very considerable difficulty here with regard to married men's quarters, and we must provide additional married soldiers' quarters somewhere. The only London barracks I need mention are the Albany Barracks, and the main defect is not their insanitary condition as regards the men, but as regards the horses. It is, undoubtedly, in that respect a bad barrack, but after very careful examination we are satisfied that at a comparatively moderate sum we can provide much better accommodation for the horses. The Committee ought clearly to understand that in the scheme now put forward I am only dealing with large permanent improvements; smaller works of a sanitary character ought we feel to be provided for in the Estimates of the year. Now I come to the case of Ireland. I do not think the Committee will be surprised to hear that the force in Ireland is considerably in excess of what is required there, and if new provision is to be made for troops the Government hold that it should be done in England and not in Ireland. At the same time, there is a considerable body of troops to be maintained in Ireland, and for those troops adequate provision must be made, and especially with reference to cavalry, which has better opportunities for exercise, and can be maintained more cheaply in Ireland than in England. At the Curragh the huts are in a deplorable condition, and many of the other barracks are just as bad, or even worse. We must deal with the case of the Curragh, where it is proposed to concentrate the cavalry regiments scattered in different parts of Ireland, and also three batteries of artillery. The next place I would refer to is Dublin, which is a very convenient place for barracks, and it is connected by rail with all parts of Ireland. At the same time, it is also probably the most difficult case with which we have to deal. The sanitary condition of the Royal Barracks has occasioned me almost as much anxiety as any question which I have had to consider. We have endeavoured to ascertain the cause of the defects, and have employed an entirely independent authority—Mr. Rogers Field—to report on the Dublin Barracks, and to suggest anything necessary for improving the sanitary condition of the troops there. We are carying out his recommendations, and we have spared neither pains nor money in endeavouring to put those barracks into perfect sanitary condition, although, no doubt, the state of Dublin drainage generally made it impossible to expect complete immunity from fever. At the same time, I admit that the Royal Barracks cannot be said to be up to the level of the general sanitary condition of Dublin, as is shown by the number of cases of enteric fever. I shall not rest satisfied until the Royal Barracks are in at least as good a sanitary condition as Dublin generally. If the hopes of the Government are realised, and they are able to put those barracks in a more satisfactory condition, we propose to set apart a portion of the barracks for the accommodation of stores, and, of course, naturally they would be convenient also for the men of the Army Service Corps, and that will enable us to get rid of the existing store houses, which are inconveniently situated. The changes proposed will also enable us to put into the barracks one infantry regiment. There are other barracks in Dublin with which we shall also have to deal. Several of them are not capable of containing a full battalion of infantry. Certain small additions have to be made for that purpose, and there are one or two demolitions that are absolutely necessary for the health of the troops. These, however, are compara-

tively minor matters, as compared with the larger scheme I now have to mention. We are building a cavalry barrack at Grange Gorman, close to the Phœnix Park, Dublin, most conveniently situated for the training of the troops; but we shall also require barracks for a battalion of infantry, though I am not quite certain yet what is the best place to build them in. For the various works I have sketched out in Dublin I shall have to ask the House to allow the Government to expend the sum of £270,000. Then there is the case of Belfast, where an enormous cost is annually incurred by the hiring of temporary quarters; and though there is no doubt a barrack is wanted there on sanitary grounds, I should prefer to justify the proposed expenditure in Belfast more especially on the ground of the large economy that will be effected by getting rid of the hiring system. The same remark applies to Enniskillen, where it is desirable to find accommodation for a whole infantry battalion, instead of the small proportion of troops at present quartered in that place. I now pass from the United Kingdom to the colonies. I hesitated a long time before I determined to ask my Colleagues to deal now with the foreign stations, thinking that this was a subject deservig separate consideration; but, after all, the health and comfort of our troops abroad is just as important as of those in this country, and the conditions to which they are sometimes subjected make it a matter of even greater importance to make the places in which they are accommodated wholesome, satisfactory, and comfortable. There is then, first, the case of Malta. There the garrison has recently been largely increased, and the barrack accommodation is quite inadequate for the large number of troops now maintained there; and accordingly it is proposed to erect an infantry barrack in a situation convenient both for health and for the purposes of the defence of the island. At the Cape, again, one of the barracks has got into a bad state, and for many years past the general officer commanding has recommended that something should be done for the purpose of putting them in a better condition. There we shall have to spend a considerable sum. Two cases of a minor character are those of Gibraltar and Bermuda. The sanitary condition of the barracks at Gibraltar is certainly unsatisfactory, the death-rate is exceptionally high, and we think a moderate and reasonable sum ought to be expended upon them; and the same is necessary in the case of Bermuda, in order to prevent the outbreaks of enteric fever which have occurred at both those stations during the last few years. Coming to the last head on which I have to ask the Committee to approve further expenditure, I have to observe that at present the cost for lodging is enormous; and it would be a real economy that quarters should be built in certain cases for the accommodation of married soldiers and warrant officers, thus getting rid of the lodging allowances. The cost of the expenditure under this head I put at £290,000, which would save at least £15,000 a year. There will be several other savings effected by carrying out the whole scheme. This year alone we have reduced the Barrack Vote by £40,000, and when the scheme is completed it is believed there will be a permanent saving on this Vote of at least £60,000. There are other expenses incurred at present in respect of travelling allowances to ranges and for other purposes, which will be saved by the changes proposed; and there is, lastly, the money that will be realised by the sale of certain old barracks, such as the Manchester Cavalry Barracks, and the proceeds of those sales will be credited to the amount the Committee are now asked to allow the War Office to expend. The sum which the Government estimate they will require to carry out the very important and extensive works which they now propose will not exceed £4,100,000, which is the sum mentioned in the Resolution. The precise form in which we propose to raise the necessary sum it would be the province rather of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to show; but this determination we have formed, at any rate, and strongly adhere to; from past experience we are satisfied that a great scheme of re-construction if once accepted by the House of Commons should be carried out without delay and without hesitation until completed. We are not, therefore, prepared to leave it to the chance of annual Estimates, and our proposal will be embodied in a Bill which we shall ask the House to sanction as a whole, and that done, the War Office will be bound to proceed with

the scheme, in the prosecution of which they can only be stopped if Parliament in its wisdom think fit to repeal the Act. There are two other points which will, I think, commend themselves to the Committee. In the first place, I shall no doubt be asked what guarantee we can give to the Committee that the Estimates presented are fair and reasonable; that the Government are not embarking on an extravagant system of building; and that this very large work will be properly supervised in all respects when it is undertaken. I will tell the Committee the steps which I have endeavoured to take. In the first place, these plans have been most carefully prepared by the authorities now in charge of our barracks and are based upon their past experience. But the Government have not been satisfied with that. I have had also the independent opinion of a contractor who ranks high in his profession, and that gentleman has examined the plans very carefully, and has reported to me in strong terms with regard to them that he thinks the Government are getting full value for their money, and he expresses his approval of the plans, both with regard to material and as to construction. But we have not been satisfied even with that. We have, with the hearty assent of the Royal Engineers, now called in the assistance of two outsiders completely unconnected with the War Office, namely, Mr. Creed, the surveyor to the Land Commission, and thoroughly acquainted with the subject in its rural aspect, and Mr. Pilkington, an architect of enormous experience in the planning of urban industrial buildings. I asked them to examine the plans, and tell me whether they could find anything in the proposed plans, either with regard to plan or material, which savoured in the slightest degree of extravagance, and also to make suggestions as to how the plans could in any way be improved so as to contribute more effectively to the object for which they are intended. Thus I had the fullest guarantee that the plans would be thoroughly examined by independent authorities, and might be confidently recommended to the House of Commons. The second point upon which the Committee will desire to have some assurance is that the sanitary arrangements of the new dwellings are satisfactory. It will, perhaps, naturally be felt that shortcomings in the past require such a guarantee, and the Committee will want to be assured that the Government are really going to satisfy modern sanitary requirements in a reasonable degree. The Committee will recollect the extraordinary interest taken by the late Mr. Sidney Herbert, afterwards Lord Herbert of Lea, in this question. He was the pioneer, in co-operation with Miss Nightingale, of proper sanitary improvements in barracks, and established a system which did an enormous amount of good at that time. Among other things Lord Herbert of Lea brought into existence a body known as the Sanitary Committee. It is now proposed to re-construct and revive Lord Herbert of Lea's Sanitary Committee. It will be composed of persons thoroughly qualified from different points of view to advise on the sanitary construction of these buildings; and I also propose the appointment of one expert, who will be able at any time to go down and examine any place where the Government think it desirable that his opinion should be obtained. This Committee will entail no extra charge upon the Exchequer. Its functions will be, in the first place, to examine all the plans the Government propose for the barracks, and to recommend what alterations they propose in order to bring the buildings up to the modern requirements of sanitary science, and also in the future to examine the Sanitary Reports both from India and the United Kingdom, and report to the Secretary of State for War for the time being on the measures taken for keeping camps and barracks in proper order. The House, therefore, may rest assured as far as sanitary science can go everything in reason will be done. I have now only to move the Resolution already in the hands of the Chairman. We believe that this measure will put all our barrack accommodation that specially requires attention upon a sound and decent footing. I am not going so far as to say that even at the present moment our barrack accommodation compares very unfavourably with that of some foreign countries; but in this country it ought to be better than in foreign countries. In this country much has been done of late years in the way of seeing to the housing of our working classes and the improvement of their dwellings both in town and country;

our barrack accommodation has lagged behind in this and in other ways. That reproach the Government now hope to remove, and with that hope I ask the House to allow me to introduce a measure which will get rid of it at least for a long time to come.

*(11.20.) MR. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: In common with all hon. Members present, I listened with great interest to the statement which the right hon. Gentleman has just made with that lucidity which distinguishes all his utterances upon this important subject. Speaking for myself, I listened to that statement not only with interest, but with very considerable sympathy, because I am well aware that the housing of the troops of this country is in a most unsatisfactory state, and has been so for a long series of years. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken first of the unsatisfactory condition of the huts at Aldershot, the Curragh, and elsewhere, which are worn out and are almost unfit for habitation; and, for my own part, I should be glad if some reasonable scheme could be proposed for rendering those huts habitable and healthy without imposing too heavy a burden upon the taxpayers. In the second place, the right hon. Gentleman referred to the barracks, many of which, he stated, were in a more or less insanitary condition. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that many of those buildings are not only in an unsuitable locality, but are also in the worst part of that unsuitable locality, and that, therefore, it is desirable that the troops should be removed from such places altogether to places in which they would be accommodated under better conditions. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of a certain number of infantry battalions being concentrated at Aldershot and elsewhere, but he did not say where they were to be taken from. My experience in past years has been that when we speak of taking away a battalion of infantry or a regiment of cavalry from any particular locality the authorities at the Home Office are apt to put in a word in favour of retaining the troops where they stand. I should like to know from what particular locality these troops are to be taken, and whether the right hon. Gentleman has made things straight with his colleagues at the Home Office as to the removal. We must presume that the troops were placed in their present position in the public interest, and I suppose we can be assured that their removal will cause no detriment to the Public Service. What I desire to say, however, is that this House, as far as I know, will grudge nothing that is necessary for securing the health of our troops or the sanitary condition of the barracks in which they are quartered. I, however, desire to make this proposal part of a much larger question. I wish to know whether, in point of fact, we require all the troops for whom this accommodation is asked. Last year we had a statement from the First Lord of the Admiralty when he brought forward a proposal for an expenditure of a large sum of money upon the Navy; and now we are asked by the right hon. Gentleman to sanction an expenditure of a sum of upwards of 4 millions sterling—very much "upwards," I fear—for I hardly think we shall keep within the limits of what the right hon. Gentleman calls the net sum. We are invited to spend £4,000,000 upon barracks, without any information being given as to whether we really need the large military force which we at present possess. If the Navy is being greatly strengthened the fewer troops should we require, and I think that the House of Commons is entitled to some further statement from Her Majesty's Government on the subject. I do not know whether Her Majesty's Government will be disposed to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, so that there might be a thorough inquiry into the whole scheme. I think that such an inquiry would tend to strengthen the hands of Her Majesty's Government, if they have a good case. The right hon. Gentleman has satisfied himself, or thinks he will be satisfied, as to the sanitary improvements to be made in the barracks. These are very important points, but the great point is as to the necessity of this expenditure, and the conditions under which it is to be made, and I think the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War, as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, will admit that it is not an unreasonable suggestion that the House of Commons should have an opportunity, by means of a Committee, of inquiring into this subject, which really lies very much by itself, and is just the sort of subject which the Committee of this House could with advantage inquire into. I venture to say that

such an inquiry, conducted by a Committee of the House, would be much more useful than those general fishing inquiries into the Army and Navy Estimates which we have seen, and of which I can speak with some confidence, having myself been Chairman of one of the Committees, and which really do not result, as I think experience has proved, in very much good; whereas a definite inquiry by a Committee into a subject such as this might at once enlighten the House and secure the interests of the public, and at the same time strengthen the hands of the Government, if they really have a good case for the proposals they now make. At this stage of the proceedings I do not think it is to be expected that we should pronounce an opinion either for or against the whole or any part of the scheme, but I thought it right to make these observations on the first blush of the matter, and I hope the Government will take them into their consideration.

*(11.35.) SIR WALTER BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I quite agree with my right hon. Friend who has just sat down that no man could have given a more clear or more lucid statement than my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War. More than that, I go further, and I say that he seems to have carefully considered the whole question, and to have taken, as far as he has been able, every pains that every particular and every detail of this great scheme should be brought under his especial notice. But I must say this one thing. We have had the gravest condemnation both from my right hon. Friend on this side of the House and from my right hon. Friend opposite upon the great neglect which Governments have shown in the past for the welfare of the troops. No man could have listened to what has been said on both sides of the House on this subject without coming to the conclusion that we have not done our duty in carrying out those sanitary precautions which make the life of a soldier bearable. But, Sir, there is something beyond this. It has been admitted on both sides of the House that successive Governments have been anxious to cut down the expenditure, and have cut it down, especially in those directions where outlay is necessary for the health and well-being of the troops. I will only venture to say, without going into detail, because it is absolutely out of place at this time, that the country itself will rejoice to hear that their troops are going to be placed in the same position, as regard health, as those unfortunate people are who are in workhouses or confined in prisons. We have looked after the health of everybody else, but we have absolutely and thoroughly neglected the Army in this respect. I recollect, years and years ago, being in barracks which were at that time considered to be absolutely unfit for habitation. Those barracks still exist. They have been temporarily patched up from time to time, but their condition is no better now than it then was, and they remain a scandal and disgrace to the country. My right hon. Friend who last addressed the House spoke very strongly about troops being taken away from the towns; but I thought one of the great objects of this scheme was to take the troops out of the towns, and to place them in some position close to railways, so that they can be conveniently conveyed into the towns in case of necessity. And I venture to believe that my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, so long as he knows that troops are within easy distance of towns should their services be required, will not object to their removal from those towns to barracks more healthily situated. It has also been asked where the new troops to be concentrated at Aldershot are coming from, and my right hon. Friend especially stated that they were coming from Ireland. I rejoice to hear that Ireland is in so satisfactory a condition that we are able at the present moment to look forward with satisfaction to the withdrawal of troops from the country. That speaks a great deal for the management of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. My right hon. Friend opposite went on to say he would like to know if the number of men in the Army could not be decreased. That, Sir, is a very serious question indeed. He has been Secretary for War, and he knows, and knows well, that in case of emergency we have not been able to put sufficient troops into the field without calling out the Army Reserves. He knows perfectly well that even now the regiments at home have to be depleted of their best men in order to fill up the regiments serving in India. Then how can we afford to reduce the number of troops?

I think it would be a most unwise step to take at this particular time. Next, my right hon. Friend said let us have a Committee. He is like many other people who, when we have got a statement before us, when we have seen a scheme which is to be put forward by the Government, are anxious to shelve the whole question by referring it to a Committee. He does not mean to tell us the Committee will not call for all sorts of evidence under the sun. He does not mean to tell us that we shall be able to proceed with this scheme as early as my right hon. Friend is anxious to commence. All he says is—let us have an inquiry. First, as to how many men we want; secondly, where the barracks ought to be placed; and thirdly, what the cost should be. And, in passing, I would like to make one allusion to the sanitary question, and to point out that we have never yet found that sanitary men or experts have been able to build great buildings without some fault or defect being subsequently discovered in the sanitary arrangements. Look at our great offices in Whitehall, and how they had to be altered. Surely, then, we ought not to allow the difficulties of sanitation to further delay the carrying out of that most important scheme. And all I can say is that I hope my right hon. Friend will, before he allows any barrack to be commenced, see that the proper sanitary arrangements are made, which alone can be conducive to the health of the troops. My right hon. Friend has done good service to the country. He has not blinked the question, as he would have done had he asked for a very small sum; but he has been bold enough, and wise enough, and prudent enough, to ask for a large sum, a sum which, however, I will venture to say, the country will ungrudgingly grant if the necessity for it is proved to exist.

(11.45.) SIR W. CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I am very glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War has taken this whole matter into his consideration and asked for a sum of money which will enable him to carry out the work properly. Am I to understand that the only concentration of troops will take place at Aldershot? The right hon. Gentleman said nothing about concentrations at large centres in the north. I should further like to ask what is to be done with the cavalry barracks at Leeds, which are in a disgracefully bad state. Also, are the barracks at Norwich and Brighton to be done away with? And finally, will there be a Schedule attached to the Bill showing where the new buildings are to be constructed, and how many men they will accommodate?

(11.46.) MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): As the camp at Aldershot happens to be in that part of Hampshire which I have the honour of representing in this House, I should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having made up his mind to spend a certain amount of money for permanent barracks, and I should also like to congratulate him on having induced the Chancellor of the Exchequer to advance the money. As the right hon. Gentleman has said, the huts at Aldershot were built at the time of the Crimean War. They were built, I believe, to last 20 years, and they are constructed of weather boards and felt roofings. But they have already been in existence upwards of 30 years. At the present time, I believe it costs about £5 a year for the repairs necessary for each hut, and, therefore, I believe that the scheme for erecting permanent barracks will, in the long run, prove economical, because it will do away with the necessity for this large annual expenditure on repairs. But in addition to that, it will be all the better for the health of the troops. We make a great outcry about the housing of our labourers, but I venture to say that very few labourers are housed in such a manner as are our troops at Aldershot. Many of the huts there are not fit for men to live in. Now that we are to have a large camp, I hope that attention will be paid to the housing of our soldiers as well as of our labourers.

*(11.47.) MR. E. STANHOPE: The right hon. Gentleman has asked me whether the proposal I have laid before the Committee has the assent of the Home Secretary. Of course it has. I spoke in the name of the Government. He also asked for a Committee to inquire as to what the strength of the Army ought to be. Well, I entirely repudiate any such idea. The strength of the Army must depend on the responsibility of the Government of the day, and we accept that responsibility in full. We are satisfied we are not going into any excess, but I doubt, if all our troops returned from abroad, whether even under this scheme the accommodation

would be adequate. I am not prepared to adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman to appoint a Committee; we must keep the responsibility in our own hands. As to the camps in the North of England, we have no idea of abandoning them. On the contrary, we shall extend them. With regard to the barracks at Leeds, that has been a question fraught with great anxiety; and with the full concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief we have decided to retain them, although the surroundings are not altogether satisfactory. We do not propose to insert in a schedule the barracks we intend to retain, as the difficulty of carrying the Bill would be enormously aggravated. I am ready to give full information to the public, because I believe our scheme is amply justified.

*(11.49.) MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I should like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the barracks at Preston which may easily be made suitable for cavalry. Till recently a battery of Artillery has been stationed there, but it has been removed to Woolwich. The barracks are in an excellent place outside the town, and they are well built, and are provided with a well appointed riding school and other appliances, and could, I believe, be easily made available for a cavalry regiment. In view of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to remove the cavalry from Manchester, I would suggest to him that Preston would be a more suitable place for locating them than Lichfield.

(11.50.) MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The Resolution, Sir, which you have read from the Chair appears to deal only with the question of barracks, but the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War told the House that his scheme extended beyond that, because it included the purchase of land. I do not know whether it will not be necessary to alter the Resolution, as a Bill is to be founded upon it. But I rise for the purpose of asking the Secretary for War whether he will afford the House information with regard to the mode in which the scheme will affect what was intended to be carried out under the mobilisation of the forces many years ago. In connection with that scheme a certain amount of barrack accommodation was erected in different parts of the country, and I think we ought to be informed whether the barracks then put up will be utilised. There is a reflection which occurs to my mind and which I suspect will occur to many other people to-morrow when they read the account of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. Here we have a War Minister coming down to ask a vote of between four and five millions, and in order to justify that expenditure he gives a most lamentable account of the present condition of the barracks in different parts of the country. Nothing could be more emphatic than this condemnation of the conduct of present and past Governments. How is it, and why is it, that with the hundreds and thousands of pounds, aye, the millions of pounds, which have been voted in the last two decades in connection with buildings and repairs, we are now told that the barrack accommodation at Aldershot and and at the principal stations in this country is simply scandalous and deplorable? Whose fault is it? It is not the fault of the House of Commons, for I never knew the House begrudge money for work of this description. The responsibility must rest with the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors. It appears to me that the right hon. Gentleman owes the House some kind of apology for the state of neglect and disrepair into which the barracks have fallen, and also for their insanitary condition. The country ought to have some explanation of how it is this has come about, and they ought to know upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility.

COLONEL NOLAN: I must express my gratification that the worst barracks in the country—Galway Barracks—are going to be dealt with under this scheme. But there is one point to which I should like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and that is to the accommodation at the depôt centres. He will find, if he inquires into the matter, that the barracks at these places have not been erected on the most economical scale. They are too small for the number of troops that ought to be provided for, but the accommodation for the staff is unnecessarily large and out of proportion.

*(11.54.) MR. STANHOPE: In reply to the hon. Member, I may say that the depôt centres will continue to be used hereafter, as at present, with possibly one exception.

*(11.55.) MR. H. J. WILSON (York

W.R., Holmfirth): I think the right hon. Gentleman must have failed to catch a portion of the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal, who asked how it is that the barracks have got into such a condition.

*MR. STANHOPE: It is impossible at this hour to go into that question; but if hon. Members desire to pursue it at another time, I shall be happy to meet them. I accept my share of the responsibility; but I think I shall be able to satisfy the House that during the two or three years I have been in office, I have done something to remedy the defects at our military centres, although I may not have been able to apply an adequate remedy.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of sums for the purpose of building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom, and in certain Colonies.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL (No. 156).

SECOND READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland furnish the House with any information in regard to this Bill?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): The Bill is one that has been very carefully prepared, and it is also one in which I am aware the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. M'Donald) takes great interest; but as it has only been circulated to-day, and as the subject is one of importance, I desire, as far as possible, to ascertain the views of the mercantile community of Ireland upon it before it is further considered in this House.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman promise that at a future time, after he has had the opportunity of ascertaining the opinions of the mercantile community in Ireland, he will afford the Irish Members an early opportunity of considering the matter?

*MR. MADDEN: I can give no pledge on the subject.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 6th March.

MOTIONS.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.

(12.0.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I ask leave of the House to bring in a Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to the liability of employers for injuries to their workmen.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I should like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman whether this Bill is the same in all respects as that which was introduced in a former Session, or whether the clause relating to the right of employers to contract themselves outside the Act has been discarded?

MR. J. R. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would also furnish some information as to the Insurance Clause.

MR. MATTHEWS: The Government will consider whether the clause referred to by the hon. Gentleman may not undergo some modification.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 172.]

COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION EXPENSES BILL.—[Bill 152.]

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

CROWN OFFICE BILL.—[LORDS.]

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 3rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (RE-ARRANGEMENT OF VOTES.)

Ordered, That the Statement laid before the House, showing Arrangement of Votes in the Estimates for 1890-91, as compared with that in the Estimates for 1889-90, be referred to the Committee of Public Accounts.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 28th February, 1890.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

First Report from the Committee made, and to be printed. (No. 30.): To be considered on Friday next.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, namely—

E. Lathom.
(*Ld. Chamberlain.*)
V. Oxenbridge.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Kensington.

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

EXAMINATIONS FOR OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS.

EARL WEMYSS: My Lords, in rising to bring before you the notice which stands in my name on the Paper, I have to make a double apology to your Lordships. I have, first, to apologise for this notice having last Session been so long on the notice Paper, and for not having brought it forward, but, as perhaps some of your Lordships know, when those twin enemies of man, gout and neuralgia, get possession of one's person, they do so to the exclusion of everything else. It was physically impossible for me, therefore, to come down to this House for the purpose of bringing this matter forward. I make that apology to those in particular who may have suffered inconvenience from my inability to attend. The second apology I have to make is for venturing at all to bring this subject before your Lordships, but the explanation I have to make for doing so is this: Those of your Lordships who read the *Nineteenth Century*—and who does not?—are probably aware that at the close of 1888 and the beginning of 1889 the pages of that periodical were full of letters and articles upon the question of examination. Against what is called "The sacrifice of Education to Examination" a very numerously signed protest was drawn up which appeared in the columns of that serial. On turning to that protest I find it was signed by 415 persons. There were among them 12 Peers, 73 Members of Parliament, 154 principals, professors, tutors, heads of schools, ladies, and others connected with education. Of those persons 37 who signed the general protest, I should mention, signed it with reservation. Now, my Lords, I signed among others, not on account of having any special knowledge of the subject, but in agreement with the general feeling which I have no doubt exists throughout the country, and possibly among your Lordships, that this system of examination was and is being carried in this country to an extreme. I afterwards, to my surprise, one day received a letter from three gentlemen who had been most active in making the protest, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and Mr. Frederic Harrison, asking me to bring this matter before your Lordships' House, and ask for the appointment of a Royal Commission. My answer was that I had no special aptitude for this work, that I had simply signed the protest to show my own feeling in reference to it, and that there were many Members of your Lordships' House far more able to deal with the subject, to whom they had better appeal. But having received a further letter from them I think your Lordships will agree that I could do no other than consent to bring this matter before you. In doing so, I shall not venture to give you any opinions of my own upon this most important matter; your Lordships must look upon me as a sort of telephonic instrument, which will bring to your ears the views and opinions which have been uttered outside the walls of this House; and in giving those views and opinions I shall endeavour to do so in as condensed a form as I can. For that I pray your Lordships' patience. I wish I had the power of condensation, which, as the story goes, was once possessed by a French cook—I do not know whether he was in the service of the Noble Earl Granville—who was supposed to be very extravagant and wasteful of meat. When he was reprimanded, and asked what had become of an "ox which had been sent into the larder a few days before," he was equal to the occasion, for, putting his hand into his pocket he drew forth a meat lozenge — "*Voilà le bœuf de*

Monsieur." I repeat that I wish I had such powers of condensation; but I have endeavoured, out of the documents which have appeared upon the subject, to summarise, as far as I can, what appear to me to be the principal protests against the cramming examinations which are conducted at the present time. I think I had best begin by touching upon the general protest upon the question. To discuss the general question would embrace the whole subject of education and culture; but my Motion is confined to two points, namely, inquiry into the means for obtaining good public servants for the service of the State, and also inquiry into what is done abroad, so that we may, if possible, profit by the methods adopted in foreign countries. I believe that as regards the arguments against the general system of education, so far as general education is concerned, this is the sort of thing that is said: that education, generally speaking, in the proper sense of the word is sacrificed to examination; that is, education in the true sense of teaching—that which trains the mind and faculties; and that training of the mind and faculties is impossible with the rapidly succeeding examinations of students, which are constantly going on at the present time. I see that one of the fellows of Oriel says that between the ages of 7 and 22, he was never examined less than twice a year. Then it is stated that what is thus learnt for examination purposes is rapidly forgotten; the examinees' memory is called "a ten-days' memory," and no wonder. The Duke of Argyll, sp aking of the present system, says—

"In primary education we have an overburdened memory and a weakened brain, and in higher education an artificial examination."

Then it is said that the aims of students are misdirected: that instead of being directed to learning, culture, and education in the proper sense of the term, men's aims are entirely directed to getting money—prizes, scholarships, and fellowships—and making way in life. The result is that you have superficiality, monotony, and men turned out as from a one-pattern machine. All play of imagination or individual character is crushed out, as it were, by an iron roller, and you have uniformity where Nature intended variety. Education is given into the hands of two classes of specialists, the examiners and the crammers, and everything is directed to the examinations. And what is the direction of these examinations? They cause the construction of analyses, summaries, and tables to be substituted for the study of Standard works, and the Association of Teachers meets to discuss what are called "wrinkles" in examinations, those wrinkles being intended to meet the crotchets of examiners, with which they are well acquainted. A teacher says that his most intelligent pupils do not do best in examinations. Now here is what a lady, a parent, says—

"It is the duty of parents to revolt against the present system, because a child's life is a perfect torture, and no heed is taken of the child's intellectual bent."

Sir Sydney Waterlow states that he is Governor of a school where there are 800 out-door pupils and 200 boarders, and that in that school

"Ever since they had prevented the head-master trying for payment by results the educational improvement in the school had been manifest and great."

I am happy to say that, under the wise rule of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland, within the last fortnight, a revised educational Code for Scotland has come out, under which payment for results in schools is in a great measure done away with; the payment is given for classes, and much discretion is given to the schoolmaster as to how he will classify his scholars. That is what has been very much wanted; what parents and teachers have been asking for; and I think I may say that the proposal of my noble Friend has been received with gratitude in Scotland by all who are interested in teaching. Now, my Lords, the general system of these examinations is pithily put by an old Parliamentary friend of mine, Admiral Sir J. Hay, who says, "There is really nothing like our present system of examination—except in China." It is true we have not got quite to the point yet that they have reached in China in this respect. I saw in a paper the other day that at Canton they have what is called an "examination lottery;" that is to say, they bet on the students who are going up for exami-

nation just as they do in this country upon horse races on Epsom Downs; and in China, too, it is said, that both horses and jockeys—that is, the students and the examiners—are occasionally "made safe" in order that those who make the bets may win in those lotteries. Well, I trust we shall not come to that; but I have here a passage in which a very distinguished scientific man puts the argument very strongly and clearly—Professor Huxley. He says about examinations—

"Examination, like fire, is a good servant, but a bad master, and there seems to be some danger of its becoming our master. I by no means stand alone in this opinion. Experienced friends of mine do not hesitate to say that students whose careers they watch appear to them to become deteriorated by the constant effort to pass this or that examination, just as we hear of men's brains becoming affected by the daily necessity of catching a train."

And Professor Huxley sums up the whole thing in this one short sentence—

"They work to pass and not to know; and outraged science takes her revenge. They do pass and do not know."

So much, my Lords, for the general question of education in the proper sense of the term. I point out opinions. I do not merely give names, but they are the names of most distinguished persons who hold these views which I have endeavoured to summarise. This is one class of arguments against the over-cramming produced by the present examination system; but there is one most important feature of the subject, and that is the effect produced on the health, not only on the present but of the coming generations. Here is what is said upon this matter by medical men of great distinction. One says that—

"A great increase of nervous affections is due to"—what?—"school examinations, that much brain disease results from over-pressure, and that both home and colonial experience bears this out."

Another says—

"That where there are no counter-athletics the physique is deteriorated."

Dr. Avery says—

"That the effect on girls of over mental strain is great. They grow up highly nervous women, giving birth in case of their marriage to weak and deteriorated offspring."

And he goes on to say—

"The spirit of emulation is stronger in girls than in boys, and makes them work beyond their strength."

I was talking to the Rector of St. James's, Mr. Kemp, and he told me that his observations bore that out, for he said "I constantly see however worked and strained young women pupil teachers are." For a moment I may be forgiven, perhaps, for adding upon this point that as I was coming down to this House in a hansom this afternoon, I found I was being pursued by a brougham and pair which finally overtook me. A medical friend jumped out and said, as he knew I was going to the House to bring forward this subject, he would tell me a very instructive incident bearing upon it. He had been attending a lady who had already added several boys to the population. Her boys had recently gone through some severe competitive examinations. After recovering from the chloroform which had been administered to her, she eagerly asked "Is it a boy or a girl?" On being told it was a boy, she burst into tears and said, "Oh dear, then we shall have all those horrid cramming examinations to go through again." That shows what an influence these examinations have had on people's minds in this country, and how they look forward to modifying them. Dr. Warre, the Master of Eton, spoke in the *Letters from all Sorts and Conditions of Men*, of there being many more boys at Eton wearing spectacles than there used to be, and that many a bright boy between 12 and 15 becomes blunt and dull from this cause. And we are told that many more of our distinquished schoolmen die in early life entirely from the results of the work entailed upon them in preparing for these examinations. Now, my Lords, I come to the specific subject of my Motion, namely, whether or not this system is good for the public service, and whether it is the best means that we could adopt for the purpose of giving us efficient public servants. As regards the public service in the Army and Navy, I do not propose to go into that branch of the question. Still, one cannot help thinking there is something wrong in the Army Examinations when one finds what men have to go through. I saw the other day a friend of mine, a captain of Volunteers; we were out shooting, and I thought he looked very much depressed and out-of-sorts. On asking him "What is the matter?" he said, "I have to go up to London for my

military examination, and what bothers me is that I have got to sit up all night and learn forty pages by heart; I must not miss a particle or a word of it, and that is where the trouble occurs." I do not think that is a practical way of training men. I think it would be much better to train men in manœuvres and in what they would be called upon to go through in actual warfare. They should be trained for that purpose in the open country, say at Aldershot, and be taught to manœuvre their men under instructing officers, and should be required to show that they had the requisite knowledge of ground. It was not examination that gave us our great generals and admirals of olden times, and, as far as I know, no examination-general has ever had a command yet, except one distinguished officer of the Staff College. As regards generals in command, I do not think any such officers have been in active service, and we have yet to learn whether all that is done in the way of examination in the Army is likely to give us anyone fit to be chosen for it. At any rate, it strikes me that is not the way to make practical soldiers. But, my Lords, it is more especially with the Civil Service that I have to do on the present occasion, and the question is, Does this system of competitive examinations give us the best type or the best men for that service? I happened to be at the Treasury when this system originated. It was in 1852 or 1853 under Lord Aberdeen's Administration; and I well recollect hearing that the whole question of the Civil Service was to be gone into by Sir Charles Trevelyan and a gentleman whom we did not know then at the Treasury. We asked who he was, and we were told that he was a great friend of Mr. Gladstone—by name Sir Stafford Northcote. He was not in Parliament then. That was really the beginning of this new system of Civil Service Examinations. But what was the cause of its origin? It was want of courage on the part of public men and Members of Parliament to enquire into the merits of individuals and to recommend proper persons for admission to the Civil Service; and they thought they would get rid of the whole thing by sending all the candidates to a cram-examination, and so have all responsibility taken off their shoulders.

Earl Wemyss

That was the cause of the system being instituted, and I think your Lordships will not say that it was a good origin. I will say very little, but I hope it will be to the point on this question. Lord Rosebery put the case in a nutshell when he wrote to the *Nineteenth Century*:—

"I am deeply impressed with the fact that by the present system we lose many excellent, and obtain many useless men."

Another extract from these letters, which I will read to your Lordships is from one by Lady Taylor, the widow of a man well-known to us, Sir Henry Taylor, who was for many years at the Colonial Office. No better public servant I think ever held office. She says:—

"The present system is torture to the victims and does not supply the best materials."

Such, she says, was her husband's opinion; and he said that—

"If our present system had been in force in 1824, he never would himself have got into the Civil Service."

And Lady Taylor says:—

"In such case the State would have lost 50 years' service"

from one of its best, as he was generally recognised, Civil servants. Moreover, a point which I would bring particularly to your Lordships' attention is that we do not carry this principle out to the full. It is only appointments in the lower branches of the Public Service that are put up for competition and examination. Cabinet Ministers are not so chosen; Judges are not so appointed; the Right Reverend Bench is not so filled; professors, one and all, are not so chosen. I go further, and ask would any of your Lordships be content to choose your land agent who works for you, or even the odd men working about your house, by such a system as this of competitive examination? Take for instance the Cabinet—I do not say the present Cabinet, but almost any other Cabinet Ministers who have ever held office, would they if that office had to be filled by examination have been able to assert their right to the positions they held? Certain I am, I may say, of one who would have been so qualified, and that is the present Prime Minister. I well remember being told by an Oxford man, the son of the late General Peel, in the course of a conver-

sation about Oxford—"We have at the present moment the future Prime Minister at Oxford." I asked, what is his name? and he said "Robert Cecil." Therefore I have no doubt that if there had been necessity for it my noble Friend the Prime Minister would have succeeded in putting himself in the front in any competitive examination. But there is a very important branch of the Civil Service which we are told suffers greatly by this system, and that is the Indian Civil Service. In India you have races who are extremely intelligent, who know the sort of men who go out there; they draw comparison between the Civil servants of pre-examination times and those who are appointed by special examinations; and they say that there is deterioration in many respects, in many qualities—I will not say precisely what they are—but qualities which are essential for governing those races. They see that manifest deterioration and falling off. Nothing can be stronger than the expression used in a published letter of Sir William Gregory, than whom there is, I think your Lordships will agree, no greater authority as a highly cultured man. He lays the greatest possible stress on the deterioration in the Indian Civil servants and the danger arising from it; he hopes there may be some remedy found for this, as he considers, very pressing and immediate danger; and he speaks most strongly of the necessity for some security being taken for the choice of men fit to deal with and be entrusted with the government of highly intellectual races. Now, all I shall say further upon this subject is in reference to the concluding part of my Motion in regard to how far the system now adopted in this country prevails abroad. I am desired to ask that an inquiry should be made into the working of foreign systems. I find that there is no competition in any of the 26 States of Germany in the sense of our competitive examinations in England. They have qualifying examinations for categories and posts in which success is essential. In fact the English system obtains nowhere in Europe except in France; and what says M. Yves Guyot upon the subject? He writes—

"La protestation est juste; si elle est juste en Angleterre, à plus forte raison l'est elle en France, où nous sommes tous des petits Mandarins, qui n'avons la permission de devenir quelque chose qu'après avoir été broyé par un tas de laminoirs qu'on appelle des examens et des concours, et tout est demandé à la mémoire, rien au jugement, où le mieux noté est celui qui a le mieux retenu la leçon du maître et n'a jamais pensé pour lui-même."

He says if this protest which we are making is right in England, it is even more so in France, where they are all "petty-Mandarins," who have not permission to become anything except after being crushed by examinations and competition, where everything is asked of the memory and nothing of the judgment. And he says of those examinations, that the man who gets the most marks is he who has best retained the lessons he has learned from his master and has never thought for himself. The American view of the subject also bears out that which I venture to set before your Lordships from the protest. From letters published in New York, it appears that this question is being raised in that country also. A New York publication which is headed "Examination and Education," published by Leonard, states that President Adams, of Cornell University, says:—

"From his own experience the best work was done where there was the largest freedom; the least satisfactory where there was the most rigid system of examination and marks. The German method is superior to the English; American experience accords with the German."

Professor Thompson, of the University of Pennsylvania, writes:—

"Thus far we have avoided the worst defects of the English system. We have kept examinations in the hands of teachers, which minimises cramming."

Chancellor Sims, of Syracuse University, declares the whole system of prizes and scholarships and other honours on examination to be vicious and hurtful. And Professor Rogers, of Harvard College, says:—

"It is almost a truism since the days of Matthew Arnold that in Germany, the land of few examinations, scholarship has touched a mark far beyond that reached in England, where an examination begins and concludes everything."

My Lords, I have nothing more to quote to you in opposition to the present system of cramming-examinations, but as my object in moving for this Commission is that in doing so both sides of the question should be brought before

the House, so that your Lordships may decide which is right and which is wrong, I think it is right that I should now say a few words on the other side. A reply to that protest has appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*, and I think I may say that the general answer given is that examination and competition act as a stimulus to candidates to work, and that without it not one in ten, or even one in a hundred, would work for learning's sake. Lord Thring, in his answer to one of the published letters, also says that he does not think you can get boys to learn for learning's sake, and that you must give a stimulus in the shape of scholarships and prizes, or perhaps, as he says, even a stimulus behind. What he means by that I will not attempt to explain. Then they say in defence of this system that there is no other means of avoiding favouritism in appointments to public offices than by throwing them open to competition. That was the very reason why, as I have told your Lordships, this vicious system was first introduced. This necessity, I grieve to say, is considered to be much greater now under a Government of the democracy than ever it was under a Government conducted by a bloated aristocracy. Let me give the House a very short summary of the view of, I suppose, one of the chief of crammers—Mr. Scoon, a man of extreme ability, who has done good service in getting young men forward for examination. He sends foxes into the Philistines' corn. He does not mince matters in answering his opponents, and he says that the agitation against examination is due to the unendowed coach; that a private tutor is rarely consulted before the University course for better or worse is closed, by which enthusiasm is kindled not so much for the acquisition of knowledge as for the objects of knowledge; that it is the University men and not the coaches who swamp the country with detestable primers, summaries, and digests which supply the place of larger works, and the use of which deprives the candidates of the power of thinking out even the value of an adjective; that injury is done to health by examinations; that the unendowed coach represents the survival of the fittest; and that high-class candidates are successful without the aid of tips. My Lords, I have now stated both the

Earl Wemyss

arguments against and those in favour of the present system. There have also appeared in the publications to which I have referred and in the letters of different kinds from which I have quoted, suggestions as to what should be done in the way of remedy for the defects which the writers themselves see. For, mark, in all this correspondence, in all the remarks of those who defend the existing system, they do not defend it exactly as it is. They defend examination, they defend competition; but they do not defend the examinations as they are now conducted, for I think, almost without exception, they say reform of some kind is wanted. The difficulty is for them to find what the change should be; they do not see their way, and meantime they are content to more or less let things alone. Still, if they do not ask for, they are not opposed to the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry, and in that way they hope that some outlet will be found. Of those suggestions I have noted a few. They mainly resolve themselves into qualified selection, limiting and controlling appointments by examination. All educational examinations of pupils, it is again strongly recommended, should be conducted by teachers with an independent assessor. Then grants of money to deserving students are recommended without examination, and on the recommendation of college and school authorities, rather than awards of scholarships and prizes by competitive examination. Others again think that physical tests should be added to examinations, and that marks should be allowed for them. Lord Lytton wishes the Public Service to be supplied by qualification, subject, if possible, to selection, while Lord Derby is of opinion that some substitute for competitive examinations is required which would give equally free opportunities to all. Lord Carnarvon says there is nothing like the old Oxford University honors system; and no man is more entitled to speak of that system than Lord Carnarvon, who under it distinguished himself so much at the University. He also says he would be in favour of nomination with a high qualifying test, as in the Foreign Office. Lord Pembroke says there should be a pass-examination put at whatever height you choose, and then there

should be physique tests. In Holland there is a system existing which is said to work extremely well. For public appointments there is a qualifying examination, with a nomination of candidates to the qualifying examination from the universities and schools. When the nominations are vested in the universities and schools, there would be much less chance of jobbery than if they were in the hands of public officials. Now, my Lords, my task is at an end, and, as I have said, it is not a responsibility which I have taken upon myself. I am simply the mouthpiece of others. I will only say I wish that, in addition to what I have been able to state with regard to the views of distinguished persons, I could bring any experience of my own to bear upon this matter of examination; but I recollect hearing, many years ago, that the grandfather of one of your Lordships once said, "He thanked God he was born before that scoundrel Jenner adulterated the race." And I, for my part, thank God that I was born before men were put, as they are now, under this torturing examination harrow. My examinations at Oxford were very much the same, I have no doubt, as those of many of my noble Friends—on entering the University for the Little-Go, and for one's Degree. I am happy to say that is the whole amount of examination to which I have ever been subjected; and my first examination, on entrance into the University, was, I recollect, not very formidable. I was marched up the Hall where all the tutors stood in a row, into the presence of the Dean, and the Dean simply put one very searching question to me—"How is your father?" I supposed I answered that question very satisfactorily, for I was instantly passed and became entitled to all the privileges of the University. I cannot, therefore, my Lords, thank God, speak to the working of these examinations from personal experience; but I think I have said enough, quoting from these authorities, some of them among the most distinguished men in the land, who have expressed their views on this subject. I hope I have convinced your Lordships that this question is a very vital one; that it not only affects the intellectual progress and education of the nation, but that it affects the national health in the present, and possibly that of generations yet unborn. We are told that it is not the best way of obtaining our public servants, and there is no other country in Europe except France in which this system prevails. I hope, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government will take this matter into their serious consideration, not necessarily from anything that I have said, but on account of the interest which is taken in the question at the present time by the public as manifested by the opinions to which I have referred. From what I have been told, I believe that the granting of this Commission is not impossible, and that it is not viewed at all with disfavour by the head of Her Majesty's Government. It is in that hope and in that belief that I have brought the matter forward, not speaking for myself, but for those who have desired that I should bring the subject under your Lordships' consideration. I have, in conclusion, to apologise for taking up so much of your Lordships' time.

Moved,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the whole subject of official appointments by examination, and to collect information bearing on the matter from other countries."—(The Lord Wemyss, *E. Wemyss.*)

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE: My Lords, as an old examiner, and not in my episcopal capacity, I should like to say a few words upon this subject. Looking round upon your Lordships' House I can see the face of certainly one noble Lord whom it was my privilege and duty in old times to examine. I daresay there may be others present, for I have examined a good many. With regard to the articles in the *Nineteenth Century*, to which the noble Earl has referred, I may say that I am not one of those who signed the protest. I was desirous of doing so, but felt myself unable to sign it as I thought it went too far. But I contributed one of the articles which have been referred to, and if I rightly remember it was the last word in the discussion upon the subject. Although unable to sign the protest, I do not rise for the purpose of opposing the Motion of the noble Earl. With the general purpose of that Motion I entirely agree; but, as the noble Earl did not speak as an expert on the subject

of examinations, I think it desirable to point out the distinction between examinations as a mode of entrance to the Public Service and of testing capacity for well-paid work, and the use of examinations as a distinct part of education. I maintain, and I think any one with University experience will support me in saying, that examinations are a necessary part of a regular education. With regard to the subject to which I especially devoted my own attention at Cambridge—mathematics—examination was the very backbone of the educational system. It is the best way of first getting knowledge into a man, and then getting it out of him; seeing whether he is competent to reproduce that knowledge which has been put into him. As to the notion of a man being merely crammed for a time and then having, upon the strength of his memory, to produce a certain amount of knowledge, that is a mere caricature of that which is the real system of teaching and of which examination is the test. A certain amount of knowledge is put into a man, and it is only by examination that you can find out whether he is competent to reproduce the knowledge which has been imparted to him. Examination is the test that a man has understood what he has learnt, and that he is able to reproduce it in a clear and suitable way. But beyond that, I venture to say that it is not the mere reproduction of knowledge that is first put into a man that is required, but both with regard to classics and mathematics the most important portions of them are just those things which a man has to evolve out of his intellect, and which he cannot possibly get from any books beforehand. In the case of classical examinations, every one knows that certainly at Cambridge the chief stress is laid on original composition—it may be verses, or it may be Latin prose or translation; but it is perfectly impossible, from the nature of things, that that could ever have been crammed into a man. With regard to mathematics, the great object of the examiners is so to frame their questions in reference to book work as that they shall test a man's thorough knowledge of what he has been doing, and make it impossible for him by mere cram to rise to any high place in the tripos. Examination and cram are often taken as if they were correlative terms; but the great effort of Cambridge examination was, as far as possible, to dissociate those two things. Anything at all in the nature of cram was at once marked in black by the examiners, and every effort was made to throw cram into the background and to give the marks and the honours to those who showed that they had not been crammed, but that they understood what they had learnt, and who showed by the manner in which they worked their problems that they knew what they had been doing. There seems to be a great tendency, because examination seems to have partially failed with regard to certain applications of it, to bar examination altogether. I entirely approve of what has been said by the noble Lord—I believe it was a quotation from Professor Huxley—that examination is a good servant but a bad master. I have no doubt that is so; but while we disclaim it as a master, let us make it our servant. Let us make it the handmaid of education and the test of knowledge, but let us suppress as strongly as possible the notion of any real connection between examination and cram. The noble Lord has wisely confined himself to one particular portion of the subject; he has not asked for a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of examinations in general. It seems to me that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, consisting of men who are experts in this matter, and who are most laboriously and conscientiously devoting themselves to the question how examinations can best be managed and how they can be made best to answer their purposes, might well be let alone. I think they understand their business better than any Royal Commission can teach it to them, and it is much better to allow them to work out their own problem in their own way. With regard, however, to official appointments by examination, that seems to me to be a subject which deserves to be looked into. If one may believe all that one hears about the results of these examinations, I think there is a great deal which may be very properly inquired into; and, therefore, while I speak strongly of the benefit of examination and the possibility of entirely dissociating it from cram, I am entirely with the noble Lord in the Motion he has made.

The Bishop of Carlisle

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, the noble Lord who has addressed you with so much ability on this subject has in his speech combined a number of subjects which hardly seem to be appropriate to the object of the particular Motion itself. My noble Friend appears to have had a limited experience of examinations, and his experience was a very pleasant one I should imagine, for a young man going up at Oxford simply to be asked about his father's health could not be very trying. I am sure, however, that you could hardly put that forward as a system which could either be preserved in Universities or which, if preserved, would conduce to the advantage of the Universities generally. With reference to the three very distinguished men whose views he has put forward, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and Mr. Frederick Harrison, I think, without any disrespect to them, I may say they are not without what some people call crotchets, or, at all events, hobbies, which they ride with some violence. With regard to the passages which have been quoted by my noble Friend, I regret to say that I am not so extensively read as himself nor have I refreshed my memory as to those passages, but I certainly do remember that there was a long controversy in the *Nineteenth Century* with regard to this subject of examinations. The right rev. Prelate who has addressed your Lordships' House has, I think, shown you that examinations for prizes, scholarships, and degrees, are absolutely requisite, or else the Universities would become of little or no advantage. Everything that has gone on in this country recently has been in the direction of stimulating education by offering open scholarships, and making prizes more open than they formerly were, so as to bring forward those of special ability for whom the Colleges have almost contested. I am far from saying, nor do I think it necessary to the argument to say, that the number of examinations at the Universities do not strike one with surprise, remembering what formerly took place, and comparing them with the period at which one was studying at a University one's self. At that time there was the "Littlego" or responsions, and there were no doubt what were called College Examinations at the end of the term but no examinations for degrees either when going in for pass or for moderations and then final honours. I think my noble Friend was speaking not of the official examinations to which his Motion is directed, but rather of the examinations within the Universities themselves, which are continually going on. In fact, whenever I have been at Oxford I have found that the new schools in High Street there are pretty well occupied by those who are being examined for something or other in that place, which was certainly not the case before. We are apt to forget the state of things which existed formerly when Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Trevelyan began their movement, though that was not done by themselves alone, one being a private secretary, the other being employed as everybody knows, in an official capacity. At that time to which my noble Friend has referred, it was not thought that the system in existence was a good one, and I cannot imagine that it was only with the view of getting rid of the responsibility of nomination that Ministers consented to the change which then took place. I do not say that it does not interest myself as a Minister to be free from nominations, which was the system formerly, and I think that many must have the same feeling. The selection of individuals is a very invidious task, particularly for offices, which should be open to all. It seems a hard thing that when five or six boys at a school, all equally capable, all equally educated, and all equally brought up as gentlemen, you should exclude five of them from particular offices because the sixth has influential connections. It seems a hard thing that five of such boys must be excluded from the competition and from the chance of obtaining a particular appointment because they had no connection with the Minister, and no connection with anybody who could give the appointment. This system of open competition, therefore, is not a thing which has come about suddenly, but it has grown. In the first place, there were test examinations, and eventually competition followed, and I think the effect of those examinations, judging from the results, has not been so bad as my noble

Friend supposed, for one office after another has come voluntarily under this system, and many offices which are not under the Orders in Council still call upon the Civil Service Commissioners to undertake the examination of their clerks with a view to obtaining efficient Civil servants. Therefore, I say, that this system of open competition has sprung up gradually of itself. In a few moments I will show what Parliament has done, rather differing from the view of my noble Friend, though I quite admit that this question has exercised men's minds very much, and that eminent men have taken different views on the subject. My noble Friend went on to speak of the Scotch Code, and gave all the credit for it to my noble Friend the Secretary for Scotland, and he is entitled to a great deal, but, at the same time, I would point out that we in England have taken the same course, and that I am as responsible for what has been done in Scotland as my noble Friend (Lord Lothian). I do not quite see, however, the bearing of this upon the question before us. I go back to that, and if I thought that this system were destructive of all real education, as my noble Friend says, I should be the last to resist his Motion. I do not say that it may not require great modifications, and indeed constant modifications have been going on. The Departments have been in constant communication with the Civil Service Commissioners not only with the view to render the examinations such as will secure candidates fitted for their particular Departments, but will also ensure that the knowledge possessed is not the result of a system of cram. In fact, the first object put forward was to insist upon a thorough education. The main object of the entrance examination, it is to be borne in mind, is to secure the selections of youths which have had a thoroughly well-grounded liberal education as English gentlemen; and what I want to contend for is that the Civil Service Commissioners secure that end while they do not exclude youths possessing the ordinary education which gentlemen get. For you will find it is a remarkable fact that in a great number of cases in which Universities and schools send up their candidates, they are largely successful, not in consequence of having gone upon a system of cram, but from having adopted a system of what is called a liberal education fitted for gentlemen both at school and in College. I quite agree that the object ought to be that those which have been reading specially for those examinations, should not be taken out of the ordinary course of education which will qualify them for any other position; and the system which the Civil Service Commissioners adopt is, I think, well qualified to attain that end. For instance, in the lower branches of the Civil Service Examinations to which candidates are admitted no one can say that the examinations are of such a character as to induce an education different from that which would qualify a man for any ordinary position as a merchant or shopkeeper or anything else in London or any of our cities. But with regard to the higher class examinations, if my noble friend had looked into the subjects which are examined upon, and the care with which they are selected, I think he would have seen that there was nothing which would tend to encourage cram, but that it was intended and everything was done to encourage the acquirement of a liberal education at universities and schools. There have always been at the universities and outside men with special qualifications, who are able, as it were, to whip up their pupils for examination for good degrees or for positions which they desire to attain. There is no doubt that there are unendowed persons who have adopted their own course in these matters, and have shown themselves specially qualified in that way, but those persons are not the examiners, and therefore no suspicion of favouritism can be attributed to them in regard to those whom they coach, who undergo the same examination, and whose only advantage is that they have received the help and stimulus of the unendowed tutors. I do not think the object of my friend is to interfere with the system of education, and I do not understand him to say that these examinations for special purposes do interfere more with the system of education than the examinations for prizes and certificates, which he seemed to think so injuriously affect the minds and physique of those who are subjected to them. That point has been

answered by the Right Rev. Prelate, and I think I need not further dwell upon it. But let me quote from the late Report of the Civil Service Commissioners for the purpose of showing what are their own views upon this question of liberal education. They say that for themselves they are fully sensible of the great responsibility which is imposed upon them, and that they will strive by constant vigilance so to administer the system as to encourage a liberal measure of instruction, in order to ensure that those candidates only shall succeed whose knowledge has been thoroughly and intelligently acquired. And when we consider who the Civil Service Commissioners are, we find among them Sir George Dasent and Mr. Courthope—one of the most distinguished literary men of the day and a man highly qualified for the post he occupies. I know more of him than of Sir G. Dasent, but everyone who knows Mr. Courthope knows that he is singularly qualified for the post he holds, and that he is the last man in the world to allow a system of real education to be eclipsed by a system of cram which should lead to the carrying away of prizes by those who had not received a thorough, true, and liberal education, as he says himself. Then my noble Friend speaks of health, and on that point I am a little surprised. I do not deny for a moment that the great competitive strain to which people are subjected in these days, not only in schools or in official examinations, but in the tremendous struggle for existence and for a competency which is going on in this country, has to some extent increased the prevalence of nervous disorders, and has had in that way an injurious effect upon people's brains. The only question is whether the undisturbed brain is so valuable an article that the risk of disturbing it should not be run for the purpose of arriving at higher qualifications. I do not find from my own experience that people's health and minds are to any large degree affected by these examinations in schools, colleges, and universities. In the Commissioners' Report there is given a summary for the first 30 years of the system. In the first 30 years they state that there were 123,000 entries for examination. My Lords, think of the trouble which Ministers have been saved. There were nominated 26,675, and entries for open competition 291,521. The reason I give the full figures is to show how many were affected in health. Even upon the strict medical examination made of candidates the number was only 2,363, or not 1 per cent. Therefore, your Lordships see that those who had prepared themselves for these examinations or competitions had not absolutely destroyed their health, and one knows that among such large numbers there must be youths who have inherited disorders. That seems to be the effect of these competitive examinations. You will find in the last Report of the Civil Service Commissioners a letter from Sir Andrew Clark with respect to the Indian competitions, for which he had been medical examiner, expressing the opinion that those who passed for the Indian Civil Service did not appear to suffer in their health, though I believe the Indian Civil Service examination is as severe as any. But though he does not find that they suffer in their health, he finds, curiously enough, that there is a particular form of disorder—rather disagreeable to talk of perhaps—albuminuria, which comes on at the critical moment of examination, arising apparently from nervous excitement, and to which those possessing highly nervous constitutions are liable. However, he finds that when the examinations are over that passes off in a few days, and does not materially affect the candidate afterwards. I think, my Lords, we may pass on with the subject as far as the official examinations are concerned. With regard to the general question of health, I would ask have we become a nation so puny and unhealthy that we have no longer either muscles or strength enough for such a strain, as would appear from the statement of my noble Friend? The complaint is generally the other way: the complaint is that we are becoming a nation of athletes, and there never was a time when athleticism was so prevalent as at present in our colleges and schools and among our youth. Those who have been the most celebrated at Cambridge and Oxford as athletes have taken the highest places and honours in the Oxford Classes and the Tripos at Cambridge. And so with regard to the Judges and those who have held high office in this country. My

noble Friend says that neither we, as Ministers, nor the Judges are put to examination. The Judges have to go through a long trial; it is true they have not to go through the trial of an examination extending over several days, both oral and written, but they have to make their reputation as men of ability, as lawyers able to state facts and deal with them—certainly they have to show their competency in law. So, again, with regard to those who adorn the Bench on which my right rev. Friend sits, there is not one who rises without examination: they have had to show their qualifications before the period when they were elevated to the Bench. With regard to my own position I will say nothing—or I will only say this, that nothing would be less to my taste than to be put to an examination test by the Civil Service Commissioners. When I was at the Home Office I remember a very curious incident occurring in reference to this subject. I was called upon to appoint an Inspector of Mines, and I wrote to the great College at Newcastle to recommend somebody. They sent me back the name of a man who they said knew everything about mines, who was consulted upon all mining questions throughout the country as an authority, was thoroughly acquainted with everything connected with the ventilation of mines, and whom they said I might safely appoint. Well, I appointed him, and he went before the Civil Service Commissioners for examination. He was plucked because, as he said, he had totally forgotten all the things he knew when he was 22, but that at 42 his mind had been carried far beyond what he knew then, and he said it was unreasonable to call upon a man at his age, and after so long an experience to undergo a Civil Service examination. I agree, but that was at a very early period of this system; things are now conducted in a very different manner; but I know it happened in that particular case that after having appointed two men, both eminent engineers in the North, who were both plucked, the Commissioners at last passed a young man of the greatest distinction, but they again complained that he was not quite 25. I replied—"This will not do, if he is not 25 he is very near it." Then they said they would pass him, but that his pension would only reckon from his 25th year. He was then appointed, and I believe has been acting with great success ever since. I only mention that, my Lords, to show that with regard to examinations they should be adapted in some sense to the kind of men who are called upon to undergo them, and it no doubt requires a great deal of skill to conduct them properly. My noble Friend spoke with some disrespect, I think, of those who had gone to India. I have myself had a little experience with regard to Indian matters, and I never heard complaints made on that subject. On more than one occasion inquiries have been made by Government into the working of the competitive system, with the result of ascertaining that the system has produced men many of whom have acquired a reputation for administrative capacity of a high order. With regard to Indian Civil Servants, I can only say that they are men who are eminently qualified to perform the duties called for from them. I can quote from the Reports of the Director of Military Examinations to the same effect; and, in fact, the Civil Service examinations have been conducted with the view of getting the best men, because it has been found that we have no means of getting them in any other way. I do not wish to be in the least misunderstood in this matter. I can quite understand the arguments of my noble Friend and his supporters with regard to avoiding the responsibility of nomination, but he is mistaken if he supposes that character is not now tested. The subject of character is closely inquired into by the Civil Service Commissioners, and there were over 2,000 rejected on that ground, and not allowed to go in for the examinations, as appears in their Report to which I have adverted. That shows that there is supervision exercised with regard to character. My Lords, after all this, what have we to do with a Royal Commission? I cannot myself understand the arguments for a new inquiry of that kind. There is a perpetual inquiry going on. What good purpose would be served by appointing another Commission? There are no facts with regard to what is done in foreign countries, which cannot readily be procured by the Foreign Office, as to this subject and all matters connected with it. The Army examination of the Belgians is referred to in the Appendix to the last

Report of the Civil Service Commission, and anything else of that sort can be readily procured. Have there been no inquiries upon the subject? Has not this subject been inquired into again and again? In 1853 there was Sir Stafford Northcote's Commission; then in 1855 there was an Order in Council which began the system; and in 1856 there was a Resolution of the House of Commons in favour of it. Then in 1859 there was the superannuation measure, that no one who had not a certificate should receive a pension. In 1860 there was a Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed upon these subjects. Then there was another Order in Council in 1870 upon which practically they are now acting. Since that time there has been the Playfair Commission, and now there is the Ridley Commission, which has to consider this question incidentally, and which has found, in fact, that a great many of the pupils are too good for the post for which they go up to be examined; and that really you have put razors to cut blocks. The standard may be altered in order to answer the objection that many of the Lower Division clerks have really higher qualifications than men in the Higher Division. Now, after all these things, what is it my noble Friend wants? He wants a Commission on which we must put, I suppose, representatives of different opinions, who will not report unanimously. Suppose we put on a Commission Mr. Frederick Harrison on the one side, and some person who takes a totally different view on the other, what would be the result? You would have simply no Report whatever, or an imperfect Report, and we should be just where we are. My Lords, I am convinced of this: that with an Executive deeply interested in having the offices well filled, and interested in exercising the vigilant superintendence which it exercises now, I fail to see the need of any inquiry such as is suggested by the noble Earl; and it is a remarkable thing, when you consider how every subject is brought before Parliament, that nothing has been brought forward against the system as one bringing into office persons who are unfitted for their duties. No attack has been made upon the system on the ground of the unfairness in the examinations, or of injustice done to individuals. Of course, there will always be among great numbers of persons black sheep. Though the majority are white sheep there will always be some black ones, whether the system adopted be nomination or competition. I believe, in the absence of any such charges against the present system, that a new Royal Commission would throw no greater light on the subject. Let us inquire, if you please, into the subject of education, and how we can give a better stimulus to it in regard to those who are to fill official positions. If, on the other hand, there be anything in the system which conduces to ill-health, let us have statistics on the subject, and not act upon suggestions such as that put forward by my noble Friend, whose medical acquaintance got out of his brougham to tell him the interesting fact which he narrated. It did not seem to be of much importance upon this point, because the particular effect to which he had just been referring was the effect upon girls, and therefore a girl was more likely to be subject than a boy to the effects of the system which he so much deplores. My Lords, I believe that without any further Commission you have already full means of arriving at a just conclusion on this subject; and therefore, with great respect to my noble Friend, I must answer that I cannot accede to his request for a Commission.

LORD TEYNHAM: My Lords, I think you will allow that my noble Friend made an exceedingly good point when he referred to the athletic part of the argument of the noble Earl. I wish the noble Viscount had been as successful, as he certainly was eloquent, in attempting to deal with the numerous other points which were put by the noble Earl. It would be a most satisfactory thing to the public could this matter be dealt with successfully once for all, and as I think every great question ought to be dealt with, by an able Minister like the noble Viscount, competent to lead public opinion, and to give to public opinion that guidance which the people of this country expect to receive, not only upon this, but every other important question. My Lords, it is very curious, indeed, to see how many inconsistent opinions there are among eminent men, themselves connected with the work of

education, upon this subject. I was very glad to hear from the noble Earl that Dr. Warre had given his views against the present abuse of examinations. The last time I looked at an Eton list, and that is not very long ago, I found that the Rev. Dr. was not only examining in the old-fashioned manner, but was actually examining every boy for every division he had to enter, and if he did not pass affixed the sign of a minus quantity against his name. I hope that has been abolished, and that the opinion of the Rev. Dr. has been changed. Then there is the question of Public Schools. I am acquainted with one which is, perhaps, rather more a proprietary school which is greatly patronised by the upper Middle Class, and I know what happens to the boys who are at a too early age over-educated in that school. They are sent up to the Universities, there to obtain scholarships, and they obtain nothing else because they are worked out; and I am not at all sure that that is not an advantage to them considering the present condition of the Universities. I am not speaking of what they were formerly, but of what they are now, even when the positions of distinction in them have been so very highly filled. My Lords, what are they? Instead of the old educating subjects—the classics and mathematics—we have all kinds of "ologies." Your Lordships know the term which is applied to these other subjects. They are subjects which are harmless enough; but if they do not precisely educate, they are not of any distinct advantage to the persons who are examined. Subjects like Political Economy and Modern History, with which the Universities have nothing to do, are substituted for real educational work. As for the origin of this system which the noble Lord pointed out, I am not at all surprised to find that Sir Stafford Northcote was in favour of this kind of examination, because it is within my knowledge that Sir Stafford Northcote, in order, I suppose, to assist himself in his Parliamentary work, went to a celebrated Professor of Mnemonics and studied under him, and probably he thought as he had derived benefit from that kind of instruction it would be of advantage for examinees and would assist them in the same manner. Now, the next point is one to which I desire particularly to call your Lordships' attention. The noble Earl, quoting Lord Thring, said that he contended that school examinations were absolutely necessary, simply because a large majority of the boys would not work unless they had a stimulus before them or a stimulus behind. My Lords, I question that, and I think they might be made to work. It might be made a necessity of their school time that they should work—it was so in the time of our grandfathers. The man who I consider injured and ruined more than any other the education of England was the late Dr. Valpy of Reading School. He took it into his head—it was one of the follies of the wise—that grammars ought to be written not in a learned language, but in English. Before his time the old Eton grammar was written in Latin, and not only so, but Latin was the language spoken in every school where a gentleman was educated. A boy never addressed his master except in Latin, nor would any boy even address his schoolfellows except in Latin, and the consequence was that in those days a Lower Fifth Form boy would have a more competent knowledge of that most difficult art, Latin Prose Composition, than anyone now, except perhaps Archdeacon Denison. As to the right rev. Prelate saying that the Universities know their own business best, and do not want to be guided by a Royal Commission, I happen to have seen the actual marks which were given by four examiners to a very eminent man with whom I am acquainted, in giving him a First Class in Classics, and they differed so widely and absurdly in the marks which they gave for exactly the same work that it shook my faith in University examiners, and it shakes my faith now when the right rev. Prelate tells us that the Universities know their own business best.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I do not wish to prolong this discussion further than to express my very great relief at hearing the speech made by my noble Friend the Lord President of the Council, for I understood the noble Earl to say that he brought forward this motion with the support of Her Majesty's Government. It is a subject in which I have always taken a great interest. My noble Friend began by an allusion to a cook, but I can assure him that no cook

of mine ever presented to me an ox in the shape of a pill; though with great culinary skill he has himself presented to us all the arguments which we have heard during the last 25 years against the admission of Civil servants to appointments by competitive examination. At the end of his long speech he stated his justification in bringing this subject before us was that he had the support of the head of Her Majesty's Government, and I own I trembled when the noble Viscount rose to address your Lordships, because I feared that we might be going back to a system which cannot be restored in place of a system which has answered very well indeed. It has always seemed to me that in order to have a Royal Commission the first thing is to show a necessity for it, and it is for my noble Friend to show that in this case there has been a deterioration in the *personnel* of Civil servants either in this country or in India. Some proof that that has been the result of the present system ought to have been given, and I believe there is no proof whatever of the sort. The noble Earl has not suggested more than others have done who have attacked this system, though giving us, in a more tangible way, the desires which have been expressed for modification of details. The question is, what is the most certain mode of enabling us to secure the best men, whether by selection, by a competitive examination, or by leaving it entirely in the hands of Departments to fill up vacancies as they arise? The noble Lord made a comparison between Bishops, Judges, and statesmen. I think he might have said a little more about statesmen, for they have a great tussle to go through before they become Cabinet Ministers—a very great tussle indeed. I remember a joke of Lord Palmerston, who was once asked whether a man was fit for an office to which he had been appointed, and he replied, "I have generally found that when a fellow has been clever enough to get a political office he is clever enough to perform the duties of it." There is no doubt that political men have a much better and safer test than any mere literary examination could possibly put them through. Judges and Bishops are appointed, it is true, by selection, but in the case of such appointments the great responsibility rests upon the Prime Minister, or the head of a Department who makes the appointments; and if he makes a bad appointment he is perfectly sure to hear of it directly through the organs of public opinion; the appointment is criticised, and he has at once to accept the responsibility. Now, what is the position of the political head of a great Department? Has he time himself to really examine into all the qualifications of the numbers of young men of 18 or 19 who are desirous of filling the office? I venture to say that he has not, and if he makes a mistake in making the appointment he has to admit the responsibility, though it may not be brought against him for eight or ten years afterwards. I believe there is no possibility of the head of a Department himself selecting young men, and the result must be, for human nature continues the same, that if you give the power to heads of Departments to make appointments to offices, the power will be exercised almost always at the dictates of political Whips in the House of Commons, or at the request of Peers who discharge similar duties in your Lordships' House; or at the suggestion of political friends. I have no doubt that we should all like to have an easier opportunity of providing for sons who are not quite so intelligent as we should wish them to be, and that may account, perhaps, for some of the attacks which have been made upon the system of competitive examinations. What the right rev. Prelate has said is perfectly true with regard to distinguishing between real and forced education—we ought to make a distinction between cramming and real education. I do not think the word "cram" is a very admirable word. Students may be crammed in such a way as that they learn only the questions which they are likely to be asked, or they may not, and it depends entirely upon the character of these examinations whether they are successful or not in securing the best men. The noble Lord brought forward the instance of Sir Henry Taylor, who declared that he would never have been able to get into the Colonial Office if there had been a competitive examination at the beginning. I entirely agree with the noble Lord that I never knew a better permanent Civil servant than Sir Henry Taylor; but there are other

authorities than Sir Henry Taylor, and I am justified, I think, in not taking his authority upon the subject of what he would or could not have done when he was a young man, because I am perfectly certain that if he had known that his admission into the Public Service depended upon his showing that he possessed a certain amount of education, he would have succeeded in satisfying the requirements of the tests. Another thing which your Lordships do not know, but which Lord Kimberley does, with regard to the question of clerks, is that Sir Henry Taylor was not quite so good an authority as will be supposed, for he was in such an exceptional position that he almost to the end of his life continued to do some of the most valuable work in the Colonial Office, but for 15 years of the time he never saw it, living 70 miles away as he did. My Lords, I really am glad that the noble Lord opposite has spoken on behalf of the Government as clearly as he has done, but I think if a case of deterioration had been made out, or if a case had been made out as to the destruction of health, it would have been a very difficult thing; but if no case of that kind does exist, I think it would be perfectly wrong of Her Majesty's Government to give encouragement to the notion that the valuable system now existing, though it may be open to improvement, is likely to be upset by the Report of a Royal Commission.

THE EARL OF DUNDONALD: My Lords, I should like to ask the noble Earl whether, in the event of his succeeding in his Motion, he would include the entrance and other examinations to the Army within the scope of it. I think your Lordships will agree that in no branch of the Public Service is it so necessary to have men of initiative and readiness of resource as in the Army. By the present system of examination, the memory of a candidate is made the most important factor, and we know that many men of small memory, but of great readiness of resource, would under the present system be prevented from entering Her Majesty's Service. I am sure most of your Lordships must have among your acquaintances many men who have failed in passing the preliminary examinations for the Army, but who are, above all, the most fitted to lead troops in action. I do not wish to make a speech on the subject. I came here not knowing that it was to be brought forward, but I desire to call attention to the examinations in regard to men who are entering the Services. The noble Viscount made some remark to the effect that he was not aware that these examinations have a bad effect on men's health, but I know men personally who have told me they have been made ill by having to undergo the examinations. I trust, therefore, that the noble Earl will, if he succeed in his Motion, include the Army examinations in the scope of it. In my own branch of the Service, the Cavalry, there were in former days four or five men deep waiting for commissions, but at the present time, or at all events a short time ago, there was hardly a Cavalry Regiment in the Service which was not short of officers, while hundreds of men who would make most excellent Cavalry officers, second to none in the world, are idle and doing nothing. The object of an examination for the Public Service is to get the very best men possible to serve the country, and even if it be difficult to fill vacancies it is impossible to be too particular as to the men who present themselves and who are passed. In the Army now, according to a recent regulation, reports are made upon subalterns after, I think, three years' service, by the senior officers. I am afraid that any report of that kind will be more or less a dead-letter, because when a subaltern joins a regiment he may, as regards acquirements, stand as fair; he may pass, and may be quite good enough to go on at first; and it is a very difficult position to put senior officers in who are perhaps friends of the young man, who may be quite passable in every way, to say that they shall block him out from the Service. I believe that, as regards the Army, the effect of this provision, under which you can in that way get rid of an officer after three years' service, will be that you will only get rid of the most glaring instances of incompetency. My Lords, I will conclude by again hoping that the noble Lord will proceed with his Motion, and that he will include the Army in it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, before the noble Earl answers, I would like to say a few words. I do not

wish to enter into the general discussion, but only to touch upon the subject as far as it bears upon the Indian Civil Service, and to say that I confirm entirely as far as my own experience goes, and it has been considerable, what was said by the noble Viscount, as to the result of the present system in that Service. At the time I had the honour of holding the office of Secretary of State for India, I made repeated enquiries to ascertain whether the complaints sometimes made in the public prints with regard to the results of competitive examinations were well-founded or not, and I and my colleagues convinced ourselves from the reports we received from the various departments, that there was no reason to be dissatisfied with the results of the system of appointing Indian Civil servants by competitive examination. There were of course some failures, as there must always be under any system. Failures had occurred in the case of Civil servants who had shown want of judgment and even common sense, but under no system could that be avoided. You may test a man's intellectual capacity, but you cannot by any means you can devise test his judgment or common sense; his Examiners cannot be certain that he possesses either, and that is therefore an inherent difficulty in any system you may introduce. But I am quite sure there is no reason to be dissatisfied with the results of the system as regards India, and I am glad the noble Viscount quoted from the report upon that service, which gives a perfectly favourable opinion upon those results. I will also add that for many years there have been discussions upon the question, not whether there ought to be competitive examinations, but as to age and other qualifications. Different views have been taken on the subject, and it has been thought that the system might be improved upon. My own opinion is that the changes proposed, particularly with regard to age, were shown to be on the whole not desirable, and I am extremely glad to find that the Secretary of State for India has found it better to go back to the old system. I think it was better to give a trial to the new conditions; but as they were found not to work as well as the old conditions, I am very glad the noble Viscount has found himself able to put those conditions again in force.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): My Lords, I am glad to hear the expression of opinion which the noble Earl has just given. I can assure him the matter received very careful consideration before any alteration was made. I thought it only right that a fair and full trial should be given to the younger limit of age fixed upon some time ago when my noble Friend was Secretary of State; but the evidence which was produced before the Commission which sat in India, and the Report of the Commissioners themselves, coupled with the strong recommendation I had from the Viceroy, convinced me—having gone thoroughly into the subject upon the Reports which I received from every quarter—that it was wise to increase the limit of age for examination from 19 to 23. I am in hopes that we shall be able to secure the advantage which the Universities have given with regard to the training of young men after they have obtained their degree. Nothing could be better than the behaviour of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the matter, and I think the thanks of the country are due to them for the good they have done to the Indian Civil Service. I take this opportunity of publicly thanking them for the manner in which they have received the change of age, and no doubt still hope to render advantages to the Service. I think now that the limit of age has been altered, it is right for me to say that we never got the actual cream of the public school boys because they were taken away to go to the crammers. I hope we shall be able to get them now before they fix definitely their aim in life, and that either before they obtain their degree or afterwards they will find such an opening in the Indian Civil Service as will induce them to come forward for the purpose of filling the appointments, because to my mind there is no higher profession that a man can take up than that of the Indian Civil Service.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, I should like to say with regard to what has fallen from my noble and gallant Friend with reference to the Army, that I had myself for some years the honour of being connected with the Army; and though of course I have not the direct knowledge which he as an officer can

claim, still I had very ample opportunities of knowing what officers were some years ago. I think it will be admitted by everyone that officers of the present day are in knowledge and ability very superior to what they were 20 years ago. I do not attribute that entirely to the system of examination, but I think the system of examination has done much to improve the education of officers. When the noble Lord says that the examinations depend on memory and on memory alone, I entirely differ from him. The preliminary examination to which he refers is a very easy one, and one which an intelligent lad ought to pass without much difficulty. Then when you talk of physique, I venture to think that the officers of the present time are not inferior in physique to the officers of the British Army during any period of its existence. The noble Lord spoke of the necessity of obtaining men possessing powers of initiation, but how in the world are you to discover whether there exists the initiative power (the importance of which I entirely admit) in a lad of 18 or 19, whatever test you apply? It is impossible to test those powers except by experience. I am not in the least a fanatic for examinations, and I do not see why the system of examinations cannot be improved. I do not deny, as the noble Lord on the Cross Benches said, that your system might exclude some excellent men and some fools, but I would ask under what system can you avoid this? The great point is to admit as few useless men as possible and to get as high an average as you can. I believe that under the present system of examination you exclude those who are absolutely ignorant, and you do not run the risk of excluding more men than under any system which has yet been devised. One's sympathies are often excited at seeing a fine young fellow who has failed to get into the Army, but we must remember that many fine young men who are now officers in the Army would have failed to get in under the old system, and have had the door opened to them under this system of examinations. I do feel very strongly that before we are called upon to abolish or revise this system, which has not been unsuccessful up to the present time, we should ascertain what system is likely to be successful.

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I had not intended to trouble you for a moment on this subject, because I understood that the Debate was to have turned entirely on the value of examinations before official appointments are made. My noble Friend the Chairman of Committees has avoided that subject altogether and has dwelt exclusively on the Army Examinations. It may be in the recollection of some of your Lordships that I have ventured to contend that the tests for the Army are incomplete—not that intellectual and educational tests ought not to be applied to the Army or that their application has not been of great value, but the physical strength and proficiency in martial and athletic exercises, though not ignored for what has been called the scientific branches of the Army, the Engineers and the Artillery, are entirely ignored in the rest. Nothing but a pass examination takes place by a medical man with regard to the appointment of officers for the Cavalry and Infantry. An officer of Engineers may, as has occurred in some instances, for years together never have occasion to cross a horse; a cavalry officer, *ex hypothesi*, is obliged to do so; and yet, in the Woolwich Examination, proficiency and excellence in riding counts for a certain number of marks, but is utterly ignored in examinations for the Cavalry or for the Infantry. Surely, while good health is desirable in fulfilling all duties in life, and in occupying any official position, yet good bodily strength is of most essential value in the case of officers in the Army. I remember an ex-Cabinet Minister once saying to me that an examination which attached any value to riding would give an unfair advantage to men who had had the opportunity over the sons of poor parents. I said:—

> "I did not know before that you wished to have a handicap competition for the honour of serving Her Majesty in the Army, that the object was not to get the best possible candidate but to get the best possible race."

My view, on the other hand, is that if Her Majesty can get an officer who is qualified to ride, so much the better. The better article Her Majesty can obtain at a given price and on given terms, it seems to me the greater the

advantage for the country. I must not detain your Lordships longer upon a question which has collaterally arisen in the course of this debate. I can only say with regard to the question which has been raised by my noble Friend, that I have a very lively recollection of the pressure that came from constituents nearly half a century ago in these matters; and one of the Whips long ago confided to me that as a rule Members for small constituencies got a greater number of appointments for their constituents than Members for large constituencies; and for this reason, that it made comparatively little difference in an election in a large constituency to the chances of a candidate's election whether he obtained a particular nomination for some particular friend and supporter or not, whereas in a small constituency it might make the whole difference. A man with two or three brothers and cousins in a small constituency in the old days might decide the election one way or the other, and therefore not only had you a preponderance of nominations in favour of the relatives of the least independent and least high-minded, as a rule, of the constituents, but you had a preponderance of this kind of nomination from the most corrupt and smallest constituencies of the country. Whatever faults may be found with the present system, looking back in my own remembrance—and I had some facilities at one time in my life for seeing how patronage was bestowed—I cannot doubt that the testing of candidates by examination is in its results greatly superior to the old system of nomination. As a noble Lord has very truly observed, the nomination of an incompetent young man is not likely to effect prejudicially at once the efficiency of a public office, but as years pass by, after the patron has gone into Opposition, or has been placed in some other office, or has died, by the process of seniority the inefficient young man rises to a position of some importance and weight in his office, and the office suffers accordingly, but no one remembers after the lapse of so many years who was the Minister originally responsible for the appointment. So that in using his personal influence a Minister used not to be immediately concerned with regard to the fitness or eligibility of the candidate. Nothing is perfect in this world, and I have no doubt that the system of appointment of candidates may be susceptible of further improvement. I am quite satisfied that it is susceptible of a great deal of improvement in the case of candidates for the Army, but I cannot as regards the Civil appointments altogether support the views of my noble Friend.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I have only one word to say, and it is hardly in reply, but rather in explanation. The noble Lord who spoke from the Back Benches asked whether I would enlarge the scope of the motion so as to take in examinations as regards the Army. I shall be perfectly ready to do that if it will make the Motion more acceptable to the noble Lord the President of the Council. Would it?

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: No.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My object is to get this Motion carried, which I believe would greatly benefit the prospects of education in this country, but I suppose, from the reply of the noble Viscount, that that enlargement of the Motion would not make it more acceptable to him. I am bound to say it was with some astonishment that I heard the speech of my noble Friend. That speech was quite the speech of a person in an official position, for he based his answers on the opinions of those under him in the Office.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I beg the noble Lord's pardon; the Civil Service Commissioners have nothing whatever to do with me; they are not under me—they are under the Treasury.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I thought there was a connection between the Civil Service Commissioners and the Education Department, but apparently there is none. What the public desire to know is whether these official Reports are as absolutely trustworthy as they might be supposed to be as regards the carrying on the affairs of the country. My noble Friend has absolutely ignored the mass of evidence which he knew, or ought to have known, is being got together in the shape of letters from all sorts and conditions of men, peers, heads of colleges, and some of the men best known to science in this country, who all say that the time has come for an inquiry into the matter. I say I am surprised, because I am inclined to believe that if the head of Her Majesty's Government

had not been a victim to the prevailing epidemic and had been in the House to-night, we should not have had the speech we have heard from the Treasury Bench. I had hoped the Prime Minister would have been here, and I had reason to believe from what I have been told by those whom I represent in your Lordships' House to-night that he would have acceded to the appointment of this Committee. So that I may say that I am among those who have suffered from the prevailing epidemic. The Chairman of Committees argued as if there was no alternative between the present system and a return to the old system of jobbery and unfairness; but it is in the belief than there is an alternative, and in the hope of putting it forward, that we are moving in this matter. Certainly my object was to show that those who are in favour of this inquiry want a Royal Commission in order to see whether the complaints against the present system are well founded or not, and to see whether you cannot find some middle course which shall be less disadvantageous to the country. That is my answer to the Chairman of Committees. The noble Lord has referred to what has been done in Holland. The whole of the Civil Service is provided for in this way —not by examination, but by the nomination of heads of Department, and then the candidates have to pass an examination. I can only express my disappointment that Her Majesty's Government have thought it right, through my noble Friend the Lord President of the Council, to decline to grant this Commission, but I hope they will see fit to alter their decision.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Does the noble Lord persist in his Motion?

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: No; I shall not press my Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

DOCK ACCOMMODATION AT GIBRALTAR.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: My Lords, I wish to repeat a question which has now been before us for three Sessions. Three Sessions ago I asked my noble Friend representing the Admiralty whether they hoped to construct a dock at Gibraltar. Some notice was given to my request, but I was told that the Admiralty had not made up their minds upon the subject. Since then, as I understand, a member of the Board has been out to Gibraltar, and in company with scientific engineers has examined the various sites. The Report appears to have been favourable, and we are again told that the Admiralty are considering the question. My Lords, I am afraid the Government have been somewhat deterred by a speech which was made last year by my noble Friend Lord Carnarvon, whose opinion must carry great weight although it is a non-professional opinion. His objection to the dock was based on two grounds. He first stated that the anchorage at Gibraltar was very unsafe, and then he said, what was partially true no doubt, that wherever a dock might be constructed it would be exposed to hostile batteries from the Spanish shore. With regard to the first question, I would merely remark that if there is any one position in which a ship might be safer in harbour than another, it is when she is in dry dock; and if the question of the erection of batteries on the Spanish shore is supposed to be against the construction of a dock at Gibraltar, I can only say that the same objection applies to all docks, arsenals, and works to which we have gone on adding for a series of years. It is very doubtful, from whatever point hostilities might come, whether any batteries could be erected which could not be commanded by the Rock battery; or supposing there should be anything that could harm us, to which we could not speedily reply by armaments sent out from our own arsenals. If it is a question of working batteries it would be probably "para mañana" with the Spaniards (an expression implying delay in Spanish), and I think we could supply heavier guns from England than any hostile Power could place to command the Gibraltar dock. I hope the Government are considering this question, and the reason I bring it forward now is that it may be taken into consideration before the Estimates are passed, and not delayed for another year. I need not remind my noble Friend, who is a naval man himself, how important it is that some means of repairing our ironclads abroad, or in the Mediterranean, should be found in addition

to Malta. I venture to point out again that there is at this moment a fleet worth £10,000,000 sterling in the Mediterranean, and that there is no provision made for repairs except at Malta. I think there are three or four large docks at Malta; but suppose you go to war, and any of our large ironclads are disabled, there is really nowhere else to repair those ships unless they are taken away from the Mediterranean to Plymouth, as our nearest dockyard. In the present state of dock accommodation in the East Indies, men-of-war have been actually taken from the East India Stations because they could not be repaired on the East India Stations (I may say that with regard to that I shall have a question to ask by-and-bye), and they have had to be repaired at Malta. If you go to war your ships will be subject to hostile attacks in the East and in the Mediterranean, and very likely on the coasts of Spain. Your docks would be crowded at Malta; you would not be in the position of Lord Collingwood after Trafalgar, when there was no enemy to oppose him, and he could send his ships home to be repaired; but you would have to send your ships home 2,000 or 3,000 miles to your nearest port—Plymouth, in the face of an enemy. I very much fear from what I hear that the Government are grudging the expense of £350,000 which would be necessary for the construction of a dock, and that they are offering some subvention to private companies in the matter. I venture to suggest that if that is so, it is a policy unworthy of this great country to hand over the safeguarding of the vast property which I have mentioned to the enterprise of some private company, and that they should undertake as the only step worthy of this great country to at once commence this dock and pay for it themselves; and that they should lose no time about it, for it is impossible that a dock could be constructed under two or three years, and if any hostile operations take place in the future it may not be constructed in time.

LORD BRASSEY: My Lords, before the noble Lord replies, there are two considerations which I should like to put in the briefest terms with regard to what has fallen from the noble Viscount. First, it is proposed that the dock at Gibraltar should be constructed as a convenience and facility to commerce. That part of the sea is crowded with our shipping, and I can only say, having been frequently at Gibraltar, that I never visited the place without seeing a number of steamers under repair there. It does seem unsatisfactory that in the contingency of war the Mercantile Marine should be entirely dependent for its coal supply afloat on the hulks in the Bay of Gibraltar, every one of which might be sunk by torpedoes on a dark night or in foggy weather. I think that is one very great argument for the construction of a dock.

*LORD ELPHINSTONE: My Lords, no one who has studied the subject, especially with the aid of a map, will be surprised at the interest which has been shown in it on several occasions by the noble Viscount when he has, from time to time, brought the matter before this House. This is not the second, or even the third, time that he has brought it forward. Naval Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean have from time to time pointed out to the Admiralty the advantage we should derive from having a first-class dock at Gibraltar, and the Admiralty fully concur in the view which has been so generally pressed upon them on the subject. The Admiralty fully admit the absolute necessity in time of war of having at that station such a dock as would be capable of accommodating our largest ships. Hitherto there have been difficulties in the way into which I need not enter, but which your Lordships will readily understand. Even now, the Estimates having been framed for this year, it has been thought better that the works should be undertaken by private enterprise rather than by Her Majesty's Government. Various Bodies have approached the Admiralty with the view to undertaking the construction of the dock, and now we are only waiting for some further particulars before deciding upon the details of the matter. The Director of Works was recently out on the spot, and of the various sites suggested he selected one upon the new Mole Parade Ground, in close proximity to the dockyard. The new dock which it has been decided to construct is to be 520ft. long and 100ft. wide, and capable of taking a ship drawing 32ft. of water

on the blocks. In the event of a ship being partially damaged, having one of her compartments full and not being on an even keel, we shall be able to dock a ship drawing 35ft. of water without the blocks, and at high tide as much as 37ft. of water. Our longest man-of-war is 410ft. in length, and the greatest draught of water of any of our ships is 28ft., so that we shall have ample space. Another matter which has been considered of the greatest importance is the extension of the Mole, and it has been thought desirable that the work should be undertaken simultaneously with the dock. It is proposed that it should be increased in length by 1,600ft., and it is thought that the excavations of rock to form the dock, which will be 80ft. in depth from the surface, will go a long way, if not completely, towards the formation of the new Mole extension. The advantage of the site chosen for the docks is that it will be protected by rising ground under the lee of which it will be placed from the fire of ships at sea. On that rising ground, there are ramparts already placed. A further advantage will be that the entrance will have the protection of the Mole. It will not interfere in any way with the very limited space which now exists inside the Mole for anchorage. Moreover, the cost of the works on this side will be less than on any other that has been proposed. I will take this opportunity of referring to a matter upon which a good deal has been said. The idea has got abroad that Her Majesty's Government propose to construct docks, or the protection for the docks, on ground belonging to Spain. No such idea has ever entered the heads of Her Majesty's Government. It is true that among the many schemes from time to time suggested to the Admiralty there was one for making a canal along the north side of the Rock, and that scheme proposed that the canal should be used for coaling and docking purposes; but though supported by Sir John Burgoine it was strongly condemned by Lord Napier and especially by Sir J. Adye, the late Governor of Gibraltar, on military grounds. So far as the Admiralty are concerned the scheme has never even been before them officially. The scheme, I can only say, has been condemned, and wherever the idea originated it has never been entertained for a moment by any Department of Her Majesty's Government.

*Viscount SIDMOUTH: Then I understand my noble Friend to say that the dock is to be constructed partly by private enterprise?

*Lord ELPHINSTONE: No; entirely.

*Viscount SIDMOUTH: Will that fact occasion any delay?

*Lord ELPHINSTONE: We hope not; we hope to get the specifications in a very few days.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL.—(No. 14.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; and to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 28th February, 1890.

QUEEN'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

The COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD reported Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

"I have received with satisfaction your loyal and dutiful Address.

I am confident that the matters which I have recommended to your consideration will receive your earnest attention, and you may rely on My co-operation in your endeavours to promote the well-being and happiness of my people."

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (RE-ARRANGEMENT OF VOTES.)

Copy ordered [February 27]—

"Of Statement showing Arrangement of Votes in the Estimates for 1890-91, as compared with that in the Estimates for 1889-90.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 73.]

SHIPS (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return ordered—

"Of ships arriving at Ports in the United Kingdom from Foreign Ports in the years 1888 and 1889 with live cattle on board, showing the names of the vessels, ports of departure, and the loss of human and animal life from such vessels."—(*Mr. Howard Vincent*).

QUESTIONS.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

(3.10.) SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (University of London): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether an elementary school which takes English and geography as class subjects can present children for examination in history and elementary science as special subjects?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): There is nothing to prevent to such a plan, as that indicated in the question, being carried out, provided that a graduated scheme of teaching History and Elementary Science, as specific subjects, be submitted to and approved by the Inspector.

THE NEW MAGAZINE RIFLE.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he would state to the House who is the inventor of the new Magazine Rifle now being issued to the Army; what reward has he received, or is he to receive; is the invention patented; what is the nature of the cartridge and powder now used with this rifle; who is the inventor; what reward has he received, or is he to receive; and, is the invention patented?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincoln, Horncastle): The Magazine Rifle is a composite weapon, portions of which are due to different inventors, and the same remark applies to the cartridge. Patent rights are claimed as regards some of the parts, and they will be fully and carefully investigated before the question of reward is decided. Up to this time no rewards have been paid.

IRELAND—CASE OF MR. J. E. O'MAHONY.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that Mr. J. E. O'Mahony, editor of the *Tipperary Nationalist*, now undergoing a sentence of six weeks' imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, has been removed to Tullamore Gaol from Clonmel Gaol, where he had been in consultation with his solicitors, Messrs. Burke and Crean, of Clonmel, regarding his defence in cases of libel brought against him by Colonel Caddell, R.M., and R. Power, bailiff, for publications in his paper; whether he is aware that Mr. O'Mahony's removal deprives him of the opportunity of holding necessary consultations with his solicitors; whether he will order Mr. O'Mahony's re-transference to Clonmel Gaol, so as to be near his solicitors; whether he is aware that, although Drs. Crean and Flynn certified that Mr. O'Mahony had been suffering immediately before his imprisonment from a severe attack of influenza, from which he had not fully recovered, he was placed on prison diet in Clonmel Gaol, and that Alderman Cantwell, Visiting Justice, protested against Mr. O'Mahony's treatment; what is Mr. O'Mahony's condition of health at present; and what steps have been taken to give effect to the recommendations of Drs. Crean and Flynn, that Mr. O'Mahony required "very careful treatment and a nourishing *régime*"?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I have also to ask the Chief Secretary, in reference to this case, whether the General Prisons Board have received any Report as to the condition and treatment of Mr. O'Mahony, editor of the *Tipperary Nationalist*, in Clonmel Gaol; if he has seen the statement made by Alderman Cantwell, a Visiting Justice, that he found Mr. O'Mahony in a "very weak condition," and that Mr. O'Mahony, whilst suffering from a bad attack, was left on a plank bed and on prison diet, with nothing to drink but cold water, the result being "complete prostration and utter loss of appetite"; and if he will direct the Prisons Board to order an inquiry into the facts of this case? I also desire to know if it is true that Mr. O'Mahony, editor of the *Tipperary Nationalist*, has been removed from Clonmel Gaol to Tullamore Gaol; what is the reason for transfer; and what is the approximate cost of the removal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): With the permission of the House, I shall now also reply to the two questions of the hon. Member for North Cork on the same subject. The General Prisons Board report that the prisoner mentioned has been transferred from Clonmel to Tullamore Prison. He is afforded the usual facilities for communicating with his solicitor in the latter prison, and has been in communication with one there. The Board have no information as to the alleged certificate of the doctors named. It is not the case that Alderman Cantwell made any entry in the visitor's book. He stated that he did not consider it necessary. The prisoner does not sleep on a plank bed. He also receives a special diet. The cost of transfer has not yet come before the Board.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I should be glad to learn what are the special facilities afforded to Mr. O'Mahony for consulting with his solicitors, who reside in Clonmel? I also wish to know whether the circumstances of the case were placed in the hands of the District Inspector and sent to Tullamore Prison?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer these questions without notice.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is it the fact that this gentleman is detained in a prison at Tullamore, and that he cannot consult his solicitors in Clonmel in reference to legal proceedings which have been commenced against him? I may call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that a different course was adopted in the case of my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien.)

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman give instructions that Mr. O'Mahony shall be at once transferred from Tullamore to Clonmel?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will cause an inquiry to be made of the Prisons Board as to the circumstances of the case.

MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the second paragraph of my question as to the condition in which Mr. O'Mahony now is?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on the subject.

THE FISHERIES OF DONEGAL.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a pier and harbour at Dunalt Glencolumbkill, in the County of Donegal, would give accommodation for fishing purposes to a district occupied by 200 famili s, and that if the work was so planned that trading vessels could call alongside, 500 families could get their goods direct by sea and save the expense of carriage over 30 miles of mountain roads; has his attention been drawn to the various memorials from time to time addressed to the authorities setting forth the advantages likely to arise from the proposed pier and harbour, and to the favourable Report of Sir William Brady, Inspector of Fisheries, as to the site and the necessity of this work; did Mr. Nicolls, Local Government Board Inspector, who was in 1889 specially sent to investigate the causes of the distress in this part of Donegal, urge, in his Report, the necessity of constructing such a pier and harbour; would he have any objection to lay this Report upon the Table of the House; and will he be able to take any steps to forward a scheme so conducive to the material prosperity of the people?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The construction of a harbour at Glencolumbkill, County Donegal, does not appear to have been under consideration. The making of a pier at that place for the use of the fishermen was suggested by the Local Government Board Inspector, and the Inspectors of Fisheries agreed that it would certainly be of use to the fishermen if funds were available. The Reports also deal with other matters, in addition to that now in question. They are Departmental documents, and it would be unusual to lay them upon the Table. However desirable the scheme may be, it must, of course, be considered in connection with many similar claims from other portions of Ireland.

CAPE COAST—RIOTS AT MOREE.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any action has been taken to prevent the recurrence of disturbances in the Moree district of the Cape Coast, consequent on the

suppression of native authority and the failure of the Gold Coast Government to replace it by other arrangements, as instanced especially in the riots of February, 1889, where about 38 natives were killed and many others were mortally wounded; and if any action has been taken whether he will inform the House as to its nature?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): No special action has been taken with reference to the Moree district, in which the authority for the maintenance of order is the same as in other parts of the Colony. The circumstances of the riots referred to were fully stated by me in reply to the hon. Member for Battersea on 4th July last, and do not bear out the assumption in the question that they were consequent on the suppression of native authority and the failure of the Gold Coast Government to replace it by other arrangements. The District Commissioner who was in charge of the District of Cape Coast at the time of the Moree riots is no longer in the service of the Colony.

FLOGGING OF NATIVES.

MR. PICTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government has received a Report as to the trial of Mr. C. E. Akers, of the Gold Coast Constabulary, held at Accra in August last, for administering 72 lashes apiece to more than 20 Krepis in the Gold Coast Territory, who were suspected of stealing a sheep, and of whom four died from the effects of the flogging; whether it is the case that Mr. Akers was indicted for murder; that that accusation was withdrawn, and a charge of assault with intent to inflict bodily injury substituted; and that he was convicted and fined £5, by way of punishment; whether he is still in the service of the Gold Coast Government; whether it is true that Mr. Charles Graves Ferguson, who was a witness for the Crown in a trial for murder held in November, 1888, has been dismissed from the service of the Gold Coast Government; and what was the reason of his dismissal?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Report has been received. There was no sufficient evidence that any of the men died from the flogging, and Mr. Akers was not indicted for murder. The indictment was for assault, occasioning actual bodily harm. Mr. Akers was convicted, and was sentenced by the Acting Chief Justice to pay a fine of £5, and to enter into his own recognisances to keep the peace for six months. He is no longer in the service of the Gold Coast Government. Nothing is known at the Colonial Office of the circumstances referred to in the last paragraph of the question, nor of the person whose name is mentioned; but inquiry will be made.

MR. PICTON: Are means taken, or will means be taken, to preserve order?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Yes, Sir; certainly.

THE ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary State for War whether it is true that Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, Sir Redvers Buller, and a large staff of experts, inspected the Royal Barracks, Dublin, on Monday last, and condemned, in the most emphatic terms, the system of sewerage in these barracks; and whether, having regard to the fact that several men of the 4th Hussars, the only regiment at present stationed in these barracks, have, within the last few days, been attacked with typhoid fever, which has in one instance proved fatal, he will give an assurance that this regiment will be instantly removed?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: It is quite true that the officers named did inspect the Royal Barracks this week; but I have not heard that any such expressions were used as those mentioned. The work of improving the drainage of the Royal Barracks is not yet complete; and while it is going on I am anxious to move the 4th Hussars to some other quarters, but also, if possible, to do it in the manner which will cause the least inconvenience to the married men of the regiment.

MR. MAC NEILL: Can the right hon. Gentleman mention any limit of time beyond which these men will not be left in the barracks? Will they be kept in the Royal Barracks for an indefinite time?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; certainly not. When the work is commenced in earnest they will be removed.

LONDON SEWAGE.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, before any scheme for the disposal of London sewage is adopted, a Government Inquiry would be held, at which the inhabitants of South-East Essex would have the opportunity of expressing their views, and giving evidence?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed that the London County Council have no definite scheme for the disposal of London sewage under their consideration; but they have instructed the Main Drainage Committee to secure the services of an eminent civil engineer to join the engineer of the Council in a thorough examination of the whole sewage system of the Metropolis. As no definite scheme is at present before the County Council I am not in a position to say what opportunity can be afforded to the inhabitants of South-East Essex of expressing their views and giving evidence.

MAJOR RASCH: If the London County Council have the disposal of the sewage and decide upon getting rid of it at Candy Island, will the Local Government Board be in a position to protect the inhabitants of Southend from a nuisance?

*MR. RITCHIE: It would not necessarily come before the Local Government Board. It is proposed, I believe, to make some alteration in the existing arrangements in reference to the London County Council finance, and if these proposals are assented to by Parliament the present position might be affected.

CARRIAGE OF RUSSIAN PETROLEUM.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that British ships trading to the Port of Batoum on the Black Sea, and engaged in the carriage of Russian petroleum to the markets of Europe, are subjected to considerable danger at that port owing to the very contracted limits of the deep water space within the port, and to the unequal depth of water alongside the loading quays; whether he is aware that the danger is increased by the publication of notices in the Russian Press which represent the depth of water in Batoum to be greater than it is; and whether any communication has been, or will be, made to the Russian Government upon this subject?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The attention of the Russian Government has been called by Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg to the difficulties owing to want of space in the harbour of Batoum. Important works have been undertaken there, and are, I believe, still being carried on. Hitherto there have been no loading quays available for foreign vessels to lie alongside, and all discharging of cargo has been done by barges. I believe that a quay will, however, shortly be completed. I have never heard of any notices having been published in the Russian Press concerning the depth of water in Russian harbours.

THE BERLIN LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if it is to be understood that the British delegates at the Berlin Conference will be debarred from discussing the International limitation of the hours of labour (adult), while the representatives of Foreign Powers will be empowered to do so?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I do not admit any such understanding as the hon. Member supposes. I stated, in reply to the hon. Member for West Nottingham, the terms in which Her Majesty's Government replied to the preliminary proposal of the German Government. The detailed programme has now been received, and as soon as it has been considered by Her Majesty's Government the whole of the correspondence will be laid upon the Table.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War whether it is yet the duty of any Government official, of the War Office or otherwise, to see that the Factory Clause, when

inserted in War Office contracts, is duly observed; and whether the due observance of that clause, as one security against sweating, is also provided for by pecuniary penalties in all, or in what proportion of cases?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Factories where Army clothing is made are inspected from time to time to ascertain that the Factory Clause is observed, and in a recent instance a penalty was inflicted for its neglect. The insertion of the Factory Clause with penalty is insisted on where practicable, and in the majority of cases.

ARMY MEDICAL STORES.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War what is the reason for "the considerable difference in price between the supplies for Army and Navy Services" in the case of medical stores, as commented upon by the Auditor General; and why the Director of Contracts has decided not to adopt the system of competition which prevails in the Navy for similar stores, and to ignore the recommendation of the Auditor General "to take steps for ascertaining by public tender whether the supply of these stores for the use of the Army could not be more economically obtained?"

MR. BRODRICK: The question of obtaining medical stores for the Army by public competition has been very carefully considered, and as the paramount consideration is to obtain medicines of the best quality for the use of the troops the supply has been for some years intrusted to two firms of high standing. As the packing and distribution of the stores is undertaken by the contractors for the Army, which is not the case in the Navy, this must be taken into account in estimating the difference between the price paid by the Army and Navy respectively. My hon. Friend will therefore see that the question cannot be decided solely on the question of the price of the article, and further information will be afforded when the question comes before the Public Accounts Committee. If that Committee is not satisfied with the explanation, the matter will be reconsidered.

IRELAND—PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE STATUTE OF EDWARD III.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if he will give as a Return the revised edition of the Statute of 34 Edward III., c. 1, passed in the year 1360-61, for the appointment of Justices of the Peace, and defining their powers and jurisdiction?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): I will make inquiry whether it would be in accordance with precedent; but I have no objection to give the Return asked for.

AFFRAY AT KILLALOE.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to a report in the *Standard* of the 26th instant, that on Sunday last, in Killaloe, County Clare,

> "A patrol of police fell in with three men, and that, on their refusing to give their names and declining to be arrested, a constable discharged five shots from his revolver; that a policeman thereupon drew his sword and stabbed one of the persons in question;"

and if he will direct an inquiry into this occurrence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the facts are not as stated in the newspaper report mentioned. Two policemen had under arrest a man who had given a false name and address when found upon licensed premises during prohibited hours. His two companions endeavoured to rescue him, and were with difficulty kept back by the second constable. The prisoner subsequently violently assaulted the other constable, knocking him down, and escaped. The constable pursued the prisoner, and, after calling upon him to stand, fired shots into the air to frighten him, but the prisoner got away, and was not re-arrested until the next day. No person was stabbed. The matter is being further looked into.

THE CORK UNION.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen the report of a public meeting held in Cork on the 24th instant, on the subject of outdoor relief, in the Cork Union, and which was presided

over by the Mayor and attended by the High Sheriff and a large number of prominent citizens, and at which a resolution was passed condemning the practice of compelling old people to go into the workhouse as contrary to the practice which prevails in England; and whether, in view of the strong remonstrance of that meeting, the Local Government Board will direct the Vice Guardians at Cork to treat the question of outdoor relief on a more liberal basis?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that a meeting on the subject mentioned has been held. As, however, I have already stated, the grave abuse which existed in the administration of the outdoor relief rendered it imperative for the Guardians to take action to check it. The Local Government Board have no evidence before them nor reason to suppose that the Vice Guardians have proceeded in a harsh or illiberal manner.

In answer to a further question by Mr. FLYNN,

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that the statistics he had referred to the other day showed an enormous increase in outdoor relief in the Cork Union between 1879 and 1889. He had not got the figures by him now.

MR. FLYNN: Has not the increase of outdoor relief been accompanied by a diminution of the general expenditure of the Union?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of that question.

MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman get the Vice Guardians to consult with the late Board on the matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no reason to believe that the Vice Guardians are either harsh or indifferent in their administration of the Poor Law.

MR. FLYNN: May I ask the Chief Secretary if he can state what is the cost to the Union per head (including establishment charges) of the pauper inmates of the Cork Workhouse; and what is the saving to the rates which the Vice Guardians hope to effect by forcing James Madden (recently afflicted with blindness), and his family, to enter the Cork Workhouse?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: From the last available accounts of the Cork Union the weekly cost of the maintenance and clothing of a pauper in the workhouse is about 3s. $2\frac{1}{4}$d., and the proportion of the salaries of the staff about $10\frac{1}{2}$d., making a total of about 4s. $0\frac{3}{4}$d. per week. As regards the case of James Madden, I have already explained that the Vice Guardians did not make the order for his admission into the workhouse with a view to effect a saving to the rates, but in order that he might be taken into the workhouse hospital, as, from information before them, they believed it would be to his advantage to remain in the hospital for some time to have his eye affection suitably treated. It does not appear that the reception of this man into the workhouse would have precluded his family from receiving outdoor relief if they were found to be destitute. It would have been the duty of the relieving officer to see to their condition.

MR. FLYNN: I must press the right hon. Gentleman to make further inquiry. I believe that the amount of outdoor relief comes to 4s. $0\frac{3}{4}$d. per head, which for a family of six is a little over £1 4s. per week. Is it not more economical in such a case to give outdoor relief than to require these people to enter the workhouse?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no wish to enter into a general discussion of the question of outdoor relief. It has been found wise, in certain circumstances, not to grant outdoor relief.

CHARGE AGAINST AN EMERGENCY MAN, M'KEEVER.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a case heard at Woodford Petty Sessions on the 24th inst. before Messrs. Hickson, R.N., and Burke, J.P., in which an emergency man named M'Keever was summoned by Constable Sheehan on a charge of being "drunk in the streets of Woodford on the 14th inst., and having a loaded revolver in his possession;" if it is true that a few hours after his arrest he was brought before Mr. Burke, J.P., by whom he was discharged, and who added that no further action should be taken; has his attention been called to the report of the trial, from which it appears that it was proved by Constable Sheehan that M'Keever, on being arrested, threatened

to shoot him; that Mr. Burke, notwithstanding the protest of the presiding magistrate, persisted is cross-examining the policeman, and finally called him a "blackguard;" and that after M'Keever had been fined £2 and costs, and had paid that sum, Mr. Burke stood up in Court, advised M'Keever to appeal, and ordered the money to be handed back; and if the above facts are correctly stated, whether the Lord Chancellor will make inquiry into the action of this magistrate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not been able to obtain a Report upon this matter, and I must ask the hon. Member to repeat the question.

MR. JOHN SLATTERY.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if he has yet received any information as to whether Mr. John Slattery, of Cork, has had an appeal lodged against the sentence of six months' imprisonment, in default of giving bail to be of good behaviour; and if an application to have a case stated is made in the Superior Court, will the Irish Law Officers undertake not to oppose the application?

MR. MADDEN: I have just received information that proceedings in the case referred to are being taken in the shape of an application for *habeas corpus*.

THE CLONGOREY ARRESTS.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the charges of unlawful assembly against a number of Clongorey workmen were yesterday dismissed by the Court at Newbridge on the ground that the precept, disobedience to which was the foundation of the charge, had not been served according to Law; and whether, as Father Kinsella and 17 workmen are now in prison for the same act, in respect to which the charges were yesterday dismissed, their release will be ordered?

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I wish also to ask the Chief Secretary whether he is aware that at Newbridge Petty Sessions yesterday, the cases against the several persons who were charged with disobeying the precept issued by Colonel Forbes, R.M., ordering them to desist from committing waste on Mrs. Kelly's farm at Clongorey, were dismissed by Messrs. Bowlby and McSheehy, on the ground that the precept was not legally served; and whether, as Father Kinsella, and 17 other persons, are now in Kilkenny Gaol for unlawfully assembling to disobey the said precept, which is now found not to have been at any time of valid force, he will at once order their release?

MR. MADDEN: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer these questions. The charges of unlawful assembly were not dismissed; the hearing was commenced yesterday, and is still proceeding. The case against the persons charged with aiding and abetting in the disobedience of the precept was dismissed without prejudice on the ground that the precept was not legally served, on which point, however, the magistrates have agreed to state a case.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask, under these circumstances, as all these men were proceeded against for precisely the same act, and as one body of workmen charged with disobedience to the precept are not to suffer punishment—the magistrates having dismissed the case on the ground that the precept was not legally served, as I contended in this House a few nights ago—whether Father Kinsella and the 17 workmen who are now in gaol will be discharged from custody, as the other two bodies of men apprehended for precisely the same charge have been released?

MR. MADDEN: The question will be carefully considered by the Government; but the incident only occurred this day. It has evidently been communicated to the hon. Member by telegram; it has not yet reached the Irish Office.

MR. SEXTON: But the question is one of the imprisonment of these persons. I will therefore ask the Chief Secretary whether, as the whole of the proceedings against the three bodies of men have been founded on the precept, he will not treat them all alike, and order the third batch of men to be released, or at any rate suspend the imprisonment until the Superior Court before which the case will ultimately come has given a decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member will see that a telegraphic communication to him is scarcely a sufficient ground for me to give a pledge to the House on the spur of the moment as to what course the Government will adopt.

MR. SEXTON: Then I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the matter on the Vote on Account, and press the question whether the third body of persons are not entitled to have the punishment suspended until the decision of the Superior Court has been given.

THE CORK POST OFFICE.

MR. LANE (Cork County, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the fact that an inexperienced telegraphist from a country railway station, who is not only unable to manipulate, but has never seen several of the instruments used in the Cork office, has been appointed this week to fill one of the vacancies in Cork, over the heads of skilled learners, who have been waiting over four years for this position; whether others have been recently appointed in a similar manner to the Cork office, who knew nothing whatever of the Wheatstone, quadruplex, or duplex working, and had to learn those instruments after appointment; and will he, in future appointments, consider the claims of learners trained at Cork, who are thoroughly acquainted with the various instruments in use, and with every description of public work?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): No telegraphist, experienced or otherwise, has this week been appointed to the Cork Office; but a telegraphist has been recommended for transfer from a country railway station to Cork. This telegraphist is an expert manipulator, and, though he is stated to be at present unacquainted with some of the apparatus in use in a large office, would probably soon supply the defect. The same remark applies to other telegraphists who have been recently transferred to Cork. The learners at Cork have no claim to appointment, it being a condition of their becoming learners that they sign an understanding to that effect. I shall, however, in making appointments, always be glad to consider the learners as eligible candidates when they have made satisfactory progress.

WELSH EMIGRANTS.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if in future Emigration Returns he will cause to be stated separately the number and destinations of passengers of Welsh nationality leaving the United Kingdom for places out of Europe in each year, as is at present done in the case of Irish and Scotch emigrants?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Acts under which the Returns are obtained do not confer power for effecting the modifications suggested by the hon. Member.

PICKETS IN TRADE DISPUTES.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can define the law as relating to pickets in trade disputes between employers and employed; if men subjected to intimidation, inquiry, or demand, either within or without the dock gates, or other places, as to whether they belong to Unions or not, and refusing to be interrogated, will receive the protection of the police; if the apparent unsatisfactory state of the law relating to combinations, Trade Societies, and Unions, is receiving the attention of the Government with reference to the rights of free labour, so as to ensure and safeguard such legitimate rights; and whether it is proposed to legislate on the matter during the present Session?

MR. C. GRAHAM: May I ask whether such an unsatisfactory state of the law as is alleged in the second paragraph of the question really exists?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I cannot define the law relating to pickets otherwise than by referring my hon. Friend to the third and seventh sections of the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875. The police are instructed to give protection to all persons against violence, intimidation, and the other forms of coercion and annoyance which are made punishable offences by Statute, or are punishable by law. The state of the law on the subject referred to has received, and is receiving, the careful attention of the Government. It has not yet been made apparent by judicial decision or otherwise that the Statute and Common Law taken together are insufficient to insure and safeguard the legitimate rights of free labour. Until it has been

shown that the law falls short of what is necessary for that purpose the Government think it is premature to consider fresh legislation.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman received information which leads him to the conclusion that the authorities have not yet power enough for dealing with the whole questions arising out of the dock strike?

MR. MATTHEWS: During the dock strike complaints were received from persons who stated that they had been intimidated.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Is there not sufficient power under the existing law to deal with undue intimidation?

MR. MATTHEWS: No.

THE DELHI-UMBALLA-KALKA RAILWAY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he can lay Papers upon the Table showing by whom and on what terms the railway direct from Delhi to Umballa and Kalka, at the foot of the hills, has been taken up; whether the use of any part of the Grand Trunk and Bridges has been conceded to the undertakers; and whether anything has been arranged for carrying the rail on into the hills?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Papers containing the contract with the Delhi and Kalka Railway were presented to Parliament on the 28th of May, 1889. I believe that the hon. Member will find the Papers in the Library. As to the second paragraph of the question, no use of any part of the Grand Trunk and Bridges has been conceded to the undertakers, so far as the Secretary of State is informed. In regard to the third paragraph, no arrangement has been made for carrying the rail on into the hills.

THE BUCKINGHAM RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the Report presented this month to the Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority by their Medical Officer of Health, Dr. George H. De Ath, in which he states that a cottage at Charndon, which about 18 months ago was condemned as unfit for human habitation, is still occupied by the same family, namely, man and wife and four children, one over 20 years of age; that this cottage has only one sleeping room, which is in the roof, and has no closet and no drains; that the defective water supply and drainage of Water Stratford has been frequently brought before the authority, and nothing has been done, although in heavy rains the water runs in at the back doors and out of the front doors of some of the cottages; that a new public house called the "Crown" has been built at Twyford, and occupied under "The Public Health Act, 1878," notwithstanding that the nearest supply of water is a quarter of a mile away; that the Inspector of Nuisances has reported of Padbury, the scene lately of diarrhœa epidemic, that the general drainage is bad and the water supply unsatisfactory, and that no steps are being taken to deal with these grievous defects; and whether the Local Government Board propose to take any, and, if so, what steps to compel the authority to deal with these cases?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The Local Government Board have within the last few days received a copy of the Annual Report for 1889 made to the Rural Sanitary Authority of the Buckingham Union by their Medical Officer of Health, and it contains statements to the effect of those mentioned in the question. As regards some of these matters the Board have no control over the Sanitary Authority; but with respect to sewerage and water supply, I may refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the question which he put to me yesterday, and I may repeat that if a complaint were made to the Board under Section 299 of the Public Health Act that the Sanitary Authority had made default in these matters, it would receive prompt attention.

SUCCESSION DUTY IN SCOTLAND.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the case that personalty (including heritable bonds and sums secured over realty by bond or mortgage) pay a Probate Duty of 3 per cent., one-half whereof goes to the relief

of local taxation; whether feu duties and ground annuals pay no local taxes, and pay only a Succession Duty of 1½ per cent., no part of which goes to the relief of local taxation; whether any, and what, good reason exists why feu duties and ground annuals should not contribute towards local taxation; whether personalty (including as aforesaid) pays the full Probate Duty (3 per cent.) on the capital value, cash down, whilst feu duties and ground annuals pay the Succession Duty (1½ per cent.) only on the life interest of the party succeeding, and that by eight half-yearly instalments, the undue instalments being cancelled in the event of the predecease of the successor; and whether any, and what, good reason exists for this exceptional treatment of feu duties and ground annuals as compared with personalty?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): It is impossible to deal with all the points raised by the hon. Member within the limit of an answer. His question opens up the whole relation between personality and reality, betwsen Imperial Taxation and Local Taxation, and between taxes on the living and taxes on the dead. The hon. Member's question is further complicated by a point in connection with permanent ground rents, which I believe to be the same as ground annuals in the phraseology of Scotch Law. But this is a subject which will possibly come within the proper investigations of the Select Committee on Town Holdings.

THE TURKISH COURTS AT ALEPPO.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Correspondence that has taken place with regard to the case of Mrs. Barker; and, if he is unable to do this, whether he will cause a Copy of the Correspondence, and especially of the Report and Letters of Consul Henderson, to be placed in the Library of the House of Commons?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I do not think that it would be justifiable to print this voluminous correspondence which relates solely to the legal proceedings of a single British subject in a foreign country. We have had no discussion in regard to it with the Turkish Government, and we have no ground beyond Mrs. Barker's assertions for believing that there has been any failure of justice in the tribunals. If the hon. Member desires to peruse the correspondence I shall be happy to enable him to do so at the Foreign Office.

H.M.S. *VICTORIA*—THE 110-TON GUNS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the contracts for the two 110-ton guns for H.M.S. *Victoria* were entered into by the War Office; whether in the case of one, at least, the form of contract was that generally used for the purchase of ordinary stores; whether it did, in fact, contain provisions quite inapplicable for the supply of such an article as a 110-ton gun; whether, on the other hand, neither the contract itself, nor the schedule attached to it, contained any provisions as to the materials to be used in the construction of the gun; whether it contained no details as to the proof the gun was to undergo before its final acceptance by Her Majesty's Government; whether he will lay a copy of this contract (omitting, if necessary, the cost) upon the Table of the House; and by whom, when, and how, was each of these guns tested; upon whose certificate were they passed; and when, in each case, was payment for them made to the contractors?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The contracts for the two 110-ton guns for Her Majesty's ship *Victoria* were entered into by the War Office in 1886. The same form of contract was used for both; in fact, we have only one form of contract for all store and clothing contracts, and the general provisions are applicable to guns, but any special provisions should appear in the schedule. The Audit Office has raised the point that the form of contract is not applicable to guns, because of the provision in Clause 2 that a contractor should replace rejections in 10 days, altogether ignoring the proviso "after he is required by notice to do so." The contract did not specify the material to be used, or the tests to be applied, as there was a resident Inspector at Elswick, and there were authorised tests for steel in which the Elswick Company had already concurred. A representative of the Elswick Company is summoned on important occasions to sit with

the Ordnance Committee. The contract did provide for proof and also for rejection of inferior supplies, but gave no details as to proof. Since that time provision has been made for inserting in the schedule to the contract full details as to all these matters. The question now raised refers to a contract made four years ago. For the examination and proof of these and all other guns the Director of Artillery is responsible. One of these guns was paid for in 1888-9; the other is not yet finally paid for.

MR. HANBURY: What I want to know from my right hon. Friend is, whether in regard to the guns the test they were to undergo was merely the result of a verbal understanding between the War Office and the contractors, or was there any contract in existence requiring the contractors to accept the test?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: It was certainly not a verbal understanding. It was, however, a deliberate understanding entered into with the contractors at the sitting of the Ordnance Committee.

MR. HANBURY: Did it in any way constitute a contract between the War Office and the contractors?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Most undoubtedly; and the Elswick Company knew that if they broke their faith they would never be employed by the War Office again.

EXPLOSION OF TORPEDOES IN THE RIVER MEDWAY.

MR. EDWARD KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Rochester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if his attention has been called to the fact that, by reason of frequent explosions of torpedoes in the River Medway, the fish are destroyed in large quantities, and that the results of the trade of the freemen fishermen, secured to them by Act of Parliament, are seriously damaged; and if steps can be taken to remedy this?

MR. STANHOPE (who replied) said: The attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty had not been drawn to any extensive destruction of fish by torpedo explosions in the Medway.

DISTRICT COUNCILS.

MR. TOLLEMACHE (Cheshire, Eddisbury): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board whether the statement in his speech, on Thursday 20th instant, as to the

> "Inconvenience which resulted in many cases from the want of District Councils to relieve County Councils of the care of the highways,"

is to be taken as indicating an intention on the part of the Government, in any future legislation, to place main roads under the control of District Councils?

*MR. LONG: No, Sir; certainly not. The words quoted by my hon. Friend referred merely to the difficulties under which County Councils labour in reference to the maintenance of highways, not main roads.

BISLEY COMMON.

MR. HANKEY (Surrey, Chertsey): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the case that during several months past troops have been brought from Portsmouth and Aldershot to Bisley Common, to work there for the National Rifle Association; whether he will state the amount of the daily wage paid to each man for the work thus done; and whether in view of the hardship which the use of military labour, as above-mentioned, has entailed upon the local labouring population, by depriving them of the employment which they would otherwise have obtained, he will forthwith direct that such a diminution in the number of soldiers now daily sent to Bisley Common should be made as will admit of employment being found at once for the local labouring population?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The first paragraph of my hon. Friend's question must be answered in the affirmative. The endeavour is always made to carry out military works by military labour; and during the winter months, when drill is largely suspended, such labour is found to be of great physical benefit to the soldier. Having this in view, soldiers have been employed at Bisley in preparing butts which will not merely supply the needs of the National Rifle Association, but will also be of great use for the shooting of the Army and, under regulations, for the Volunteers of the Metropolis and the Southern Coun-

ties. We have always rendered assistance of a similar character at Wimbledon. The working pay of the men is 9d. a day, and the National Rifle Association has benefited by the cheapness of the labour. But it is only fair to remember that, on the other hand, the establishment of the camp at Bisley will hereafter be a source of considerable financial advantage to the neighbourhood.

LETTERS TO THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can state what quantities of letters were received from and despatched to the Australian Colonies during the year 1889 respectively by the direct sea route at the rate of 4d. per letter, and by the overland route (*viâ* Brindisi and Naples) at the rate of 6d. per letter?

*MR. RAIKES: The answer to my hon. Friend's question is as follows:—Weight of letters *viâ* Brindisi or Naples, postage 6d. — despatched to Australasia, 59,000 lb.; received from Australasia, 52,000 lb. Weight of letters sent by all sea route, postage 4d.—despatched to Australasia, 3,900 lb.; received from Australasia, 3,800 lb.

POST OFFICE AUXILIARY SORTERS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether auxiliary sorters employed in the Post Office are paid as low as 1s. 6d. for from four to four and a half hours' work; and, if so, how many such sorters are employed in London at that wage; and whether any increased rate of pay is allowed to auxiliaries for night duty?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not aware that there are any auxiliary sorters paid as low as 1s. 6d. for from four to four and a half hours' work. When such temporary assistance becomes necessary in times of pressure the rule is to offer 2s. for the job, with a higher rate per hour for night duty.

POSTAL EMPLOYÉS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in cases where deductions are made from the wages of postal *employés*, they are nevertheless compelled to sign a receipt for the full wage; and whether this is the general practice; and, if not, whether any cases have come under his notice of Postmasters compelling men to sign a receipt for more money than they actually received?

*MR. RAIKES: The practice, the invariable practice of the Post Office is to require its servants to sign for the amount of salary or wages which is actually chargeable to the Vote, the deductions, where deductions are made—as, for instance, for Income Tax—being shown in the form of receipt. But perhaps the hon. Member is referring to payments made by local Postmasters to those who are their own servants, and not the servants of the Department. Here a certain laxity of practice has, in some comparatively few instances, been found to prevail. Postmasters not infrequently receive a specific allowance for a specific purpose, and it has occasionally happened that from such purpose a part of the allowance has been diverted. Wherever this has been found to be so the Department has adopted very stringent measures.

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Attorney General, with reference to the Amendments which were proposed to the County Courts Consolidation Bill to secure that appeals from the County Courts in equity matters should be heard in the Chancery Division, and withdrawn on the understanding that the end would be secured by rules of Court, whether the Judges have framed such rules; and, if not, will he press the matter on their attention?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In reply to the hon. and learned Gentleman, I stated when before the Grand Committee, as is the fact, that arrangements for providing that appeals from County Courts in equity matters should be heard in the Chancery Division could be made by rules of the High Court of Justice. The Judges, have, I believe, not at present framed such rules; and having regard to the condition of business in the Chancery Division, I think that any change of the kind might tend to delay

and embarrassment. I will, however, bring the matter to the attention of the Rule Committee.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF TRUST MONEY.

MR. H. S. WRIGHT (Nottingham, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been directed to the bankruptcy of Messrs. Towle and Gilbert, Solicitors, Nottingham, and to the misappropriation by them to their own use of considerable trust moneys, and of large sums of money belonging to and received from or on behalf of clients chiefly for investment on mortgage, thus causing serious loss and deprivation to numbers of persons; whether it is the intention of the Treasury to prosecute the delinquents; and if the present Law does not meet the case of such delinquencies, whether the Government will consider the desirability of introducing some amendment of the Law?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: My attention has been called to this matter. I am aware great injury was inflicted on many poor persons. I am in hopes that evidence will be forthcoming to enable proceedings to be taken to bring the parties to justice. It is not, I think, desirable that I should say more upon this subject. The law does not, in my opinion, require amendment. The question is one of obtaining the necessary evidence.

INCOMPETENT CLERGYMEN.

MR. DAVID THOMAS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce this Session any measure providing for the exercise of more effective disciplinary power over clergymen who are unfit occupants of their livings, having regard to the statements made by the Prime Minister two years ago that some such measure ought to be passed by Parliament without loss of time; that it was a matter of much interest in Wales; and that the cost of putting the present Law into operation was "practically prohibitive?"

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): A Bill dealing with Church discipline was passed through the House of Lords in the Session of 1888; but it was not proceeded with in this House, as there appeared to be little probability that it could be passed into law without an amount of time which was not then at the disposal of the Government; but if I am to understand from the hon. Gentleman's question that there would be a disposition on the part of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to assist in passing such a measure, I will communicate with my friends in another place, and I have no doubt the desired opportunity will be afforded.

CARDIFF TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

SIR EDWARD REED: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that certain telegraph clerks of Cardiff, who were interrogated as to certain newspaper letters, and called upon to find out who had written them, were, failing to do this, summarily ordered away, at a few hours' notice, to other towns as a punishment; whether his attention has been called to a speech of the Postmaster General, reported in the newspapers of 14th February, in which he said that—

"If his conduct in connection with this matter was questioned in Parliament, he should be quite prepared to justify it:"

and whether, in view of these facts, he will afford facilities for this subject, which is greatly disturbing the members of the Telegraph Service throughout the country, being brought promptly under the consideration of the House of Commons?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am informed by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General that the question of the hon. Member does not accurately represent the facts of the case; but I would suggest that there will be a better opportunity of raising the question when the Telegraph Vote comes up for consideration, and I do not think the delay will injuriously affect the Telegraph Service.

TERRITORIAL STANDING COMMITTEES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he yet intends to propose any Territorial Standing Committees, and especially one to deal with such Bills as may be referred to it regarding that northern part of Britain which has such distinctive institutions, laws, and nomenclature as are not understood by the

more southern branches of the Anglian and Celtic races?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: It is not the intention of the Government to establish Territorial Standing Committees, and I can hardly think that the hon. Member can seriously propose such a course.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that I shall take a further opportunity of proposing to the House that there shall be a Standing Committee for dealing with that part of the country commonly, but erroneously, called Scotland.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the last competitive examination was held for admission to Class I. of the Home Civil Service; how many vacancies in the Home Civil Service were filled up by open competitive examination during the years 1880 to 1886, inclusive, and how many candidates submitted themselves for examination; whether he can state about the percentage of those in the Civil Service who are entitled to retire upon pensions, but who continue to draw full salaries, without doing the full work; whether, since the discontinuance of these examinations, Treasury clerks have been selected for lucrative appointments in other offices, so that there has been unusual rapidity of promotion at the Treasury, and a block of promotion at other offices, and that clerks have been transferred from one office to another in which the work is totally different; can he state in approximately how many cases, public servants who obtained their appointments by competitive examination have had "selected" men from other offices, who have not been examined, put over their heads; whether he is aware that many parents with small incomes have spent substantial amounts upon a special education, with a view to their children entering for the competitive examination, and that in many cases, in consequence of a system of patronage being substituted for examination, they have been obliged, at a critical time of life, to change their plans; and whether it is intended to return to the system of open competitive examinations; and, if so, when?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The question of the hon. Gentleman having only been put down last night did not come to my knowledge until this morning, and I am unable to give all the ddtails for which he asks. The last open competition for Class I. of the Upper Division was held in December, 1886. During the time that the present Government have been in office they have been reducing the number of the higher and more largely-paid Establishments, and they have been able to supply vacancies by transfer thereto of redundant clerks, and in this way several vacancies at the Treasury, among other offices, have been filled up. This reduction of the Higher Establishment is fully endorsed by the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments. We are not, therefore, able to agree with the hon. Member, who would urge us to hold competitive examinations for posts that are not required in order to provide for youths who would, no doubt, for sufficient reason, prefer the Public Service to open professions, and it is not our intention to hold open competitive examinations for Class I. as long as it is practicable to fill vacancies by transfers. As far as I am aware, three appointments have been made from the Treasury to Staff posts. In the filling of such posts we are responsible, and are ready, when necessary, to explain our acts.

THE SMALL HOLDINGS COMMITTEE.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Government will be prepared to re-appoint the Small Holdings Committee?

*Mr. COBB: Before the right hon. Gentleman replies to the question may I ask him whether, if the Committee are able to make an early Report, there is any chance of legislation on the subject this Session?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. Member for Rugby (Mr. Cobb) will be able to form his own judgment upon that matter, having regard to the various measures which are to be brought before the House. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Bordesley (Mr. Collings), I have to say when I have ascertained that it is the general wish of Members of this House I will be prepared to take the necessary steps.

GRANTS TO SCOTCH SCHOOLS.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, in the accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1889, Class IV., Vote 10, that—

"During the year 1888-9 Grants amounting altogether to £2,876 5s. were paid to Hillhead, Hamilton Crescent, and Bellahouston Schools, Govan, and to Harris Academy, Dundee, although the average fee from each scholar exceeded 9d. per week. Similar payments were reported last year, the Department pleading in justification the terms of the Code of 1887. The Code, however, in that respect was admittedly in opposition to the terms of section 3 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and, consequently, inoperative; but, under the circumstances, the Treasury sanctioned the payments, on the understanding that they were not to be continued beyond the year 1887-8. As stated in my last Report, the payments have been continued in the year 1888-9, in opposition both to the Act and to the Amended Code of 1888;"

whether these schools are still on the list of State-aided schools entitled to Government grant; and whether the Treasury intend taking any steps in the matter?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The question raised in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General turns upon certain differences in the interpretation placed upon the latter of the Treasury. The Comptroller and Auditor General refers to the explanation given by the Accounting Officer, but states that he is unable to accept the responsibility of passing the grants without noticing them in his Report. The question will now come under the review of the Committee on Public Accounts, and the Treasury will await the judgment of that Committee. The schools referred to have not been removed from the list of schools conditionally entitled to State aid, but they will not continue to receive Government grants should the average fee be found to exceed 9d a week.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS—THE ESTIMATES—ARRANGEMENT OF THE VOTES.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is any precedent for asking a Vote from the House on account of Estimates not yet in the hands of Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the right hon. Gentleman will find that in 1869-70 the Estimates were delivered on April 13, the first Vote on Account having been taken on April 9. There are other precedents for Votes on Account being taken practically simultaneously with the delivery of the Estimates. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that passing a Vote on Account does not bind the House to the approval of any new expenditure, and I would refer him to the statement on this point made by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh in 1866. The course taken by the Government is in order to suit the convenience of the House, as next week, when the time would have been available for Supply, has been devoted to other purposes.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Estimates in the Vote on Account are not presented in a new form, reducing the number of Votes from 137 to 106; whether this change has been approved by the Public Accounts Committee; and whether the House will have an opportunity of examining any scheme for the re-arrangement of the Estimates, and pronouncing upon it, in conformity with the recommendations of the Select Committee on Estimates Procedure in 1888, and of the Public Accounts Committee of the same year?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; the Estimates covered by the Vote on Account have been presented in a form showing a reduction in the number of separate Votes to 106. The change has not yet been approved by the Public Accounts Committee, but it is proposed to invite the assistance of that Committee and to ask them to consider, and, I hope, to approve of the change. Any suggestions or alterations which that Committee may recommend will, I am sure, receive the careful consideration of the House and of the Government, with a view to giving effect to them; and it is clearly understood that in giving the Vote on Account the House does not commit itself to approval of the new form of the Estimates. In 1860-61 the Civil Service Votes numbered 198; in 1861-62 they were reduced to 183; in 1865-66 they were 182; in 1866-67 they were 169; in 1867-68 they were 168;

and in 1868-69 they were 146. In reducing the number of Votes we are only, therefore, following precedent. The Government were so impressed with the necessity of making some change in the form of the Estimates which would reduce the number of Votes and insure their being better grouped that they did not like to delay making their proposals for another year. Accordingly, we determined that the Estimates should be prepared and presented in the new form, and in so doing we believed that the House and the Committee of Public Accounts would, without committing themselves to accepting the form for more than one year, be better able to judge of the change with a view to its future adoption. The Estimates when in the hands of Members will show that the means of comparison are preserved.

MR. J. MORLEY: May I ask whether it is true that the Government first of all adopted the change in the form of the Estimates, and then, last night at a late hour put on the Paper the proposal to refer the matter to the Public Accounts Committee. I would further ask whether, in the case of all the precedents the right hon. Gentleman has mentioned, the change had not been first submitted to the Public Accounts Committee, and whether that Committee had not in 1888 almost ordered that before any change was made in the form of the Estimates they, as well as the House, should first have an opportunity of considering the matter?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In answer to the first question of the right hon. Gentleman, I may say that I am under the impression that the Committee could not deal with the question unless it was referred to them by the House. With regard to the second question, the right hon. Gentleman will find that none of the changes to which I have referred had been submitted to the previous approval of the Committee of Public Accounts. In answer to the third question, I admit that the Committee did express a desire that changes generally should be submitted to them for approval.

MR. J. MORLEY: I only want to know whether we are to-night going to consider a Vote on Account, cast in a form which has never been approved by, or submitted to, the Committee of Public Accounts?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The House will not in the slightest degree commit itself to the form in which the demand is submitted. There is no change in the method of accounts, and there is no change whatever in the services to be provided for. The fact is, that certain Votes have been put together.

MR. J. MORLEY: Is it not the case that the Civil Service Estimates have been printed in a changed form, which has afterwards to be approved of?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have stated that they are undoubtedly presented in a changed form, as they were presented in a changed form in 1860, 1861, 1865, and 1866-7-8.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Is it not a fact that the Estimates Procedure Committee of 1888 reported that a scheme of grouping should receive the attention of the Treasury and be submitted to the House. Was not this Resolution substantially adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the Government, when he said that no large alteration would be made of so serious a character as to need the approval of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is perfectly true that the Committee did desire and did instruct the Treasury to group the Estimates more carefully together, and the Treasury, having followed their instructions, have only been wanting in one thing—namely, that they have not submitted a scheme to the House for consideration in any other form than in the concentrated form of the Estimates themselves. The only way in which the Instruction of the Committee of 1888 could be carried out was in the way now submitted to the House in the Estimates of the year.

MR JENNINGS (Stockport): May I ask whether, by this new system of classifying Votes, it is no longer the case that there will be a separate Vote for the maintenance of the Houses of Parliament, the maintenance of the British Museum, and the Metropolitan Police Courts; and whether these changes are not calculated to lessen the power of criticism possessed by the House over these Estimates?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Even if these Votes were not submitted as separate and substantive Votes, they would all

appear as so many sub-heads, and the House would possess the same control.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The right hon Gentleman referred to the precedent of 1867, and said that changes were in that year made in the Civil Service Estimates without submitting them first to the Public Accounts Committee. But is it not the fact that the changes were sub mitted to, and approved by, the Public Accounts Committee in that year and also in 1881?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will make inquiry.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether, if we pass this Vote on Account, it will not commit us to the change proposed, or, at any rate, preclude us from re-opening the question this Session?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is for the House to judge whether it will preclude any question from being raised again; it is not a question of order.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the putting of one question from the Chair for a number of Services will not place at the disposal of the Government the balances unexpended on all those separate Services as if it were one Vote, instead of two or three?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If the House attaches any importance to the point which has been raised, there will be no hesitation on the part of Her Majesty's Government in giving an assurance that the surplus under one sub-head shall not be expended in the Services under another sub-head.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would inform the House whether the assurance he has just given applies to the sub-heads generally, or whether it is only intended to apply to those which it is suggested to alter?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That, I think, is a question rather for the Public Accounts Committee to consider, and I may say that any suggestions which may be made in this Committee will certainly receive the most careful and respectful consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg, Sir, to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to a matter of urgent public importance, namely, to the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in introducing large alterations in the mode of submitting the Estimates to this House without having previously submitted them to the approval of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. Member that that is a question which would come better at a subsequent period on Committee of Supply.

MR. BUCHANAN: Am I to understand, Sir, that I should be in order in moving to report Progress on a Vote of Account in order to call attention to this subject in Committee?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman's Motion could be made when the House is in Committee. The hon. Member would then be in order in raising the question as to the form in which the Votes are to be taken in this House.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I wish, Sir, to ask a question on a point of order. The Government have intimated that they propose to have the subject of the new form of taking the Estimates referred to the Public Accounts Committee. The functions of the Committee are laid down on the Standing Orders, and they are not concerned in any way with the mode of putting the Votes from the Chair in this House, or, indeed, with the question of procedure in this House. The reference of such a question as is now suggested to the Public Accounts Committee would be really an extension of the province and powers of that Committee. I therefore ask you, Sir, as a point of order, whether such a proposal can be adopted without the passing of a Standing Order upon the subject.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think that if the existing powers of the Committee should be exceeded then an instruction would be required to enable the Committee to consider the special question to be referred to it.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the last paragraph of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee which has just been made, and which has reference to the point now raised. The Committee state that they do not desire to deal with

any question relating to the voting of the Estimates in Committee of Supply. I would point out that the Public Accounts Committee is an exceptional Committee acting under a Standing Order of this House, and it would be highly inconvenient to submit to them such a question as has now been raised. [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] I am only elucidating the question I desire to put to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, as I think it would be highly inconvenient to mix up these technical matters, as to the accounts and control over moneys that have been voted, with the question of procedure in the voting of the Estimates in this House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My attention has been called to the paragraph referred to by the hon. Gentleman, which seems to negative the power of the Public Accounts Committee to entertain the question as to the form in which the Votes are to be submitted to the House, and to suggest that the responsibility should rest upon the Government themselves. The Government has accepted that responsibility; but they desire to obtain the assistance of the Committee on Public Accounts in order that that Committee may satisfy themselves that the form in which the Votes are submitted to the House is satisfactory.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (Holmfirth): Did I understand you, Mr. Speaker, to rule that the question submitted by my hon. Friend (Mr. Buchanan) was not a matter of urgent public importance?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; I suggested that it would more properly arise at a later stage, when the House is in Committee.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,103, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1891, viz:—

Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS I.

	£
Royal Palaces and Marlborough House	5,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens ..	12,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain ..	30,000
Admiralty, Extension of Buildings ..	4,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	8,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	6,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	7,000
Revenue Department Buildings ..	56,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom ..	40,000
Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade, and Lighthouses abroad	3,000
Peterhead Harbour	5,000
Caledonian Canal	1,000
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	83,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England:—	
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices.. ..	6,000
Treasury and Subordinates Departments	15,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	10,000
Colonial Office	6,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	2,500
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	27,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	6,000
Charity Commission	6,000
Civil Service Commission	7,000
Exchequer and Audit Department ..	10,000
Friendly Societies, Registry ..	1,500
Local Government Board	27,000
Lunacy Commission	2,000
Mercantile Marine Funds Grant in Aid	— —
Mint (including Coinage)	20,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Public Works Loan Commission ..	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	8,000
Stationery Office and Printing ..	70,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of ..	6,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Secret Service	6,000
Scotland:—	
Secretary for Scotland	2,000
Fishery Board	4,000
Lunacy Commission	1,200
Registrar General's Office	1,000
Board of Supervision	1,500
Ireland:—	
Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary	8,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	400
Local Government Board	15,000
Public Works Office	10,000
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	3,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	6,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England:—

Law Charges	12,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	8,000
Supreme Court of Judicature and Land Registry	65,000
County Courts	20,000
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	3,000
Police, England and Wales	10,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	110,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	80,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	6,000

Scotland:—

Lord Advocate, and Law Charges and Courts of Law	10,000
Register House	6,000
Crofters' Commission	1,500
Prisons, Scotland	15,000

Ireland:—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	20,000
Land Commission	20,000
County Court Officers, &c.	18,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police, &c.	20,000
Constabulary	300,000
Prisons, Ireland	20,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	30,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,500

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England:—

Public Education, England and Wales	800,000
Science and Art Department, United Kingdom	45,000
British Museum	27,000
National Gallery	3,000
National Portrait Gallery	600
Learned Societies, United Kingdom	7,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain	10,000
London University	3,000

Scotland:—

Public Education	160,000
National Gallery	400

Ireland:—

Public Education	200,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	200
National Gallery	300
Queen's Colleges	500

CLASS V.

Diplomatic Services and Consular Services	100,000
Slave Trade Services	8,500
Colonial Services, including South Africa	2[illegible],000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	— —
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies, &c.	16,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	1,000
Friendly Societies Deficiency	— —
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain	500
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	70,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland.	1,000

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	9,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,000
Total for Civil Services	£3,055,103

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	100,000
Post Office Packet Service	20,000
Post Office Telegraphs	350,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£670,000
Grand Total	£3,725,103

*(1.40.) MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I desire, Sir, to raise the question which I attempted to bring before the House before the Speaker left the Chair. I should like to state very shortly what has actually taken place with regard to this matter, and what the proposals of the Government, and the action they desire to take, really amount to. The whole subject originated in the Estimates Procedure Committee, 1888, which considered the possibility of grouping the Votes in Supply, and a scheme was submitted to them, which was by no means identical in essence or detail with the scheme on which the Estimates now before the Committee is based. The recommendation of the Procedure Committee is that the scheme should be submitted to the consideration of the Treasury with a view to a scheme being submitted to the House. In the autumn of 1888 a different scheme was sent to the Public Accounts Committee, and the scheme upon which the arrangement of the present Estimates is based is a modification of the scheme of the Public Accounts Committee. That scheme should have received the approval of the House before being applied to the Estimates. On April 30, 1889, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said it could only be with the full assent of the House that the Government would take any steps to limit discussion on the Votes. The subject is not merely a technical or financial one. It is closely

connected with the efficient conduct of the business of the House. The discussions in Committee of Supply are upon questions of administration, and as such they are highly valued by hon. Members on both sides of the House. No doubt questions of administration are sometimes discussed in Committee at undue length; but that is comparatively a small evil, for it is by the discussion of those questions that the way is paved for substantial reforms. Discussions in Supply are very highly valued by hon. Members on both sides of this House save, perhaps, those who sit on the two Front Benches. The financial value of the discussion, of course, has often been considered and often minimised. Discussions on questions of administration are often doubtless continued at very great length and go into minute details; but, taking them all round, they are essentially of very great value for legislation and the effective discharge of their duties by Members of this House. Speaking particularly on behalf of Scotland and a body of Members who form a small minority in this House, I may say that these discussions in Committee of Supply afford us practically the only opportunity we have of bringing forward subjects in which we are interested and which cannot otherwise gain the general attention of the House. I urge upon independent Members of this House not to allow any substantial limitations of their opportunities for discussion until they have a fuller knowledge of what the limitations are and have had the chance of debating the proposals in detail before agreeing to them. We are practically, however, excluded from a due consideration of them—at any rate, for this Session—and we are required to act upon the proposals and vote estimates in accordance with them. In the short time that has been at disposal it is very difficult for a Member of this House to gather the extent of the alteration which has been made by the scheme now submitted. First of all, large and important Votes on which discussions took place in former years are being put together. The Diplomatic and Consular Votes are no longer taken separately—Votes which last Session formed almost the only opportunity we had of discussing Foreign Affairs. The Colonial and South African Votes, too, are no longer capable of being discussed as separate Votes; they are to be taken as a single Vote. Undoubtedly, we have hitherto debated these Votes separately, not as to financial detail, but in regard to our colonial administration, which is interesting not merely to Members of this House, but to the public. Then the Votes of the Chief Secretary and of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland are taken as a single Vote. Everyone is aware that these two Votes form the subject of discussions in this House. Similarly, with regard to subordinate Departments, large numbers of which, hitherto separate, have been put together. Take the Scottish Votes. This scheme does not include under one Vote all discussion of Scotch matters as did the scheme submitted to the Public Accounts Committee, but it considerably minimises our opportunities. The Vote for the Registrar General for Scotland and another Vote under Class II. have disappeared from the list. Then the Exchequer Vote for Scotland; that has also disappeared, and I think it has been distributed among several Votes. I cannot find it, but amongst the payments connected with the Treasury under the new scheme is the "Exchequer (Scotland)—Salaries only." The Exchequer (Scotland) Vote has disappeared.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. L. JACKSON, Leeds): It is in Class VII.

*MR. BUCHANAN: That makes it still more confusing than I imagined it to be, and it only illustrates the very great difficulty we shall have in the future in knowing exactly what we are voting. Take, for example, the Diplomatic and Consular Buildings Vote. We spent £26,000 last year (the estimate for this year is £40,000), and a Vote of £7,000 on account is asked for to-night. I am quite at a loss to understand this Vote, and we are left perfectly in the dark by the Government as to whether this is a large and substantial increase in the expenses, or whether it is due to the new scheme now being adopted. No doubt when we have the Memorandum of the changes submitted to us, we will be able to understand it. It is essentially the duty of Her Majesty's Government, before they insert in the Estimates alterations of this sort, to lay a statement before the House and Committee that we may see

with what we are dealing. The Public Accounts Committee had a scheme submitted to them in 1888, and they reported. According to two letters addressed to the Chairman of the Committee by the Secretary to the Treasury —the Treasury, not the Government— found it desirable, comparing the Estimates of 1890-91, to effect some rearrangement of the Votes, the result being a reduction of the number of Votes. As I understand, a statement explanatory of that was not submitted at the same time.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: A statement was submitted at the time. Unfortunately, it has not been printed.

MR. BUCHANAN: Of course it is not printed. I am sorry I fell into the error. But it was only laid on the Table last night without notice being put upon the Paper. Had proper notice been given, probably it would have saved a great deal of discussion. I understand that part of the scheme before the Procedure Committee, but not included here, was that the Votes should go before a Select Committee, who should make certain of the Votes the subject of several large Resolutions. That has all fallen out. I think such a substantial alteration in the financial procedure of the country as that now proposed ought certainly to be considered by the Government before submitting it to the House. I earnestly call the attention of hon. Members to the subject as one which vitally affects their interests not only in respect of their financial control, but as regards the effective discharge of their duty in discussing the conduct of the Administration. Though no doubt a little of the diminution of the number of Votes is due to the Local Government Act and other causes, yet this is an alteration of a very different character, and one of such importance that it ought to have been submitted to this House. I beg, Sir, to move to report Progress, and that you ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—*(Mr. Buchanan).*

(5.2.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I am sorry that the hon. Member takes so serious a view of the situation. The Government believe that, in submitting the accounts in the present form, they are carrying out the recommendation of the Committee which sat on the question. If the method of presenting the accounts had been brought before the House endless debate would have arisen almost on every group of Votes. The hon. Member, and perhaps some others, have somewhat magnified the importance of the changes which have been made. It is said that Votes have been grouped together, each of which deserve the fullest discussion. But I can assure the Committee that there is no single Vote or sub-head of a Vote which, under the new system, cannot be discussed as amply as under the old, though fewer Votes will be presented. I may appeal to the Members of the Committee on Public Accounts, certainly to those who were on the previous Committee whether they do not think the system of grouping advantageous. The hon. Member himself doubted the value of a system of grouping, and opposed that system on the Committee. But it was distinctly recommended by the Committee, who said that some convenience and probably some economy of time would result from the adoption of a system of grouping two or more Votes which were now separately submitted to the Committee of Supply. It will be remembered that it was the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) who started the idea, that the proceedings of Supply might be simplified by grouping and presenting fewer Votes to the House. It may be that though each Vote may be discussed as amply as before, there will be less temptation, if I may say so, to frequent discussion. The grouping system has commended itself to the majority of the House. It might have been better to have referred the matter to the Committee on Public Accounts, rather than to put the Votes in the amended form at once before the House, but I shall be surprised if any Member of that Committee objects to the scheme of the Government as a whole.

AN hon. MEMBER: It should have been referred to the House.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I thought the complaint was that we had not referred it to the Committee on Public Accounts.

*(5.5) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: To make it clear, I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the complaint of the Public Accounts Committee is that, instead of submitting a scheme of the proposed changes first to the House, and through the House to the Committee, the Government first made the changes in the mode of submitting the Estimates, and then came to the Public Accounts Committee with the changes already adopted, and asked them to criticise or adopt those changes. The changes were already made before the Committee were consulted. That is not the plan which the Procedure Committee recommended. The Government have not consulted either the House or the Public Accounts Committee.

*(5.7.) MR. GOSCHEN: I thought the complaint was that we had not submitted the changes to the Public Accounts Committee, but I now find that the Committee do not make a complaint.

*(5.7.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman does not understand me. It is, in one sense, a complaint because the change has been made before either the House or the Public Accounts Committee had an opportunity of considering the scheme. The Committee do complain of the way in which they have been treated.

*(5.8.) MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Member interrupted me too soon. If the House had been consulted, the reform proposed would have been delayed for another Session. If the House studies the accounts in this new form, as it cannot fail to do in the practical working of the scheme, they will find it more convenient than the old. As to the complaint that we are only referring the change to the Public Accounts Committee after it has been effected, I can assure the hon. Member that we only propose to refer the matter to the Committee, because, from what we have learnt, we believe it to be their desire to have the matter before them. But I am quite willing even now to adopt any course which the right hon. Gentleman, on consultation with the Government, may desire for bringing the matter before the Public Accounts Committee. Although there will be undoubtedly some economy of time, I think the importance of the change has been unduly magnified.

*(5.10.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The right hon. Gentleman has disarmed criticism by the extremely courteous way in which he expresses it to be his desire to treat the Committee over which I have the honour to preside, and in which he endeavours to make amends for any mistake he may have made. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to admit that a different course should have been pursued, and to say that he regrets what has been done. Speaking as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, and not as belonging to either Party in the House, I desire to say that the Committee on Public Accounts are always unanimous, and by an old and invariable tradition are absolutely free from Party influences. And I hope that so long as I am connected with the Committee it will always be free from Party influences. What was done last Wednesday—and the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) will bear me out in this—was done with perfect unanimity, and no one objected to a word in the Report we presented to the House. There was a word which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to which I wish to draw attention for a moment. He said that, in introducing these changes on the responsibility of the Government, he was acting according to the principle laid down in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. That is not the view of the Committee, because they think it is too great a power to leave in the hands of Departments for them to present their accounts in any form they please—for instance, to reduce considerably the number of the Votes. From the public accounts point of view, we do not enter into the question of the effect the changes may have upon the mode in which money is voted in Parliament. We look to the clearness and continuity of the accounts and the efficiency of Parliamentary control over the money voted. If the number of Votes is diminished, it will be easier to transfer money voted for one service to the use of another. For example, in one Vote for Public Buildings in Great Britain money is to be voted for the Office of Works, and in place of the three existing familiar Votes there

are three heads of the Vote—one for the Houses of Parliament, another for other public buildings, and a third for furniture for public offices. The Office of Works may spend money voted for one of these purposes on another. Under the present system of three separate Votes that could not be done, because it is impossible to transfer money voted, say, for the Houses of Parliament to other public buildings without a Resolution of the House; but, supposing this change is adopted without such a safeguard as that to-day suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, the money could be transferred, and there would be no sufficient Parliamentary control over the expenditure. The object of Parliamentary control would be defeated.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr JACKSON, Leeds, N.): It would be stated in the Appropriation Account.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Yes, but it would not be necessary to come to the House to sanction the transfer from one Vote to another. This, I think, shows the danger of the change, and this is the justification of the view which has been repeatedly taken by the Public Accounts Committee, and which was stated in 1888—that important changes in the Estimates should not be effected at the sweet will of any Department of the Government, but should be submitted first for consideration to this House and the Public Accounts Committee. I have no doubt, on mature consideration, the Members of the Government will take exactly the same view as the Parliamentary Accounts Committee. All that I wish and claim is this: that we shall be perfectly free to consider this change as if it had not been made—as if all that had been done had been to submit a scheme for the re-arrangement of the Estimates, applying not only to these, but to the Army and Navy Estimates also. We should be in no way committed by the unfortunate fact that the Estimates have been re-cast in this form without consultation with the House and the Public Accounts Committee. As to the point I alluded to some time ago in putting a question, I hope I may be allowed to say that as to the matter of voting money in Committee of Supply, to which the hon. Member for Edinburgh alluded, I think it would be a very proper subject for the consideration of a Special Committee. I would deprecate the throwing of that matter on to the Public Accounts Committee, as it is not at all germane to their functions.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

(5.20.) Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I rise, Sir, to move the reduction of the Vote, and I base the Motion upon the fact that certain official persons, whose salaries are included in it, have conspired together to defeat the course of justice.

MR. MACLURE (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford): I rise to a point of order. I wish to call attention to the fact that strangers are present.

Notice taken, that strangers were present.

Whereupon Question, "That Strangers be ordered to withdraw," put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I was saying that practically my charge is that certain official persons confederated together to defeat the course of justice by interfering to prevent their friends being put on trial for a crime in regard to which two persons were tried and convicted. Before stating the facts, I wish to call attention to the present position of the law in these matters. There is no doubt that of late years a certain offence—I will not give it a name—has become more rife than it ever was before. Before 1885 the law was insufficient to deal with it, because the offence had to be proved by an accessory, and many other offences very much of the same nature were not regarded as crimes at all. In 1885, when the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was before a Committee of the House, Mr. Stead—who, it will be remembered, took a very active part in urging that Bill on the attention of the House—sent me a report with reference to this offence, giving particulars and evidence which went to show the extent of its prevalence. I was requested to read this report to the House, but I did not think it desirable to do so,

although I thought the case was pretty well proved. I proposed the addition to the Bill of a special clause which I took from the French Code, and this clause was submitted to the Attorney General and Lord Cross, and, with some verbal alterations, accepted and incorporated in the Bill, and is now the law of the land. Therefore, in 1885, Parliament armed the guardians of public morality with full powers to deal with this offence. In doing so, they recognised that the offence was on the increase, and they expressed their desire that it should be stamped out; and, presumably, it was intended that the law should be used equally against high and low. I will now state the facts of this case. It is very likely that I may fall into slight errors of detail, but I think I shall be able to submit enough to establish a *primâ facie* case that there has been a gross scandal, and that there is ground for investigation into the conduct of those who are responsible for it. In the beginning of last July a boy in the Post Office was found to be in possession of much larger sums of money than it was likely he would have obtained in a legitimate way. On the 4th of July the boy was sent for by Mr. Phillips, an official of the Post Office, and Constable Hanks, attached to the Post Office, and the boy confessed that he had received the money for a certain offence committed in a house in Cleveland Street, occupied by one Hammond, and that other boys in the Post Office were equally guilty. These other boys were examined, and they also confessed, all stating that they had been induced to go to the house by a certain Newlove. a clerk in the Post Office. Newlove was interrogated and confessed to the charge. Newlove was arrested on the 7th of July, taken before the magistrate on the 8th, and by successive remands detained until the 20th of August. On that day a man named Veck was arrested. He was associated with Hammond in this house. Newlove and Veck were charged together; on the 11th of September they were committed for trial; and on the 18th were tried at the Old Bailey. Veck was indicted for felony and for misdemeanour; and Newlove was indicted alone for misdemeanour. Both pleaded guilty to misdemeanour and were sentenced, Veck to nine months' and Newlove to four months' imprisonment. The sentence on Veck was scandalously inadequate. Veck, who was called "The Rev.—something—Veck"—I do not know whether he was in holy orders, but he went about dressed as a clergyman—had not only committed these offences himself with the boys, but was the associate and partner of Hammond, and induced boys to go to Cleveland Street for money, and in order to serve his private ends. If ever a man deserved the full sentence of the law this man Veck did. The Committee will remember how if a poor man, urged by primary necessity steals some small thing, he is sent to prison often for more than nine months, and how in Ireland men are sent to prison for longer periods for offences which assuredly even no Gentleman on the opposite side of the House will assert are in the least to be compared with that of this man Veck. Whether this inadequate sentence was a condition of these men pleading guilty, or whether, as they did plead guilty, it happened that the depositions at the Police Court were not shown to the Recorder, and he did not know how monstrous the case was, I do not know. But I think it is pretty clear that the real object was to stop all further disclosures, hush the matter up, and get these men out of the way. I believe that Newlove and Veck would never have been prosecuted had it not been for the action of the Postmaster General and the secretary of the Post Office. The matter occurred in the Post Office, and they—I honour and respect them for it—insisted that action should be taken in the matter. The Solicitor to the Treasury, who is, I believe, under the orders of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and the Treasury—and I dare say the Home Secretary also—knew perfectly well by this time that certain persons had frequented this house in Cleveland Street; they knew that the police had got certain clues; they knew certain names had been mentioned; and they determined, so far as they were concerned, that if they were obliged to prosecute these two men the case should go no farther if they could prevent it. Having thus arranged matters in regard to these two men, what, the House will wonder, had become of Hammond, the proprietor of the house? If Hammond had been arrested, he would no doubt

have been able to make revelations. These wretches live not only by this particular offence, but by a system of levying blackmail; and it is incredible to suppose that Hammond did not himself know the names of many of the persons who had frequented the house. I stated that on the 4th of July these matters were investigated at the Post Office by Mr. Phillips, with Constable Hanks, and that Newlove and the other boys told what they knew about Hammond. Hammond was not watched on the 4th of July; far from it. It may be reasonably supposed that information of what was passing was conveyed by Newlove to Hammond, who, not being watched, fled the country. When he had got well away, on the 6th of July, a warrant was obtained against him. The Treasury were informed by Mr. Monro that Hammond was not present, but the police, unlike the Treasury, were perfectly in earnest in this matter. The Postal Authorities wrote at the same time to ask that, if possible, Hammond should be secured and brought back to England. On the 25th of July the Treasury forwarded to the police a letter from Lord Salisbury saying that the Government could not ask that Hammond should be extradited from France. By this time the Post Office, who were still anxious to pursue Hammond, had sent Mr. Phillips over to Paris, and on the 7th of August a telegram was received from him asking that someone should be sent over to complete arrangements for the expulsion of Hammond from France. On the 8th of August Inspector Abberline was sent over; but he did not stay long, and he was succeeded by Inspector Lowe. I do not know exactly what was being done with the French Government, but nothing came of it, and Hammond remained in France for about a month. On the 12th of September Hammond, whether expelled or not, went over the Belgian frontier, and Inspector Lowe followed him and reported to Scotland Yard that Hammond was at a town in Belgium. Mr. Phillips also went to Belgium on the 12th of September, and it appears that on the 14th he was already in communication with the Belgian police, for he telegraphed that the moment an assurance could be given that demand for extradition would be made, the Belgian police would arrest Hammond. On this the English police applied to the Treasury. The reply was that an answer should be sent as soon as possible, but that the question was not free from difficulty. On September 16, the secretary to the Post Office, who was also in earnest, wrote to the police urging that immediate steps should be taken to secure Hammond's arrest. On September 17, Inspector Greenham was sent to Belgium and reported himself at Brussels. On the same day the Treasury wrote to the police that there was no evidence before them of an extraditable offence, and therefore they could not ask for Hammond's extradition. On October 6 a strong letter was written by Mr. Monro to the Treasury, drawing attention to the stigma which would rest on the English police if Hammond were allowed to escape. On that day he did escape. Remember, this man was surrounded by English police. He was being watched by the Belgian police, but he went to Antwerp and embarked on board a ship called *The Pennland*, which was bound for the United States. During the time Hammond had been in Belgium, the Belgian police reported that he was accompanied by an English boy. This boy had been abstracted from his parents presumably for vile purposes. Now, whilst Hammond was in Belgium, whilst the English and Belgian police were surrounding him, Mr. Newton was with the solicitor to Lord Arthur Somerset and also to Veck and Newlove, either went to Belgium himself or sent someone there. This Mr. Newton, or this other person, gave Hammond a large sum of money, and also paid for the ticket not only of Hammond, but also of the boy who had fallen into such a terrible position. Any one can find that out by going to Cook's office.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Who obtained the tickets?

MR. LABOUCHERE: Newton or his representative. I cannot help thinking that if the Government had been in earnest, they might have obtained the extradition of Hammond, because our Extradition Treaties, both with France and Belgium, cover such charges as those of indecent assault, either by the principal or by accessories. It was put in evidence before the magistrate, and I

do not think it was questioned, that Hammond induced boys to come to his house, that he took them into a room and handed them over to the creature who was going to assault them. I should say that that was being an accessory to an indecent assault, but I admit the point admits of a good deal of discussion. As this, however, was not a political offence, and as both the French Government and the Belgian Government and everybody in either country would have been glad to have had the men turned out of their country, I think they would in all probability have stretched a point if the matter had been fairly put before them. But there is another course. There is such a thing as expelling men from a country. I remember when I was in the Diplomatic Service being engaged in a case of expulsion. You can always get a Government, when it is going to expel, to expel on the frontier nearest to your own frontier, and I have no doubt we could have induced the French or the Belgian Government to have expelled Hammond by putting him on a British ship which would have brought him to this country. Certainly, in the opinion of the police and the Postal Authorities, something might have been done, but nothing was done by the Treasury or the Foreign Office; or, if anything was done, it was done in a perfunctory manner, so that no result should be achieved. If it had not been intended to extradite Hammond, if the Government had no plan by which they intended to get hold of him, what was their object in hunting this man from France to Belgium and from Belgium to America, and then leaving him alone? I think the object is pretty obvious. They wanted to send him away as far as possible from this country. Their object, in fact, was much the same as that of Mr. Newton, who gave him money and paid his passage, and also that of the boy with him, to America. Both of them, each for different reasons, wanted him not to turn up in England. The Government did not wish for revelations; they wished to hush up the matter. Now, Cleveland Street was frequented by a considerable number of persons. They were persons who used these boys, and most unquestionably it was desirable to get at them. I shall not trouble the Committee with more than one extract. I am going to read an extract which I think will surprise the Members of the Committee. It is from the evidence given by a constable named Sladden, who was put to watch the house to see who came to the house after Hammond had fled. This is his evidence:—

"I have been engaged in watching the house No. 19, Cleveland Street. I commenced on July 9th. On that day I saw at 5.10 p.m.——"

*Sir R. WEBSTER: Will the hon. Gentleman say from what he is reading?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Depositions.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: There are no depositions of Sladden as far as I know.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I think I can convince the hon. and learned Gentleman. They may not have been published, and perhaps I am wrong in using the word depositions.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: The hon. Gentleman says he is reading from depositions; I accept his word.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I am reading the evidence of Constable Sladden at the Marlborough Police Court. I will produce the official copy. Sladden said, "I commenced on July 9th——" I can understand why the hon. Gentleman does not want this evidence read.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I do not rise for my own personal protection; but I venture to submit, for the honour of this House, it is not right that such observations should be made respecting one who, in the discharge of his public duties, is watching to see what is being put before the House.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton must see that that observation is a most offensive one, which ought not to be made across the floor of this House.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I will withdraw it, but perhaps I may be allowed to explain that my case is that the Government wish to hush this matter up. I put the matter in a general way and not in reference to the hon. and learned Gentleman in particular. Sladden said—

"I commenced on July 9th. On that day I saw at 5.10 p.m. a corporal of the 2nd Life Guards arrive at the house. A gentleman arrived at 4.50 p.m. knocked at the door, and was answered from the door. He and the corporal shook hands, talked for about five minutes, and walked away without entering the house. On

July 13th I saw the same men call again. The house was empty, and they went away. On that same day a great many gentlemen called at the house. On July 14th a gentleman and a Royal Artilleryman called. On July 30th I saw other gentlemen come, and finding the house empty went away."

Now, I think I have proved my case. The house is in no obscure thoroughfare, but nearly opposite the Middlesex Hospital. Surely it must have been known to the police, and if it was not known to them it ought to have been. In no other city in the world are such abominations openly carried on. Parliament has done its best to put down houses of ill-fame, but compared with this place a house of ill-fame is respectable. If it were desired to make an example of the offenders, why was not a policeman stationed at the house to follow the persons who came there? The obvious answer is that it was not desired to follow them up and punish them. One person guessed the police were on his track. I do not wish to mention any names except those which have already been made public, but I will give the name of this person because a warrant is out for his arrest. It is Lord Arthur Somerset. A warrant is out for his arrest and he has fled. I am not certain whether the police got on his track by seeing him come to the house or whether his name was given by one of the boys, or by Veck or Newlove, but in any case on the 23rd of July several of the boys were taken to Knightsbridge Barracks, where Lord Arthur Somerset was quartered, and the boys identified him as a person who had been with them in the house. I know that evidence of informers is generally tainted, but the evidence of the boys is not near so tainted as would have been the evidence of one of these professional wretches. These boys were employed at the Post Office. They have been more sinned against than sinning, and it is not likely that they would have identified Lord Arthur Somerset unless they honestly believed he was the man who tempted them. On the 23rd of August, further evidence was obtained against Lord Arthur Somerset. A boy named Allies said he had received money from him in post-office orders. The boy lived at Sudbury, and on going to the post office there, the police found two post-office orders signed by Allies. The orders had also come from the Knightsbridge District Office. This, at least, was confirmatory of the statement of Allies. On the 24th of July, these boys were taken to identify Lord Arthur Somerset, and on the 27th of July Mr. Monro reported to the Treasury the evidence of the boys. On the 24th of August he further reported the evidence of Allies. The Treasury gave no sort of instructions, but after these Reports were made, the police were enjoined to take no further action until they heard again from the Treasury. The object of the Treasury was to hush up the matter, not to have prosecutions. The matter was referred to the Law Officers of the Crown. The Law Officers of the Crown, I need not say——

*SIR R. WEBSTER: What date is the hon. Gentleman referring to?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not know at what date, but I need not say the Law Officers did not advise a prosecution. Let me ask the Attorney General whether all the evidence was before the Law Officers? [Sir R. WEBSTER assented.] May I ask whether the questions that were put to the boys at Marlborough-street were arranged, in any sort of way, by the hon. and learned Gentleman himself, or by any of his subordinates? [The ATTORNEY GENERAL made no reply.] The hon and learned Gentleman will not answer that.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. Gentleman must not say that. I prefer to answer when I make my statement.

MR LABOUCHERE: I know that the cross-examination was so conducted as not to bring in Lord Arthur Somerset or others, because Mr. Newton was solicitor to Lord Arthur Somerset, and also solicitor to the prisoners Veck and Newlove. I have the evidence that was submitted at Marlborough Street, and not one-half of the statements of the boys to the police were brought out, and it was only stated in cross-examination that they had made statements at the Treasury, the obvious intention being to limit the prosecutions to Veck and Newlove. On August 3rd the police were watching Lord Arthur Somerset. Two constables saw him at the Knightsbridge barracks when he was on his way to take part in the review on the 7th of August, on the occasion of the German Emperor's visit to this country. On the 22nd of August a constable again saw him at the barracks. On the 11th

of September he called at the barracks and was informed that Lord Arthur Somerset had obtained four months' leave of absence and had gone abroad. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is not quite correct.] Anyhow he did go abroad; I do not know when. On the 8th of October the funeral of the Dowager Duchess of Beaufort took place at Badminton. A constable was sent down by Mr. Monro because it was thought Lord Arthur Somerset would come there. I suppose it was thought desirable to give the Treasury one more opportunity of acting. ["Oh!"] An hon. Gentleman seems to question my facts. The constable reported—

"I beg to report that, in accordance with instructions, I attended the funeral of the late Dowager Duchess of Beaufort, and saw Lord Arthur Somerset was present at the obsequies."

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Will the hon. Gentleman give the name of the constable?

MR LABOUCHERE: Luke Hanks, of the General Post Office. The Report Hanks made was sent to the Treasury, and no doubt the Home Secretary has a copy of it. I believe that a suggestion was made that action should be taken. The reply of the Treasury took the form of a direction to at once withdraw the constable. Finding no action was taken, Lord Arthur Somerset remained in England, and went to his clubs as if nothing had occurred. During this time inquiries had been made of the police and the Treasury by the commanding officer of Lord Arthur Somerset's regiment, and by a gentleman connected with the Household of the Prince of Wales, Lord Arthur Somerset himself being a member of that Household. The police refused to give any information in the matter, and about the middle of October the gentleman representing the Household of the Prince of Wales telegraphed to Lord Salisbury, asking for an interview with him.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Will the hon. Member give the gentleman's name?

MR. LABOUCHERE: Sir Dighton Probyn. On the 18th of October this gentleman had an interview with Lord Salisbury. At the end of the conversation, Lord Salisbury said—I am not perfectly certain of the words—that a warrant would be obtained to-morrow or a warrant should be obtained immediately. I think this fact was communicated to the commanding officer of Lord Arthur Somerset's regiment, and Lord Arthur Somerset then fled the country. I am not in the least complaining of the gentleman connected with the Household of the Prince of Wales nor of the commanding officer of Lord Arthur Somerset's regiment. In view of their position I can well understand the course they adopted. Probably they know the family of Lord A. Somerset, and they can hardly be blamed for desiring that his lordship should get out of the country to avoid a trial. I am not quite certain that if I had been in the same position as they were I should not have done as they did; but their position is very different from that of Lord Salisbury. The importance of the point here is why did Lord Salisbury interfere in the matter? What right had he to interfere? Was it the business of a Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to mix himself up in such matters? But if he did intend, or know that a warrant was about to be issued, surely the last thing a man in his official position should have done was to communicate the fact to a friend of Lord A. Somerset's. The object, however, is perfectly clear. Lord Salisbury had had his hands forced. Public attention had been drawn to the matter; it became necessary to issue a warrant, and it was intended that a hint should be conveyed to Lord A Somerset to get out of the jurisdiction of the law before the warrant could be served on him. But this is not all. Let us admit this to have been a mere indiscretion on the part of Lord Salisbury; but was any time lost in the issue of the writ? Was it issued immediately? No; the conversation with Lord Salisbury took place on the 18th of October, and the warrant was not issued until the 12th of November, in order that it might be absolutely certain that Lord A. Somerset had received the information that a warrant was going to be issued and to give him time to get out of the country. So palpable was this that when the warrant was issued it was perfectly well-known that he was out of the country. It was a mere *brutum fulmen*, and the police so regarded it. They took no trouble to look after Lord A. Somerset, because they knew he was out of England. I would ask in regard to the warrant what further evidence there

was on the 18th October than there was when Lord A. Somerset was in England? What further evidence was there on the 12th November than was known on October 18? We know there was no further evidence. Why was not the warrant issued as soon as Lord Salisbury stated it was to be issued on October 18, and when Lord A. Somerset was in the country? Why was it put off until November 12? Perhaps the Attorney General when he speaks will tell us that. For my part, I think the reason is pretty clear. If the Committee are somewhat surprised at these transactions in which Lord Salisbury is concerned, they will be still more surprised when they learn what occurred. Lord A. Somerset was a major in one of her Majesty's regiments of Guards, and on the 9th of November it was announced in the *Gazette* that his resignation had been accepted. Now, this form of resignation is an honourable discharge. If an officer in the Army is not considered worthy of an honourable discharge, it is inserted in the *Gazette* that his services are dispensed with. Can anyone think that, if the man had been a mere Lieutenant Jones or a Captain Smith, this would have occurred? It is an insult to every officer in the Army and to every man in the country who is anxious that the Army should remain an honoured and an honourable profession. This is not all. It will be found on investigation that Lord A. Somerset, who is a fugitive from justice, is still a magistrate for two counties. He went to Constantinople, and showing, as he was able to do, that he had been allowed to honourably resign his position in the Army, and that he was a magistrate for two counties in England, he asked for some official position in the Court of the Sultan. By this time, public attention had been drawn to a certain extent to what was going on, and Ministers began to think they were getting into a mess. They were a little frightened at what might happen, and so they looked around for a Jonah, and they found him in the person of Mr. Newton, solicitor to Lord A. Somerset, and they prosecuted him for getting witnesses out of the way. I do not blame Mr. Newton; so far as I know, he only aided Lord Salisbury in defeating justice, but it seems to me that if Mr. Newton is prosecuted, Lord Salisbury and several other gentlemen ought also to be prosecuted and charged under the same indictment. I can well understand that there might be an indisposition to bring scandals of this kind before the public, but it must be borne in mind that Ministers have no dispensing powers with regard to the English law, and I hold that they were utterly false to duty when they did not make every effort to bring to justice a man whom they had reasonable ground to believe was guilty of such an offence. It must not be forgotten what has taken place in regard to this case. Two men have been sent to prison, but they are poor. Their confidant was left alone. Their confidant had Attorney General, Solicitor General, and Heaven knows what at his back to take his part and to give him information and advice to get away as fast as he could. Hon. Members may remember that one of the charges brought against my hon. Friend the Member for Cork before the Special Commission was that he gave money to Byrne to aid him to escape from justice, and I should like to ask what difference there is between giving money to a man to escape and giving him information which enabled him to do so. But entirely apart from what I hold to be the criminality of Lord Salisbury there can be no doubt that Lord Salisbury at least acted very foolishly in the matter. He aggravated the scandal. Foreign newspapers took notice of the case, and they have represented this country as a nation of hypocrites, and made very strong and, I believe, in many cases unjust reflections on persons in high stations. It is the common talk in the workshops of this country respecting the case that the law is not fairly administered as between the rich man and the poor man, that justice is not fairly meted out between man and man, regardless of rank and social position, and thus great harm has been done by the course which has been adopted. We have heard a good deal lately about criminal conspiracy. What is this case but a criminal conspiracy by the very guardians of public morality and law, with the Prime Minister at their head, to defeat the ends of justice? Neither the upper classes nor the Treasury have any reason to thank Lord Salisbury for his action in the matter, for

both have been considerable sufferers by it. Is it not a fact that during the time the matter was before the public the name of many a gentleman was insidiously and unjustly whispered about as being concerned in the scandals? I myself heard the names of several persons in high position hinted at and whispered about in connection with the case, and after what has occurred I feel it my duty to say that, so far as I know—and as the result of close inquiry I know as much about the case as any man—not one of those gentlemen whose names have been mentioned abroad and at the clubs was directly or indirectly in any sort of way connected with the scandals. In short, no name was spared, however high the position of the man who held it. I have seen the name of a gentleman of very high position mentioned in foreign newspapers in connection with the case, but having, as I have just said, looked very narrowly into the whole matter, I am absolutely certain that there is no justification for the calumny. In connection with this I may add that I know that a still more eminent gentleman, closely connected with the gentleman to whom I have alluded, has used all his efforts to have the fullest publicity given. I think that it is due to that eminent gentleman that the Government have at last been forced into the qualified action which has been taken against Lord A. Somerset. I think that this ought to be known. As I think all know, I myself took strong views upon the matter of Royal Grants, but I expressed my views openly, and I protest against the good name of any man, be he prince or peasant, being whispered and hinted away. I honour and respect the eminent gentleman to whom I have alluded for his action in this matter. I consider it wise and noble, and worthy of the great position he holds. However, I only allude to this in order to show how incalculable are the evils that might have arisen from this system which the Government has adopted of hushing up these matters. But the action of the Government, the guardians of public morality, does not affect individuals alone; it encourages persons of any social station to think that they may commit this sort of offence with absolute impunity. The statement of Constable Sladden is perfectly astounding, but I do not think it can be contradicted. I think the Home Secretary can bear me out. A considerable number of years ago Sir E. Henderson sent a Report complaining of inaction, and no action was taken because the law made it almost impossible to convict. The Home Secretary will bear me out when I say that this offence has been on the increase of late, but every constable or inspector takes care not to arrest any cognate person, because they believe that by doing so they would make themselves marked men and be sent out to the suburbs. In the streets, in the music halls, you have these wretched creatures openly pursuing their avocation. They are known to the police, yet the police do nothing to stop this sort of thing. It is scandalous that such a state of things should exist in London. There is no capital where it exists more openly. This was not the case 10 years ago, and I ascribe the increase entirely to the immunity granted to the criminals. I quite agree that it is most undesirable on many accounts to parade these scandals in the public Press, but I maintain that it is far more undesirable that poor persons should be prosecuted, and cognate persons allowed impunity when they happen to be wealthy. These poor and wretched creatures live to minister to the vices of those in a superior station. Is there any man who will not feel indignant that boys employed in one of our public offices should be tempted into indecencies more gross than were ever committed under Louis XV.? Instead of making every effort to punish offences, as far as I can see every effort has been made to hush up the matter. I do not know what the defence of the Government may be, but I venture to advise them not to put up any lawyer with a brief in his hand, who will by special pleading and evasive chicanery defend this charge. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"] Very well, then, I will say not by the same tactics as those pursued with regard to the Special Commission—that means the same thing to us on this side of the House. My first charge is that Lord Salisbury and others entered into a criminal conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice. I ask for a Committee to investigate this charge and allegation, and if it is granted I am perfectly willing to withdraw my Amendment, but I will not, and I do not think

that many in this House will, be satisfied with a mere *ex parte* denial on behalf of the incriminated persons. If the Committee is not granted Lord Salisbury and the others stand condemned by their own Code of ethics. The hon. Member for Cork was charged with writing certain letters, and again and again hon. Gentlemen opposite said that he must be guilty because he had not courted an investigation. Mr. Walter was not a member of this House; I am. Mr. Walter had certain proofs, but he did not submit them; I have submitted my proofs. For my own part, I think I have already shown more of a *primâ facie* case for an inquiry than there was simply because Pigott sold forged letters to the *Times*. If the Government refuse this investigation, either they admit their guilt or they have two Codes of ethics—one for an Irish leader and another for a Conservative leader. If the Government plead guilty I shall deem it my duty to divide the House, because I think that this House ought to disconnect itself from any condoning of abominable offences of this kind, and ought to stand up for the principle of equal justice between man and man. If they do not admit their guilt I shall divide, because a man cannot be Judge, jury, and defendant in his own case. If these charges, openly made in this House, are not in some way investigated a heavier blow will be dealt to the good name of the country and to the cause of law and order than anything that has been done for many and many a year. I appeal to the whole House, to hon. Members sitting on both sides, to support me in the action I have taken. I appeal to them, not as followers of this Ministry or of that, but on the broad ground that they are English gentlemen. I appeal to them because I know that they loathe these offences as much as I do, and I hope that they will stand by me in the only course that ought to be pursued in this matter, and the only course which will lead to the thorough and efficient prevention of such crimes.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Henry Labouchere.*)

*(6.25.) SIR R. WEBSTER: Of all the occasions on which I have spoken in the House and of all the questions I have heard raised since I have had the honour of being a Member of the House, nothing in my opinion has approached the importance of the occasion on the charge made by the hon. Member for Northampton to-night. He has charged the Prime Minister with being party to a criminal conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice, and that subordinate officials, whom he said must have known what was being done, were also parties to that conspiracy. The hon. Member has said that deliberate notice was given to enable an accused man to escape from justice, and said that it was the wish of those whom he charged that that person should not be brought to justice; and he has alleged that certain criminal proceedings were arranged by a corrupt bargain with the view of minor punishments being inflicted in order that other persons who might be implicated might escape. I think that the Committee will agree with me that these are charges of most disgraceful conduct if they are true, and more disgraceful charges if false, and it is strange that, with that semblance of fair play which the hon. Member has pretended to assume, though he knew that the person who now addresses the House must be one of the persons implicated in the so-called conspiracy, the hon. Member has endeavoured to discount what I may be going to say by describing it as only the chicanery of a lawyer. I do not think that my hon. and learned Friends the Members for South Hackney and Stockton will acquiesce in that view. The main sting of this charge is that Lord Salisbury on a given night in October, with the purpose of allowing Lord A. Somerset to escape, made a communication which was intended to be conveyed to him, and that on receiving that communication Lord A. Somerset fled. Before I sit down I shall demonstrate that there is not a shadow of foundation for that charge. But if the charge is true, is it just or is it right that it should be made in the presence of the man who can answer it, or behind his back?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am not a peer.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: If the hon. Member has any *prima facie* case, any of the peers who are opposed to Lord Salisbury could ask the question in the House of

Lords. Does the hon. Member mean to suggest that Lord Herschell, if he believed in such facts as the hon. Member for Northampton asserts that he believes, would not have thought it his duty to have brought them forward and enable Lord Salisbury to give an answer across the floor of the House of Lords? I am going to accept the responsibility for my own acts and state exactly what I have done. If there be anything in that spirit of fair play to which the hon. Member thought fit to refer at the conclusion of his remarks, it should have prompted those who appreciate a sense of justice to have made this charge where the answer could have been directly given by the person particularly affected by it. I hope the House will bear with me, for it may be that I shall have to address it at some length. It is absolutely essential I should deal with all the points raised one by one, and I am sure the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would rather I should trespass upon the time of the house too much than too little. We are dealing with infamous charges, and I will undertake to demonstrate that they are not true. The House must remember that these infamous charges are levelled against myself, the Treasury Solicitor, and possibly the Chief Commissioner of Police, though he seems for some reason or other to have been exculpated. But what is to me much more important is, it is suggested that members of my own profession, who have practised for years and whose names are well known, have also been mixed up in that foul conspiracy with their knowledge. It is not very easy for me to take this story exactly in the order I should like to take it, because the hon. Member has thonght fit to break it up into a number of different cases, and has put before the House what he asserts about each of those cases. Perhaps the better course, therefore, for me to take will be to follow the order the hon. Member has found it convenient to adopt. If I were to do otherwise, I might possibly overlook some of the hon. Gentleman's statement. But first I wish to make one or two preliminary observations. At a date which does not substantially differ from that given by the hon. Member, and which we may take roughly to be about July 25—I do not say that is absolutely the earliest date, but some time in the middle of July, and certainly before July 25—the case was put in the hands of the Treasury Solicitor. From that time down to the present every step in the proceedings has been taken under my direction, and the hon. Member knows it, and therefore the House will appreciate what the hon. Member means by suggesting that no lawyer was to get up with a brief. That is the spirit of chivalry and fair play which animates the hon. Member. The first three cases are the Veck and Newlove case, the Hammond case, and the Somerset case, and, less important, the Newton case. It is, I must say, strange to my mind that the hon. Member for Northampton should have thought fit to introduce the Newton case into the discussion, seeing it is my unfortunate duty to have to represent the Crown in that prosecution, in which the defendant Newton is to be defended by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney, I venture to think that knowing that, as he undoubtedly did from his speech, and as I shall show from other sources——

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did know it.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: It is somewhat strange he should have thought fit to express the opinion he did about that case. I pass from that. When I deal with the matter I shall contradict every statement the hon. Member made; now I want the House to follow me and appreciate what the Veck and Newlove charge is. The charge against Her Majesty's Government is that these cases were intended to be punished by light sentences; that it was arranged between the prosecuting and defending counsel, with the knowledge of the Treasury Solicitor, that the accused should have those light sentences as the price of silence; and that that corrupt bargain was made with the knowledge of those in authority. I think the House will agree that, if true, more infamous conduct was never charged against persons in authority. I am fortunately able to speak more than once in this debate, and if, by inadvertence, I omit to deal with any point, I hope I shall be reminded of it. The first information given by the Post Office was on the evening of July 5; that was the same day as that on which Hammond bolted. Certain statements respecting Veck in connection with the boys were placed before me some time in

the month of July. The hon. Member has suggested that I either had instructions from some higher authority or gave instructions that no prosecution should take place.

MR. LABOUCHERE: No, I did not.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: In connection with the Somerset case the hon. Member said that most distinctly, but I desire to say that whatever case the statement may be intended to apply to there is not the slightest shadow of foundation for the suggestion. My sole wish has been that when the evidence was sufficient to put a man on his trial he should at once be brought before a Court of justice, and there has been no distinction or difference whatever between one person and another. I will state exactly what did happen. Up to the middle of August, the evidence against Veck was not complete. I think the House will agree that anybody who puts forward these charges ought to be practically certain he can prove them, I cannot imagine anything worse than that a man should be put on his trial on such a charge on the mere chance of getting a conviction on some slight evidence. For it is perfectly well known that if these charges are once made, however much a man may clear himself, there are people foolish and wicked enough still to believe there is some truth in them. I do not hesitate to say that the sole consideration operating on my mind was whether there was or was not sufficient corroborative testimony. Up to the middle of August, there was not sufficient evidence to put process in force against Veck. I may say, by the way, there was amply sufficient evidence against Newlove and Hammond, and the warrants were issued on the 7th.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I never raised this point. I simply stated as a hard matter of fact that Veck was arrested on the 20th August.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: It is absolutely necessary the whole story should be told, for the hon. Member has said that when these men were put on their trial on the 18th September they were lightly sentenced in consideration of pleading guilty and disclosing no other person's name. The warrant was issued as soon as the evidence in our hands was, in my opinion, sufficient. There was some difficulty in finding Veck, but he was arrested on August 20th, committed for trial on September 11th, and pleaded guilty on the 18th. Now I come to the *gravamen* of the charge. Every particle of evidence against Veck came under my immediate notice, and I was represented by Mr. Poland, Q.C., and Mr. Avory. I do hope the hon. and learned Member for Hackney will speak in this debate. No? I hope some hon. and learned Member of this House will bear me out in what I am saying with regard to these gentlemen. I want to know by whom this accusation is going to be supported. If any hon. Members opposite, who belong to my profession, speaks in this debate I do hope they will express their opinion of one—I may say both—of those gentlemen who represented the Crown in that prosecution, and say what they think of Mr. Poland, who has lived all his life at the Bar, and is perfectly well-known for his high honour and standing in the profession. The prisoners were defended by Mr. Gill and Mr. C. W. Mathews. The house has heard something about whispers. Perhaps the hon. Member for Northampton has had something to do with some whispers circulated in connection with this case. Whether he has or not, the knowledge that the hon. Member was going to bring this charge has enabled me to obtain from Mr. Poland and from Mr. Avory a written statement with regard to this particular matter. I do not believe there is a Member of this House who will suggest that what I am about to read, signed by Mr. Poland, is other than the strict and literal truth in the matter. The learned counsel says this:—

"Mr. Avory, my junior, was informed by Mr. Gill, who defended Newlove, or by Mr. Mathews, who defended Veck, that the prisoners intended to plead guilty, and that the case would be disposed of in the course of the day. I went to the Old Bailey between 3 and 4 o'clock and went into Court shortly before 4, that being the time when pleas of guilty are taken, when convenient. I addressed the Recorder, and Mr. Gill and Mr. Mathews addressed him also. I wish to say that I neither directly nor indirectly made any arrangement with the prisoners' counsel as to what counts the prisoners should plead guilty to, and that there was no undertaking of any kind, either expressed or implied, as to what should be done by me or by the prisoners' counsel."

That is, I think, sufficiently categorical. I have here also the shorthand note of

what Mr. Poland said before the Recorder. If there had been any such arrangement as was suggested by the hon. Member I must have known of it. Does he still insist that there was an arrangement?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I still state, Sir, that there was an understanding beforehand as to the pleas of guilty. I have never stated that it was agreed that the prisoners should plead guilty and get short sentences provided that they did not mention any names. That is not how things are done. One counsel says to the other, "Don't you think the prisoners had better plead guilty?" and the other replies, "Well, what do you think?" And then the first says, "Well, we will see what we can do," and so on. The Attorney General has appealed to the lawyers on this side. I also will make an appeal to them. Will any lawyer who has practised get up and tell me that arrangements are not frequently made by which it is agreed that if the accused pleads guilty the prosecuting counsel will try and get him a light sentence?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Now, I understood the hon. Member to say that he had it from a credible informant that the arrangement which he described was come to between the prosecuting counsel and the counsel for the prisoners. Will the hon. Member now say who his credible informant is?

MR. LABOUCHERE: No, Sir, I will not—for the same reason which the Chief Secretary for Ireland so often gives us—he would be a marked man.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I am surprised that the hon. Member, having now heard me state on behalf of the counsel engaged in the case that this wicked and corrupt bargain was not made by them, withholds the name of his credible informant. But I feel as certain as I am of the fact of my standing here that it is impossible for the hon. Member to give the name of any credible person who will come forward and state that this wicked arrangement was made. The next allegation made by the hon. Member was that the case was called on at a late and inconvenient hour when the reporters were not present.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I was informed of that fact by a learned counsel who was present.

Sir R. Webster

*SIR R. WEBSTER: At the Old Bailey pleas are always taken either at 4 o'clock or at the beginning of the day's work. Mr. Poland is of opinion, an opinion which I entirely share, that no good is done by reporting cases of this description, and it is greatly to the credit of the reporters of the Press that they almost invariably refrain from reporting them. But I have Mr. Poland's assurance in writing that he took no steps to have the Court cleared or to prevent the proceedings from being reported in the newspapers. When he began his speech there happened to be a woman in Court, and the Recorder of his own motion ordered her to leave. Mr. Poland says, "I was specially careful to do nothing in this case out of the usual and ordinary course." Now I come to the hon. Member's charges, based on the allegation that the sentence was light. Veck pleaded guilty to 13 counts of the indictment. There was no evidence of felony in the case at all, and Veck was prosecuted for misdemeanour under the section of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Newlove was indicted for assault with intent to commit sodomy, as well as for offences against the Act. He did not plead guilty to the graver charge, and I was satisfied that there was no evidence to go to the jury on the grave charge, and it was on my responsibility, and mine alone, that the count against Newlove for the more serious offence was not pressed. The House must bear in mind that by pleading guilty these prisoners rendered themselves liable to more than two years' imprisonment. Cumulative sentences can be inflicted under the Act and the Recorder could have passed a much higher sentence if he had thought fit to do so. I say distinctly that neither directly nor indirectly was there any communication with the Recorder on behalf of the Government, or, as far as I know, by any living person with reference to the sentence passed upon these men. It is not my business to justify that sentence. It may not have been sufficient; I think myself that it might have been severer; but the question of insufficiency is a matter affecting the Recorder only. Does the hon. Member for Northampton intend to charge a Judge like the Recorder of London with being a party to this criminal conspiracy? Unless the hon. Member admits that the

sentence was a sentence passed by the Recorder in the exercise of his discretion, he must contend that the Recorder also was a party to the conspiracy, and for some motive was willing to inflict a lighter sentence than should have been passed. The hon. Member affirms that the real object of the conspiracy which he alleges existed was to hush the matter up. Well, I have answered the hon. Member by meeting every assertion which the hon. Member has made respecting Veck and Newlove.

MR. LABOUCHERE: There is one point which the hon. and learned Member has not dealt with. I said that I did not know whether it was suggested to the Recorder that he should pass a light sentence, or whether the depositions showing the gross iniquity of Veck and Newlove were not submitted to the learned Judge.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: All the depositions went before the learned Recorder as a matter of course. There is not a shadow of foundation for saying that anything but the ordinary course of justice was pursued in this case. The hon. Member has suggested that the real object of passing these sentences was to hush the matter up, and that these prosecutions would not have taken place but for the action of the Postmaster General. All I can say is that when the statement respecting Veck and Newlove came before me, I, and I alone, exercised my judgment, taking counsel, however, with those whose opinion in criminal matters is of the highest value. I think, Sir, I have proved to the House how unfounded the hon. Member's charges are, and now I come to the allegation respecting Hammond. It is an allegation which I confess has filled me with astonishment. The hon. Member says that Hammond ought to have been watched by the police, and that the Postmaster General, or the Secretary to the Post Office, desired that he should be prosecuted, but that the police and the Treasury Solicitor and others desired that he should escape. As a matter of fact no information of any kind was given to the police until the afternoon of July 5, and Hammond left the country on the morning of that day. I lay no blame upon the Post Office for not taking steps. We know perfectly well that by the Criminal Law we are not entitled to arrest a man without a warrant unless he is caught in the commission of crime.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): How about the Statute of Edward III.? [*Laughter.*]

*SIR R. WEBSTER: This case is far too serious to be made the subject of laughter, and I do not know whether right hon. Gentlemen opposite think I ought to be interrupted in this manner. Hammond left on the morning of the 5th of July; and, notwithstanding the insinuations and statements of the hon. Member, from that moment Hammond was beyond the reach of the law. The hon. Gentleman has suggested that Hammond could have been extradited if the Foreign Office had wished it to be done. He had also suggested that arrangements could have been made whereby Hammond might have been put aboard an English steamer and so arrested. All I can say, and I carefully confine myself to what I know, and the Postmaster General can confirm me, is that every step was taken to bring the arrest about. From the beginning we have been extremely anxious to get hold of Hammond; indeed, ever since the issue of the warrant in July, 1889. As far as I know, no single act was done, directly or indirectly, to prevent Hammond from being brought to justice as quickly as possible. The hon. Member for Northampton has said that a letter came on the 25th of July from Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office saying that Hammond could not be extradited. Will the hon. Gentleman give his authority for that statement? [MR. LABOUCHERE shook his head.] Then, has it come to this, that without any warrant at all such charges can be made across the floor of this House? As a matter of fact, the reply came from one of the Official Secretaries of the Foreign Office, who wrote the letter, it being a matter of regular routine business, and nothing being known about the case except that there was no evidence of any crime on which Hammond could have been extradited. I will not go into the strictly legal aspect of the question, as the authorities did not regard it in that light. They were all extremely anxious to obtain the extradition. The only ground on which it could have been demanded was aggravated or indecent assault; and, unfortunately,

in the case of Hammond all the boys consented and were above the protected age. I again distinctly repeat that, with reference to extra-legal extradition, a step was taken to bring Hammond to justice. Hammond fled to Belgium. I understood the hon. Member for Northampton to suggest that it was with the cognisance of the Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Oh, no.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I am glad to have that withdrawal. Certainly an expression fell from the hon. Gentleman which made me come to the conclusion that the Government was distinctly charged with getting Hammond away, first to Paris and then to Belgium. If the charge be withdrawn, the House will draw its conclusions with reference to some of the other charges. I took down the hon. Member's words, which were to the effect that the Government could have induced the French Government to expel Hammond to an English ship; and that they hunted the man from France to Belgium, and the Government wanted to send the man away. I would ask the hon. Member, if he is bringing forward his accusation from a sense of justice, and desires to make this indictment because the interests of public justice require it, whether he will tell the House whose authority he had for saying that the Government wished to send Hammond away? There is not one scrap of evidence before me that the Government, directly or indirectly, took any step to prevent Hammond from being brought to justice. On the contrary, every act is in the other direction. But the hon. Gentleman said that, owing to the action of the police—and supposedly he meant the action of the police under directions—and the action of the Government, a poor, miserable boy was abstracted from his parents and sent away to America. What did the hon. Gentleman mean by suggesting that this was done by the action of the Government? Are such charges to be bandied about on the mere *ipse dixit* of any hon. Gentleman who chooses to believe any clap-trap he may hear? If there were the slightest warrant for this charge the hon. Gentleman would be amply protected for any statement made in the House. I challenge the hon. Gentleman to give the name of his informant. As to the circumstances under which Hammond did go to America my own mouth is closed. I should be perfectly willing, and some day I shall be allowed, to state them. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney knows them as well as I do.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: I know nothing at all about them.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. and learned Gentleman's memory misleads him. He appeared for Newton on the application to remove the case into the Queen's Bench; and on that occasion all the depositions and statements of Newton were brought up, and Newton's affidavit, in which he stated that he had been a party to getting Hammond to go away on account of the blackmail he was levying on people in England.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: I am sorry that my name is being brought into the matter in this way, especially as I intimated to the hon. and learned Gentleman early in the debate that I should take no part in it, for reasons which it is unnecessary to state to the House. I can assure the Attorney General that, although I may have seen some general statements, I had no connection with the case which required me in any way to examine them.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Of course, I accept the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and withdraw my remark. I would say, however, that I am precluded from stating the facts of the case, because it is *sub judice*, and I have to be the prosecuting counsel against Newton. On the Hammond case I think I have dealt with every fact mentioned by the hon. Gentleman; but if he will repeat any charge that has been overlooked, I will meet it subsequently. Then, as to what must be supposed to be the main charge against Lord Salisbury—the charge that Lord Salisbury connived at Lord Arthur Somerset getting away. This case stands on a different footing. I have had for many months upon my mind the necessity of considering, with the greatest anxiety, whether there was sufficient corroborative evidence against Lord A. Somerset or not. It was not until the 5th or 6th of November that I gave directions, after careful consideration, that the warrant should be issued. It is stated that this was done in consequence of some higher power preventing, for fear of revelations,

a proceeding which was right, and amply justified. It is quite true that about the 25th July statements had been made respecting Lord A. Somerset, an attempt at identification was made, and I say so advisedly. But it was not at Knightsbridge, but in Piccadilly. I cannot give further facts, because the case may be further tried. On what grounds can it be suggested that, when Lord A. Somerset may come back and take his trial, the House is to prejudice the case? I should be guilty of a gross breach of duty if I were to suppose the information correct before there has been any cross-examination. The evidence of identification was unsatisfactory. The two witnesses did not agree, and there was some doubt whether they had not by conversation afterwards come to some agreement. The person who conducted the investigation moreover did not know Lord A. Somerset. I will now make a statement of which I am not ashamed, and for which I do not think the House will condemn me. I did not altogether act upon my own judgment in such a matter. I have permission to say that in the month of August, before Veck was arrested, I consulted the Lord Chancellor. I will not appeal any more to lawyers; but will state that there was no man whose career at the Bar has been more honourable than that of the present Lord Chancellor. There is no man of whom it can be said with less justice that he has ever interfered with the course of justice, and there is no greater criminal lawyer living. After the most careful consideration and examination of the whole case, the Lord Chancellor came distinctly to the conclusion that there was not such corroboration as would justify any man being put upon his trial. The same course exactly was pursued in the cases of Veck and Lord A. Somerset, both cases being submitted to the Lord Chancellor. Subsequently further evidence came up about Veck, and he was placed upon his trial. When Veck was arrested some documents were found upon him, and some of them led the authorities, about the 24th of August, to find out the boy Allies at Sudbury. The boy Allies made a statement which may be said to have given corroboration of the evidence against Lord A. Somerset. But we were in this difficult position. Some communication, which, as far as we could trace, did not come from Lord Arthur Somerset, was made to this boy the night before he was seen and the document was destroyed. The hon. Member suggests that the postal orders coming from Knightsbridge must be presumed to have come from Lord Arthur Somerset; but we were not able to identify them as having come from Lord Arthur Somerset. This was about the middle of September, and during the trial of Newlove. All the statements were presented to me; and knowing that I had previously had the benefit of the advice of the Lord Chancellor, I took upon myself the responsibility of sending the whole of the statements and of asking his advice. I thought that the matter was so serious that I took a step of which I am not ashamed. I asked Mr. Poland, who had been in the case of Newlove and Veck, to write a letter to the Lord Chancellor stating what his views were on the evidence. I did not see that letter until after it had been sent, nor had I any part in the preparation of it. It was a letter covering more than a sheet of foolscap, containing a most careful analysis of the evidence, and examining the considerations which bore on the duty of prosecuting or not. I received a communication by telegraph, and subsequently a letter from the Lord Chancellor, saying that, having gone carefully through the matter, he was of opinion that the corroborative evidence was wholly insufficient. These are facts which can be tested by any hon. Member, and can anyone suggest that such conduct could have been pursued by men in league with a criminal conspiracy? Can anyone suggest that I, not acting upon my own opinion and taking the opinion of wiser men than myself, ought to be ashamed of having taken the course which I did? If it had been a criminal conspiracy should I have taken Mr. Poland into my confidence and have asked him to write independently a letter to the Lord Chancellor? I am aware that acts of mine have been severely criticised in this House; but I did not think that any opponent of mine opposite was so hostile as to believe that I was being party to a criminal conspiracy, or had any lot or part in such matter. Now, Mr. Courtney, so the matter rested until the end of September; and now I

come to the extraordinary allegations made by the hon. Member respecting Lord Salisbury in October. The hon. Member stated categorically that the Law Officers did not advise a prosecution. If by that the hon. Gentleman means that I, as Attorney General, did not direct a prosecution, he is perfectly right; but if the hon. Gentleman means that I corruptly and improperly declined to order a prosecution because of an arrangement that Lord Arthur Somerset should not be brought to justice, then I have to say that it is absolutely wrong, and there is no shadow of foundation for the statement. Then the hon. Gentleman put this extraordinary question to me—

"I wish to ask whether the questions that were put to the witnesses at the Treasury were arranged by the Attorney General?"

What is the insinuation contained in that? The hon. Member asserts that those questions were not intended to elicit the real facts; the insinuation is that in the case of certain persons giving information to the Treasury I, as Attorney General, suggested that certain questions should be put to them, and certain others not be put to them in order not to elicit the facts. There is not a shadow of foundation for the statement.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I was speaking of the questions in the Court of the police magistrate.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The questions asked before the police magistrate only relate to Veck and Newlove. Does the hon. Member suggest that, on the case against Newlove, and I being of opinion that there was no sufficient ground for criminating other persons, questions ought to have been asked by means of a side-wind, so to speak, in order to elicit a charge against other persons? It would have been most discreditable conduct on the part of the person charged with the prosecution of Newlove and Veck to have put questions so as to bring out evidence against Lord Arthur Somerset or any other person. Questions were put by Mr. Avory in order to establish the guilt of Veck and Newlove; but I understand the hon. Gentleman to make a much more serious allegation, that the Attorney General arranged the questions which were to be put either by Mr. Avory or by the Treasury solicitor. Not one word ever passed between me and Mr. Avory and the Treasury solicitor as to the questions to be put. The statements were taken and examined in the ordinary way. Then the hon. Member said that Hanks went down to Badminton and received directions to withdraw. Will the hon. Gentleman tell the House his authority for that? As far as I know, there is not the slightest foundation for the statement; because I myself gave personally directions to the Chief Commissioner of Police, among others, that an inquiry should be prosecuted, in order to bring all the parties who were really implicated to justice. I, therefore, ask again who was the person who informed the hon. Member that Hanks was directed to withdraw? Now, I come to the very grave charge which the hon. Member makes respecting the supposed communication between Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn, and the allegations founded thereon. Now, the hon. Member was very careful, for I watched him most closely, in making this charge. Does the hon. Member suggest that Sir Dighton Probyn has given him a version of the conversation? From whom did the hon. Member get that statement? Was it the gossip of the clubs?

MR. LABOUCHERE: The hon. Gentleman asks me a question, and I will offer him this. I will write down the name of the person from whom I received it, and then I will leave it to the hon. Gentleman to read it out to the House or not.

MR. MAC NEILL: Accept the challenge.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. Member may or may not write the name down; but my question is "Yes" or "No;" did the hon. Gentleman get the statement from Sir Dighton Probyn? There are two parties to this interview. I have been able to communicate directly with one of them; but I have not been able to communicate with the other. But I am able to state exactly what did happen at the supposed interview. The statement is this: that, at a place not named, Sir Dighton Probyn, having telegraphed to see the Prime Minister, had a conversation with him, the exact purport of which is not stated. But at that interview Sir Dighton Probyn was told by the Prime Minister that he would issue the warrant "to-morrow or imme-

diately," and that that communication was intended to be delivered by Sir Dighton Probyn to Lord Arthur Somerset. Mr. Courtney, the best answer to that is to give the simple statement of Lord Salisbury, which cannot be made otherwise than through me, in consequence of the course which the hon. Member has thought fit to pursue. The statement was very simple and straightforward, and I think the House will be able to judge whether, after a fair recital of the words, the story is likely to be true. Sir Dighton Probyn did see Lord Salisbury on a date, which I cannot fix, but it was the date upon which Lord Author Somerset fled from London. It was the evening of the day on which Lord Arthur Somerset disappeared. Sir Dighton Probyn saw Lord Salisbury, and asked him whether there was any truth in the imputations made in certain newspapers against certain persons whom he named. Lord Salisbury said that, as far as he knew, there was not a vestige of evidence against any of those persons except one, and in his case the evidence of identity was not he believed in the judgment of the Law Advisers of the Crown, sufficient. Whether Lord Salisbury said that or not, hon. Members can, of course, form their own opinion; but it is much more probable that Lord Salisbury would have said something which was in accordance with truth than that which was contrary to the fact. The statement made by the hon. Member is that some person told him that Lord Salisbury said the warrant would be issued "to-morrow or immediately." As a matter of fact, I can state, from my own personal knowledge, that it was not determined to issue the warrant, and my directions were not given until the 7th or 8th of November. I cannot fix the exact date, because I cannot remember how long it took to prepare the depositions. But now I am glad to be able—for I believe the House want to know the facts—to negative the other statement, though I have not been able to check the statement as to the supposed conversation. I cannot imagine a more simple and straightforward story than that which I am enabled to make. Sir Dighton Probyn came back from the interview with Lord Salisbury; he never saw Lord Arthur Somerset again, and he never, directly or indirectly, communicated with him through any person. Nobody was more surprised than Sir Dighton Probyn that Lord Arthur Somerset had gone, for up to that moment he believed emphatically in the innocence of Lord Arthur Somerset. I assert that there is no foundation whatever for the statement that Lord Salisbury stated that a warrant was going to be issued "to-morrow or immediately."

MR. LABOUCHERE: Does he deny it?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. Member says "does he deny it?" Never until to-night has he stated what the words were. But I ask whether it is possible to reconcile the alleged story with the statement I have read in Lord Salisbury's own words?

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then he does not deny it?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I would not notice such an unjust observation and criticism upon the simple story I have told of this matter. The hon. Member knows that Lord Salisbury has denied it in the most straightforward manner by stating what actually did take place. If this kind of argument is to be used, why has not the hon. Member in common fairness allowed the question to be put across the floor of the House of Lords "Did that conversation take place?"

MR. LABOUCHERE: I will tell the hon. and learned Gentleman. I have not got Lords in my pocket.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: No; the hon. Member has not got Lords in his pocket to do such dirty work as that. The hon. Member might have put a question to the First Lord of the Treasury. Over and over again questions have been asked in this House as to whether Lord Salisbury has made such and such a statement. The hon. Member comes down to the House and makes an allegation without taking the slightest means of verifying it.

MR. LABOUCHERE: How do you know that?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Because if he had a scrap of evidence he would be only too glad to produce it. Mr. Courtney, the statement is so absurd that

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not want to interrupt the hon. and learned Gentleman, but he said he would take this piece of paper from me with the name on it. I will

leave him to read it out to the House or not, as he likes. Will the hon. and learned Gentleman take it. [*Here the hon. Member held out a small piece of paper.*]

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I insist upon putting the question which I am entitled to put. Does the hon. Gentleman say he got the statement from Sir Dighton Probyn? Will he answer that question or not?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Look at the paper.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I am entitled to continue my speech. Nobody is entitled to make such a charge as this on hearsay evidence.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: It is not hearsay evidence.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: This I assert, that Lord Salisbury does distinctly deny that he ever said one single word about a warrant being issued, or directly or indirectly, conveyed anything of the kind. In this particular matter, I have only one more fact to discuss. The matter was most carefully considered, and I again saw the Lord Chancellor, and, not being convinced altogether, the Lord Chancellor told me I should act in the matter on my own responsibility.

Sir H. DAVEY (Stockton): Which matter?

*Sir R. WEBSTER: The matter I am dealing with—that of Lord Arthur Somerset. That was about the 1st or 2nd of November. I then gave directions that the warrant should be issued. I have been occupied with this matter for a long time, and I say that a more infamous charge than that made by the hon. Member was never brought, without a shadow of foundation. I hope and believe there are many on the other side of the House, who, however bitter their Party feeling, will not by their vote support such an accusation as that which has been levelled by the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Member has said that when Lord A. Somerset went to Constantinople he applied to the Sultan for an appointment. I know absolutely nothing about it. I do not suppose the hon. Member can know anything except some newspaper rumour that has come home, but in any event, it has nothing to do with the case, and was only introduced, I suppose, as a matter of prejudice. The last charge made is that Newton was made a scapegoat. I am not sure that I am justified in saying what I am about to say; but I suppose I must do so in consequence of the suggestion that has been made. The suggestion of prosecuting Newton was started as early as September or October, when we had reason to believe that he was doing that which was subsequently stated on oath. So far from making the man a scapegoat, I considered whether the evidence was sufficient, and I came to the conclusion that it was not sufficient to sustain the charge. I may be right or wrong, but nobody in my position can approach such questions otherwise than with a great feeling of responsibility; and I have been actuated throughout the whole affair by the determination, from which I never swerved, that, be he high or low, if there was evidence, the man should be prosecuted; but that I would not subject a man to these horrible accusations on the whispers which come from clubs or the paragraphs which are inserted in newspapers. I believe I have now referred to all the allegations made by the hon. Member. I thought the hon. Member would have given some authority for the statement that the policy of Her Majesty's Government has been that distinguished persons are allowed to go about committing these crimes with impunity, but that poor persons are hauled up. If there were any justification for such an allegation, why, in the name of every instinct of fair-play, did not the hon. Member give us the time at which he says some Minister has directly or indirectly controlled the action of the Criminal Law? It is a mistake to suppose that the Director of Public Prosecutions acts under the direction of the Home Secretary. The rule is that the action of the Public Prosecutor should in all matters, including the instruction of counsel, be subject to the Attorney General, and during the time I have had the honour of holding my present office I have had, practically speaking, in all such cases the evidence before me. If there were any attempt to prevent justice being done it must have been known to me; and I repeat that there is not a shadow of foundation for the charge which the hon. Member has thought fit to bring. This is not an occasion on which, if I were capable of doing so, I should indulge in elo-

quent denunciation of the hon. Member's conduct. I leave it to those who have heard the hon. Member's accusation and to those who have heard my statement and know his reputation to judge on which side truth lies. I can well understand that hon. Members, who, I am aware, regard my conduct in other respects in an unfriendly manner, have thought fit to suggest that my statement is unworthy of credit. [*Home Rule Cheers.*] I am quite willing to submit that to the judgment of the House. This I will say: examination was conducted step by step into the conduct of the persons in this matter; and though it may be easy to say that in the possible knowledge of guilt other steps might have been taken, yet in regard to the accusation made against Lord Salisbury and those connected with him that they have interfered with the course of justice, there is not the slightest foundation in any way for the allegations which the hon. Member has put forward.

(7.45.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I will deal first with Lord Salisbury. The hon. and learned Gentleman says that Lord Salisbury did not say anything about a warrant, because he told him he said something about something else.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Will the hon. Member pardon me? I stated distinctly that Lord Salisbury denied the allegation about the warrant. I had not his words at that moment before me. They are distinct. Lord Salisbury says:—"I said nothing whatever about the date of the issue of the warrant."

MR. LABOUCHERE: I was not certain as to the exact word—whether it was "soon" or "next day." The hon. Gentleman thought he had proved his case by asking, from whom did you get this information? What did I offer? I offered to write down the name of the gentleman, and to submit it to the hon. and learned Gentleman, and if he, having seen the name, liked to read it to the House he was at full liberty to do so. [*Ministerial cries of* "Read it yourself."] I leave it to the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman at first appeared to accept the proposal, but he thought better of it afterwards. I can perfectly well understand why the hon. and learned Gentleman did not accept the proposal. I am obliged to speak frankly and truly in this matter. I assert, if I am obliged to do it, that I do not believe Lord Salisbury.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is aware that there is a certain courtesy due from Members of this House to the Members of the other House. It would be intolerable for an hon. Member to use that language of a Member of this House, and he cannot be permitted to use it of a Member of the other House.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Sir, I repeat it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call on the hon. Member to withdraw the expression.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I decline, Sir, to withdraw. [*Cries of* "Name."]

THE CHAIRMAN: I shall have to exercise the authority vested in me if the hon. Member declines to obey my ruling. Does the hon. Member withdraw?

MR. LABOUCHERE: No, Sir.

(7.48.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: As a matter of order, Sir, I wish to ask whether there is any precedent for a Member of this House being called upon to withdraw a statement he had made with regard to a Member of the other House; and if there be any precedent—in the case of an hon. Member of this House refusing to withdraw such a statement—for the Presiding Officer resorting to the pains and penalties which he is authorised to enforce. I will call your attention to the fact that on one occasion a statement was made by the Marquess of Salisbury, after the departure and suicide of Pigott, that certain letters, which are now acknowledged to be forgeries, attributed to the hon. Member for Cork, were really not forgeries. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland happened to make some allusion which enabled me to say something with regard to both him and the Marquess of Salisbury. You, Sir, called upon me to withdraw the observation, which was practically similar, as to the Chief Secretary, because he was a Member of this House. I repeated the observation with regard to the Marquess of Salisbury, and you did not call upon me to withdraw.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in the objection of the hon. Member. I again ask the hon. Member for Northampton whether he is about to obey the direction I have given him to withdraw?

MR. LABOUCHERE: With all due respect to you, Sir, I must decline to withdraw.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then I name you, Mr. Henry Labouchere.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): It is my duty to move that Mr. Henry Labouchere be suspended from the service of the House.

Mr. HENRY LABOUCHERE, Member for Northampton, having been named by the Chairman as disregarding the authority of the Chair:—

(7.50.) Motion made, and Question put, "That Mr. Henry Labouchere be suspended from the service of the House:"—The Committee divided:—Ayes 177; Noes 96.—(Div. List, No. 15.)

Whereupon Mr. Chairman left the Chair in order to report the said Resolution to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair, and Mr. COURTNEY reported that Mr. Henry Labouchere had been named by him to the Committee as disregarding the authority of the Chair, and that the Committee had resolved that Mr. Henry Labouchere be suspended from the service of the House.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I rise to order. I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it is possible to obtain your ruling now with reference to a certain ruling of the Chairman from the Chair, in consequence of which ruling the Motion now reported to you was carried?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not in order now.

Question put, "That Mr. Henry Labouchere be suspended from the service of this House."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I understand, Mr. Speaker, that a division has not been challenged, you having declared that "the Noes have it."

*MR. SPEAKER: A division was challenged, and I ordered strangers to withdraw.

(8.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 178; Noes 97.—(Div. List, No. 16.)

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman will withdraw.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg, Sir, to withdraw, expressing at the same time my regret that my conscience would not allow me to say I believed Lord Salisbury.

The hon. Member withdrew accordingly.

SUPPLY again considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Question again proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Services."

(8.10.) MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I am sure you will not misunderstand me, Mr. Courtney, when I say I feel bound at once to rise in consequence of what has happened, and to move to report Progress. I understand I am at liberty to speak only to the matter of such Motion, and if I inadvertently do more I shall be glad to be called to order. I make this Motion specifically on the ground that there has been an infringement of the liberty of debate. An ancient privilege of this House, liberty of debate, has been infringed, when an hon. Member of this House has been expelled for declaring that he did not believe the word of an individual who happened to be a Member of the other House of Parliament. The word so challenged by my hon. Friend was not utttered in that House; was not uttered in his character of a Member of that House; was not uttered even in his character of an official of this country; but it was communicated to this House by a Member of the Government as a statement made by a private person, and it was communicated to him and communicated to the House in a matter affecting his official conduct. I understand that the rule of courtesy and comity which prevails between the two Houses extends to individual Members of either House in their capacity as such Members. But I do not understand that the Rules of this House require us to observe the rule of courtesy where the action concerned is the action of a private Member of the other House, not as a Member of that House, but as a private individual. Incidentally and collaterally to that, I beg the Committee to observe that at this moment, in consequence of what has taken place, we are deprived of our leader in this debate, and to allow the

debate to go on under these circumstances would manifestly be futile. Our liberties have been invaded by your ruling, Mr. Courtney. On that general ground, Sir, which I allege with the most perfect respect for yourself in your capacity as Chairman of Committee, and also on the particular ground that the continuance of this debate has become an impossibility, I beg now to move that you do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. E. Robertson.*)

(8.14.) THE CHAIRMAN: I did not interrupt the hon. Member in his speech; but I must point out that to discuss my ruling on the Motion to report Progress is irregular. If the hon. Member wishes to challenge or arraign my ruling the proper way to do so is by Motion with the Speaker in the Chair. The second contention of the hon. Gentleman is, of course, perfectly relevant to the Motion.

(8.15.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 97; Noes 168.—(Div. List, No. 17.)

Question again proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Services."

(8.37.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Courtney, my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, who made the Motion upon which we have just divided, gave two reasons for that Motion. You then, Sir, from the Chair told us that, so far as one of those reasons was concerned -namely, that on the questioning of your ruling—the proper course was to arraign that ruling when the Speaker was in the Chair to take a division in a full House upon that subject. I understand, Mr. Courtney, that it is the intention of some of my hon. Friends behind me to raise the question of your ruling, and on the proper occasion I shall support them. So far as the second ground is concerned, I think it is felt that the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton is a good reason why we should not continue a debate in which he has not completed his answer. I therefore would suggest to my hon. Friends that we should now leave the hon. Member for Northampton's proposal, and resume the discussion on some occasion when he shall be present, and that we should proceed with the other business before the Committee. So far as the debate has gone, it seems to me that my hon. Friend has done a good service in raising a subject around which a great cloud of rumour and mystery has gathered; and I think I am bound to say that the speech of the hon. and learned Attorney General, although there were in it some gaps which may, on some future occasion, be criticised—I think the effect of that speech will, undoubtedly, be to dissipate most of those rumours. I do not know what happens to the Motion of my hon. Friend; but, at all events, I think the Committee will be well advised if this particular discussion is allowed for the present to drop, to be resumed at some time when the Mover is present.

*(8.40.) MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman has only done what we should have expected from him when he said the speech of the Attorney General had dispelled those mists that had gathered round this painful question; but I must remind him and the Committee that it will be impossible for us to allow the question to drop without a division on the proposal which the hon. Member for Northampton has raised. The Government cannot allow a charge of this kind to hang round the Prime Minister for an indefinite period, until the hon. Member for Northampton is able to return to his place. The Motion is in charge of the Committee, and must be disposed of by the Committee. If the hon. Gentleman is so ill-advised as to return to the charge at a future period he may do so; but we must challenge a decision from the Committee now that we have had the charges, and that which we claim to be a complete and absolute refutation from the Attorney General of one of the most odious charges that could, by any possibility, be brought against a Minister of the Crown.

(8.42.) MR. E. ROBERTSON: Without making any admission whatever as to the effect of the speech of the Attorney General, I refuse to accept the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman to take a division now. A division now, without further debate, would be a mere farce, and can have no effect whatever on the character of Lord Salisbury,

or as indicating the feeling of the House in regard to his action. We have not the materials for a decision; many matters have been left unexplained. If a division is forced, I shall take no part in it.

*(8.43.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The Debate upon which we are now engaged, if ended by a division under present circumstances, will compel an expression of opinion inside and outside the House which I think would be much to be regretted. A statement has been made by the Attorney General contradicting several allegations made by my hon. Colleague, one of them especially dependent on a matter of fact upon which a Member of the other House has also made a statement. I take it, Sir, that in accordance with your ruling it is not possible, within the bounds of Parliamentary usage, for one Member of this House to express his disbelief of a statement made by another Member of this House. Your ruling must go to that extent, otherwise it would seek to enforce stricter rules as applied to language used as against Members of the other House than as to language used in relation to Members of this House. I did not understand my Colleague to use the kind of language which I have over and over again heard checked as disorderly in this House, and as implying wilful mis-statement to the person against whom such language was directed; I understood it to be his expression of his belief in the matter. And there is this difficulty: that if two statements are made, one by a Member of this House, and one by a Member of the other House, which conflict, and upon which this Committee is asked to express its judgment—presumably my Colleague would have gone on to give the reasons for his disbelief.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member; but he is now entering upon a matter which is not pertinent to the Vote before the Committee.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I will not press that line of observations, which seems to be out of order. I only intended to show how extremely unsatisfactory any Division must be, when, to my mind, and possibly to the minds of many others, the debate or issue before us has been abridged at a point where proof or disproof of denial might have been given. I can only say that I shall be driven to vote for a reduction of the Vote if the Division is forced upon the Committee now, because my Colleague, in the middle of his statement, was prevented from concluding it. I am bound to say that, clear as was the statement of the Attorney General on some points, there was one point upon which it was considerlacking in clearness. A charge made by my hon. Colleague was that at a particular time in November Lord Arthur Somerset learned from somebody—I do not know from whom—that proceedings were likely to be taken criminally against him, and thereupon he fled to escape these proceedings. I gather from the statement of the Attorney General that early in July a case, full of suspicion at any rate, against Lord Arthur Somerset was then submitted to him. I gather from the statement of the Attorney General that on three occasions he consulted the Lord Chancellor on the subject, a course he will agree with me in saying which is not usual in criminal matters—a course which it may be presumed was pursued because of the very high position of one of the persons implicated.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I distinctly stated that I also consulted the Lord Chancellor in reference to others. I made no distinction whatever in respect to persons.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: But I gather from the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman that at that time evidence implicating Veck was before him, and that there were statements which—whether or not they were sufficient as evidence—did cast suspicion on other persons. I think that appears to be on this agreement, and perhaps the only common ground at the beginning between my Colleague and the Attorney General. Afterwards further evidence came in, upon which the Attorney General again consulted the Lord Chancellor; and yet further evidence, upon which he for the third time consulted the Lord Chancellor. The date of the resignation of his commission by Lord Arthur Somerset, and the acceptance of that resignation between October 18 and the date of the issue of the warrant, is certainly a most important matter, especially as in the more complete statement from the noble Marquess read to the House, to which I listened very atten-

tively, it was stated that he said nothing whatever as to the *date* of the issue of the warrant. That is perfectly consistent with my Colleague's statement that something was said about the issue of the warrant. Ambiguous language has been used, and I am not expressing an opinion on matters of fact that are not within my own knowledge. I should be loth to uphold the contention of my Colleague against the denial of the noble Marquess except upon the statement of the Attorney-General himself who read to the Committee a statement as coming from Lord Salisbury, from which it appears that the noble Marquess had an interview with Sir Dighton Probyn on this matter, and which does not positively deny that anything was said about a warrant. The words read from the paper returned to the first Lord of the Treasury, and which I presume was some communication from Lord Salisbury himself, the words were that the noble Marquess said nothing whatever about the date of the issue of the warrant. I submit to the Committee, although to me a discussion of this kind is painful, from inception to end, I submit to the Committee that however my Colleague may have been held to have broken the rules of Parliamentary debate, at any rate there is more in the allegation made by my hon. Colleague, and the arguments he used than may have seemed to many Members opposite. I should be unworthy of association with my Colleague in the representation of the borough for which we sit, if, though I have no knowledge of the actual facts, I did not take the opportunity of putting this before the Committee.

(8.50.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I greatly regret that the leader of the House does not see his way to accept the hint of the right hon Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. It must be allowed that the Front Opposition Bench has up to now given the Government much assistance in the conduct of business, and now the first time the Government are asked to make some little allowance for circumstances in the interest of fair discussion, the right hon. Gentleman puts down his foot and positively declares he will have a Vote. The Committee is perfectly familiar with the practice of postponing contested Votes and taking other Votes, and in another week or fortnight we can resume this discussion in cooler, calmer minds, and decide the matter on its merits. I will not go so far as to say I am the most impartial man in the House, but I do say I have given proof of my impartiality in reference to the matter before the Committee to-night. For this reason I missed the first Division on the Suspension, because I thought it was a Division on a question in which I did not wish to interfere in any way. Being very impartial in that respect, still I think it is only fair that the hon. Member for Northampton should be allowed to return to his seat before the discussion is proceeded with and a decision arrived at. I, myself, heard the Attorney General distinctly challenge the hon. Member for Northampton to get up and indicate any point in which his reply was not complete, and but for that challenge I hardly think the hon. Member for Northampton would have got up again. In the course of his speech the hon. Member strayed into some expressions which did not find favour at your hands, Mr. Courtney, but I no more dreamed that the right hon. Gentleman would have moved the suspension of the hon. Member for Northampton, than that he would move the suspension of the First Lord of the Treasury. I think, Sir, under the circumstances we cannot now come to any fair determination. I do not pretend to have any knowledge of the main question, but if the question is put while the hon. Member for Northampton is absent, I must vote in what I suppose will be the minority, though if the hon. Member is here again I shall probably do as I intended to do when I absented myself from the first Division. To give the First Lord every opportunity to recede from the position he has taken, and accept the moderate proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, I beg to move that you now leave the chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—*(Colonel Nolan.)*

*(8.52.) MR. W. H. SMITH: Of course, Sir, it is impossible for us to accept the Motion just made. The hon. and gallant Gentleman professes an impartial mind on the subject we have been discussing,

and I am sure I should be glad to listen to expressions of impartial opinion. He expressed some surprise that I should have found it necessary to move the suspension of the hon. Member for Northampton. In making the motion for the suspension of the hon. Member, I was simply acting in a Ministerial capacity. You, Sir, in the exercise of the authority which rests with you in the Chair, had named the hon. Member, and I had no discretion in the matter, but to give expression to your ruling, and to make the Motion which I placed before the House. The most grave charges are made which could be made against any public man—[A Voice : "Murder"]—well, I am not sure that this is not worse than murder, which might possibly be committed under provocation ; but we are charged with deliberately hindering the course of justice. The hon. Member for Northampton had laid his case before the House, and he had abundant opportunity of making a reply to the speech in which that statement was answered ; but he was called to order, and refused to obey your ruling. I may say, parenthetically, that no hon. Member should consider himself as subjected to any inconvenience, or that there is anything personally derogatory to himself in obeying the ruling of the Chair. It was the refusal to obey your ruling, Sir, that led to your reprimand of the hon. Member. We cannot permit ourselves or our Colleagues to remain under this charge or to leave it hanging round our necks for an absolutely unlimited period, and we must ask the Committee to decide whether they believe these statements to be true or false. That is the issue. Deeply as I regret that the hon. Member for Northampton has excluded himself from the House, I say it is only a matter of common fairness between gentlemen and Members of this House that this discussion shall be concluded this evening, and that the Committee shall say whether they believe Her Majesty's servants to be guilty of this great enormity, this frightful crime charged against them, or whether they do not.

(9.20.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present ; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(9.22.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR : I had no intention of taking part in the debate initiated by my hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton, but I am forced to do so by the fact that we have not now the benefit of the assistance of the hon. Member who is most intimately acquainted with the facts. I must congratulate the Attorney General on the success of his tactics, for in the most provoking manner he invited my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton to give his opinion with regard to a certain statement by the Marquess of Salisbury, and in that way provoked my hon. Friend into an assertion as to his credence or want of credence regarding that statesman's utterance. He has thus gained the marvellous advantage of securing that his speech shall not be replied to. There is not a single one of us who would not have assented to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, which offered the Government a means of escape from the unfortunate position in which they are placed by the absence of the hon. Member for Northampton. But such is their gratitude for this kind and generous offer, that the First Lord of the Treasury challenged us to keep on the discussion, although one of the parties most concerned in it is present. We are, therefore, compelled to go on to state our views regarding the statements which have been made. Now, what is our position ? The Member for Northampton has made a statement, and the Attorney General has also made a statement. These two hon. Members are the sole depositories of the facts, and yet the First Lord of the Treasury thinks it fair to call upon us to give a vote aye or no, when only one of the disputants present, and he a Member of the political party opposite. I do not wish to embitter this controversy by any allusions that may be disagreeable to the Attorney General, but I think he must allow me to say that we have had previous experience of the learned Gentleman with regard to the question of foul and calumnious and odious charges, and he cannot be surprised if we adopt an attitude of reserve and scepticism with respect to the statements he has made. I think I have put that as gently and as courteously as any man could do. I feel inclined to be rather gentle with the hon. and learned Member, because I see his experience has not altogether been

lost on him, for there was nothing more edifying in his singularly lofty address—lofty I mean in manner, and gesture, and acclamation—the horror he expressed for charges which were lightly made. There is unalloyed joy on these Benches at the somewhat tardy repentance of the hon. Gentleman. Now we are asked to give a vote in the absence of the hon. Member who initiated the discussion, and we are asked to give a vote on the uncontradicted speech of the Attorney General relating to a long series of facts which I, for one, found it very difficult to follow. We think that the Government should postpone this discussion until my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton is in his place. But the Attorney General and the First Lord of the Treasury object to postpone the discussion of these grave and odious charges for so long a period. Again I must congratulate the hon. Gentleman the Attorney General on his newly-awakened faith in the desirability of prompt means being given to answer such charges. But let me point out that we do not ask that the discussion be postponed for an indefinite period. My hon. Friend will be in his place in a week's time. My hon. Friend has not lightly taken up this question; he has done so because he considers it his duty as a public man, and I tell the Attorney General he will hear more of this question from my hon. Friend. If the Government insist on our going to a Division, I will be no party to it, because such a Division would be taken under circumstances of disadvantage to the cause of the hon. Member for Northampton. I have said that this case travels over a large number of complicated events on various dates, and the hon. and learned Member cannot expect us to be able to decide immediately after hearing his speech—which is the speech of a trained lawyer and advocate, part of whose professional duty is—and I do not say this in any bad sense—to mystify those whom he addresses with regard to awkward facts. I am quite prepared, although at a disadvantage, to dissect some of the statements that have been made by the Attorney General, and I must say the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) put it very fairly when he stated that there are gaps in the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman. Now, what is the first gap?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the Motion before the Chair. It is simply that I do leave the Chair. The hon. Member is travelling very wide of that question.

(9.33.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I did not happen to be in the House when this question was first raised, and therefore I may be excused for having somewhat diverged from the proposal before the Committee. My attention having now been called to it, I shall not be guilty of so flagrant a breach of order as to attempt to enter upon the general question. I am sure I express the feelings of my hon. Friends on this side of the House when I say that we should not go to a Division, under existing circumstances, if we did not feel justified in so doing. We accept the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, and I would urge upon the Government the desirability of affording an opportunity for continuing this discussion when the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is in the House. If, however, the Government are desirous of snatching a verdict under the circumstances, let them do so, but they will have to face the verdict that will be given outside this House. It will be for the country to judge of the action of Her Majesty's Government in forcing this question to a premature Vote when the House has before it only an imperfect statement of the real facts. I would therefore urge upon the House not only in its own interests, but in the interests of fair-play, and in the general interests of the public as well as of those who are suffering under most unjust imputations with regard to the offences that have been brought before the House, to postpone this Vote until my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) can be again in his place, and we shall have a fair opportunity of full and free discussion.

(9.35.) DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I have not had the opportunity of hearing this matter discussed; but I must say that I felt very much astonished to hear that an English Member trying to do his duty in this House had been absolutely sat upon in a way with which the hon. and learned Gentleman

the Attorney General is so familiar. Practically speaking, the hon. Member was led into a trap, with the result that he has been suspended from the service of this House. Of course, it is not for me at this moment to enter into detailed comment on the subject of the hon. Member's suspension, but, at the same time, it is a very serious matter; and having noticed the aspect of the Attorney General since I came into the House, I can understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman is sorry for what has happened. The question that has been under discussion is not a very pleasant one for Members of this House to discuss; but when the senior Member for Northampton has taken the question up and endeavoured to prove the case he has submitted, the dirt and filth lie with hon. Members on the opposite side of the House who refuse to take action on the subject. There ought to be no dilly-dallying with this sort of business.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I would point out to the hon. Member that the Question before the Committee is that I leave the Chair.

DR. TANNER: Certainly, Sir. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members should bear in mind that this is no laughing matter. Mr. Courtney, I always bow to your ruling, and accept it in a most thorough manner; but I repeat that this is no laughing matter, especially to Members of the Government who sit there and are absolutely dumb. They have listened to the remarks which fell from my hon. Friend and Colleague the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) and they will give him no answer. What are Her Majesty's Government paid for except to answer? Why does not some right hon. Gentleman get up and reply? Why is there any hesitation on the part of the Government? The suspension of one of the senior and most intelligent Members of this House—a gentleman who never gets up to speak without being attentively listened to by the most intelligent portion of the House—is a very serious matter. Of course, I do not allude to the "deadheads," and I repeat that we ought to have a reply from some spokesman of the Government, if, indeed, they have anything to say on the subject. Their conduct is really stupid. [*Cries of* "Order."] If that remark is not Parliamentary I withdraw it. But I certainly think it is stupid on the part of the salaried Officers of the Crown to succeed in suspending an hon. Member of this House, and when their conduct has been challenged from this side refuse to give an answer. Now, Mr. Courtney, I do not desire to continue this debate. I only got up for the simple purpose of trying, if possible, to spur on, to egg on, to compulse, to coerce, and to exercise some pressure on the Attorney General, who seems content to sit dumb under the charge which has been brought against the Government from this side of the House. It is disgusting.

(9.40.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 80; Noes 163.—(Div. List, No. 18.)

Question again proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Services."

(9.51.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: In view of the vote just given by the majority of the House, we are compelled, in the absence of my hon. Friend, to go on discussing this case. The general effect of the Attorney General's speech has been, in my opinion, which perhaps may be considered due to partisanship, that, while it has corrected some statements, and thrown doubt on others, to convince us of the general truth of the case. [*Ministerial laughter.*] I have no doubt that what the Attorney General said has carried conviction to hon. Gentlemen opposite. But what the hon. and learned Gentleman said with regard to the Pigott forgeries had exactly the same effect upon them. As the hon. Member who has brought forward the question is absent, all that can be done is to dissect the case of the Government as presented by themselves. The statement of the Attorney General has been charitably described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle as having certain gaps; it is more accurate to say that it was all gaps. The great fact left unexplained is that a house admittedly used for vile purposes was for months under the supervision of the police, and the net result, even after the action of the Attorney General, the Lord Chancellor, and the Prime Minister, is that two of the most obscure criminals have been imprisoned for ludicrously short terms. The common sense of the country

will not regard the sophistries of the Attorney General as any explanation of this fact. Again, why is it necessary to call into the discussion of the case the Attorney General, the Lord Chancellor, and the Prime Minister? These crimes are, unfortunately, of not uncommon occurrence; and any frequenter of an Assize Court must have seen many poor and wretched agricultural labourers brought up on such charges.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Newport, Shropshire): No, no.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I congratulate the hon. Member on his ignorance; it is an ignorance which I do not at all find fault with. But the hon. Gentleman is wrong in his statement. It is a fact well-known to those who attend Assizes, that labourers and poor people are frequently brought up charged with these offences. [Colonel KENYON-SLANEY: No, no.] If the hon. Gentleman wishes to interrupt me, of course he can do so.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Member, but I object to the character which he gives the agricultural labourer. I do not think it fair because of this particular controversy to brand the whole class of agricultural labourers, who, at all events in my particular county, do not bear that character.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I must say that I do not see the relevancy of the interruption. I do not brand the whole peasantry of the country because certain of them are sometimes charged with these odious offences, any more than I brand the whole nobility because one member of it flies from justice. I cannot really give way to the hon. Gentleman, whose remarks are irrelevant and do not enlighten the House with regard to any statement I have made. What I want to ask the Attorney General is this: When a humble person is charged with such an offence, does the Attorney General consult the Lord Chancellor and the Prime Minister? There is no answer to the fact that the titled position of suspected persons induced consultation with Ministers of the Crown who would not otherwise have been consulted. Is that equality before the law? Is the prosecution of a crime like this, because a man happens to bear a title, to be made a Cabinet question? That is a point upon which the public mind will eagerly ask for information. I have asked a question of the Attorney General, and he has not answered me. His attention was called to the fact that he consulted the Lord Chancellor as to the case of that unhappy nobleman whose name I do not wish to mention, because I desire to spare his friends any pain in the matter. He denies it. What I complain of is that he makes the denial with such—I would not like to say affectation, but such an appearance of almost celestial virtue that we must have time to consider his answer before we are able to see what it really amounts to. The hon. and learned Gentleman says he did not consult him with regard to the case of the nobleman, but with regard to the case of Veck. One would really have thought from his gestures and his manner that he supposed we would be superficial and shallow enough to take that as an answer. Why did he consult the Lord Chancellor with regard to Veck? Because of all that Veck knew of this particular nobleman and other titled persons. I do not understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman has any answer to that. A gesture even so eloquent as those the Attorney General can use will not satisfy me. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked that his attention might be called to any point he might have omitted. I have called his attention to this point, and I will not be put off with a gesture; he will keep his word. If he breaks it the country will be left to judge. There is another point to which I wish to call attention. The Attorney General says Hammond left on the morning of the 5th of July. I want to ask whether the Government or any Member of the Government knew the facts before the 5th of July?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I beg to state at once that the boys made a statement on July 4, and were immediately suspended, and were able to go away from their work. It is supposed that Newlove communicated with Hammond that night, and on the following morning Hammond went away.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: That is exactly my case. Why were not both Newlove and Hammond watched? The Government can find detectives enough to dog the footsteps of the Irish Members; they cannot find a detective to

dog the footsteps of a ruffian who, for upwards of a year, has kept a house in this City which has brought disgrace on the character of the City. They let Hammond go to France. They ought to have watched him within an hour of Newlove's confession, if they were serious in the business. If the Attorney General had got up and said he had thought it better that these matters should not be made public, and that the sacred ignorance of thousands of persons in this country should be preserved even though a few miscreants should escape, that would have sealed my lips to-night. He takes up, however, an entirely different position. I come now to the sentences passed on Newlove and Veck. The Attorney General assumes an air of the most virtuous indignation because my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) spoke of an arrangement between the counsel for the prosecution and the defence in this case. The Attorney General is an experienced lawyer of many years' practice, and he knows that arrangements of this kind are common; that they take place almost every day, and that there is no dishonour on one side or the other. Take the case of Father M'Fadden and the other Gweedore prisoners. Everyone knows that light sentences were passed because a number of the prisoners, in obedience to the advice given by counsel after consultation with counsel on the other side, pleaded guilty. Some of them, no doubt, got long sentences; but, still, these arrangements between one side and the other are as common almost as criminal trials. In spite of all the Attorney General says, I maintain that there was such an arrangement here, and the object and meaning of it was to close the mouths of the persons in gaol, and in that way save the criminals whom their confessions might have exposed. I must now call attention to the Attorney General's conduct with regard to Lord Salisbury. Knowing very well that the hon. Member for Northampton was about to make an attack on the Government and Lord Salisbury, the Attorney General had ample means of getting from Lord Salisbury a statement in reply to the hon. Member for Northampton. He had, he says, formal notice, and no one can say that my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) has acted at all unfairly in the matter. He has for months given notice of his intention in a public journal with which he is notoriously associated. What does the Attorney General do? He produces a letter from the Marquess of Salisbury denying a statement which my hon. Friend never made, but not denying the statement my hon. Friend did make. My hon. Friend's statement was that the Marquess of Salisbury spoke of a warrant being out against this nobleman. The Attorney General, as a contradiction of that statement, says that the Marquess of Salisbury was asked whom he thought to be guilty and whom innocent, and that the Marquess replied that except in the case of one person, against whom the evidence was not quite complete, he thought the evidence broke down. How did the Prime Minister of this country become so intimately acquainted with the details of the whole case? Why was it not left to the authorities at Scotland Yard? I think the country will learn with something like stunning bewilderment that the Prime Minister, who is also our Foreign Secretary, is actually diverted from the enormous and momentous duties he has to perform in our relations with foreign countries to the discussion of the hideous, and loathsome, and horrible details of a case like this. Sir, there was no small cause for bringing the Prime Minister so deeply into the knowledge of this case. The Attorney General says Lord Salisbury stated his opinion that the evidence was strong against one individual, and insufficient against the others.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I must say, Sir, that is not in the least what I stated. I stated that Sir Dighton Probyn had asked Lord Salisbury whether there was any truth in the rumours about certain persons whom he named. Lord Salisbury replied that as far as he knew there was no evidence against any of those persons except one, whom he named, and that in his case the evidence was not, in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, sufficient.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Of course I accept what the hon. and learned Gentleman says, which is in correspondence with my own recollection. But my hon. Friend asked not as to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the evidence against this person or that, but whether Lord

Salisbury did or did not communicate the information with regard to the warrant. The Attorney General had no answer ready to that question. He said that the statement he made implied a contradiction of the statement of my hon. Friend. Then, by some means which I do not wish to inquire into, another statement of the Prime Minister was brought in.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I should like to put the hon. Gentleman in possession of the accurate facts. The letter from which I quoted is entirely in Lord Salisbury's handwriting, but I had copied in my own handwriting as much of it as Lord Salisbury actually said—the affirmative part. I did not copy out—I did not think it was part of the story of what he said—the denial. The letter was in the keeping of the First Lord of the Treasury, to whom it was sent, and when the question was put to me again by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), I got up and read the denial. I have not the smallest objection to read the whole reply again to the hon. Member, so that he may see it bears out what I have said.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I have no objection. I only ask the hon. and learned Gentleman not to read it, because I do not wish him to think, as he appears inclined to do, that I am making a charge against him. I am doing no such thing.

*(10.15.) SIR R. WEBSTER: I understood the hon. Gentleman to suggest that I had not read a denial, and that some other paper was produced—as if I had produced something to which I had not referred before. I explained that I read only the affirmative part and not the negative part. This is the letter—

"Sir Dighton Probyn, I believe on October 15, asked me whether there was any truth in the imputations which had been made in certain newspapers against persons whom he named. I said that as far as I knew there was not a vestige of evidence against any of those persons except one, and in his case the evidence of identity was not, I believed, in the judgment of the Law Advisers of the Crown, sufficient. I said nothing whatever about the date of the issue of the warrant."

(10.17.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am dissecting the Attorney General's speech, and I hope fairly. I did not charge him with concealing any part of the letter. What I said was that the Attorney General seemed to have received two statements, whereas I find he received only one. I will deal with the letter the hon. and learned Gentleman has read. Now, the Marquess of Salisbury is accustomed to writing letters of great importance, and he is a man who knows as well as anybody the significance and importance of words. What is the meaning of the mysterious reserve Lord Salisbury makes in saying not that he did not mention a warrant, but that he did not mention the date of the warrant?

*(10.18.) SIR R. WEBSTER: I think it only right I should read the only document sent to Lord Salisbury with reference to this matter. This is the letter, dated February 26, of the hon. Member for Northampton:—

"Dear Akers-Douglas,—I think it only right that I should tell you when the Cleveland Street matter comes on I mean to refer to Lord Salisbury's interview with Sir Dighton Probyn on October"

—it may be the 16th or the 18th; I cannot pledge myself, for the hon. Member's writing is indistinct—

"and to show that the statement of Lord Salisbury on that occasion that a warrant against Lord Arthur Somerset would be issued next day was conveyed to him and was the direct cause of his flight. The warrant was issued on November 9.—Yours truly, H. LABOUCHERE."

That letter was sent to Lord Salisbury, and I have read his reply in his own words.

(10.20.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am glad the letter has been read, because it shows how base and without foundation is the charge that adequate notice was not given by the hon. Member for Northampton to the persons he intended to attack. The whole burden of the Attorney General's speech was the unfairness of the attack which, by some miraculous intervention, —in spite of the tactics of my hon. Friend—he was yet in a position to meet. Still, the fact remains, that the Marquess of Salisbury did not deny the mention of a warrant; he said he denied the mention of the date of a warrant. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer see no difference between the two?

*(10.22.) MR. GOSCHEN: As the hon. Member appeals to me, I say the charge was that Lord Salisbury said a warrant "would be issued to-morrow;" and he denied that in the most absolute terms.

(10.23.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not answered my question. I quite agree that the terms of the hon. Member's letter might have suggested the terms of the reply; but the Marquess of Salisbury did not deny that he had mentioned a warrant. The Attorney General also contradicted a statement my hon. Friend did not make. My hon. Friend did not say that Sir D. Probyn had seen Lord A. Somerset; there was no necessity that Sir D. Probyn should see him; the suggestion is that Sir D. Probyn communicated the knowledge he had obtained from Lord Salisbury by some other person to Lord A. Somerset, the result being that he left the country.

*(10.25.) SIR R. WEBSTER: There is no doubt about my words. I said that on that night Sir D. Probyn neither saw Lord A. Somerset nor had any communication, direct or indirect, with him, and no one was more surprised than Sir D. Probyn that he had left, as he firmly believed Lord Arthur was innocent.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The hon. and learned Gentleman knows well the authority on which my hon. Friend made the statement, or if he does not, it is because he has wilfully refused to secure the knowledge. My hon. Friend was challenged to produce his authority, and offered to write down the name, thus exercising what I, knowing the facts, deem to have been a wise and honourable discretion—a discretion which every hon. Member would respect if he knew the name. Declining the responsibility of divulging the name, the hon. Member challenged the Attorney General to mention it. Why did he not? If the Attorney General does not know, at any rate he suspects whence the information came.

*(10.26.) SIR R. WEBSTER: I am extremely sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I must crave the indulgence of the House. I had not the slightest idea as to the name the hon. Member referred to; I considered, and I consider, the responsibility of bringing in the names of these persons other than that of Sir D. Probyn should rest with the hon. Member for Northampton.

(10.27.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: That is a question the hon. Member must decide for himself. I maintain that the Attorney General, who may be right or wrong, is at any rate no longer in a position to say that my hon. Friend refused to give the name of his informant Sir, I, myself, know the name, but it was given to me in confidence, and I would not accept the responsibility of mentioning it; but I say the name of the informant makes it a matter of absolute conviction that the hon. Member stated the facts when he said that Lord A. Somerset knew the result of the interview between Sir D. Probyn and Lord Salisbury. It certainly seems a singular coincidence that the flight of Lord Arthur Somerset should occur on the day of that interview. I am precluded from casting doubt on the accuracy or veracity of Lord Salisbury. I will not commit myself in face of your ruling, Sir. Indeed, I do not know that I should desire to question anyone's veracity even if you had not given a ruling. I cannot say that Lord Salisbury wilfully said what was untrue; but I can say that his recollection was imperfect, and that Sir Dighton Probyn's recollection is imperfect also. And I say that the public will ask with some curiosity how it came to pass that the date of this interview and the date of Lord A. Somerset's flight were the same? A further question is this On the 12th of November there was a warrant issued against Lord Arthur Somerset, but the police knew that he was then out of the country. Why were there no proceedings to extradite him?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: It was not an extraditable offence, unfortunately.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Of course not, if the offence was reduced by the Government from felony to misdemeanour.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I say distinctly there was not the slightest evidence against the unfortunate man to whom the hon. Member refers of anything exceeding misdemeanour. There is no offence for which he could be extradited.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I, of course, accept the statement, and I am relieved to hear that so much can be said in extenuation. But I am not dealing with the offence of this unfortunate gentleman—he will suffer for it to the end of his days. I am dealing with the action of the Government, who took the course of issuing a warrant for the arrest of a man who had been out of the country a fortnight or three weeks—a farcical afterthought to make up for their remissness or laxity in allowing the man to escape.

It was not on the 18th November that the Government knew for the first time of the charges against Lord Arthur Somerset. He had been watched. Why was not some effort made to arrest him? How was it that he fled the country on the very day the conversation took place between Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn? The common sense of the country will be able to judge of these facts. No amount of argument on the part of the Attorney General can explain the coincidences in connection with the conversations and the escape of these men. Now, Sir, what is the justification for raising this question at all? I admit that if I were left to my free choice I would never have mentioned a word of the case. But the solid ground on which my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton stands is this: that whereas these odious and horrible offences are punished here in the case of poor men, all the resources and counsels of the Government are exhausted to save rich men who are charged with them. [*Ministerial cries of* "No."] Hon. Gentlemen opposite contradict me. Well, I have stated one side of the case; the Attorney General has stated the other, and I leave the public to decide between us. The public will not stand inequality in the treatment of anyone. It will not stand a number of unfortunate wretches being sent year after year to long sentences of penal servitude for these offences when in the midst of our city a house is allowed to exist where titled people commit these offences, and when they are allowed to escape in the end.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Now, Sir, I ask the hon. Gentleman to state to the House the name of the person on whose authority the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) made his allegations. The hon. Gentleman says he knows it. I claim, in the interests of justice, that he should state it to the House. I ask an answer from the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Of course I must answer the direct appeal of the right hon. Gentleman. He knows that the name is not in my custody. My hon. Friend mentioned the name to me in confidence. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and ironical cheers.*] Does any hon. Gentleman doubt my word?

An hon. MEMBER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I do not know from what hon. Member that cry came.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I see the gentleman, Sir—the fourth from the Gangway on the second Bench opposite.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is most un-Parliamentary, and I ask him to disavow it.

MR. T. FIELDEN (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): If I said anything un-Parliamentary, of course I withdraw it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would not take any notice of the hon. Member's observations under ordinary circumstances; but after what has taken place I feel called upon to say that the hon. Gentleman opposite did say "Yes" when I asked if anyone doubted my word. I call on you, Sir, to compel him to withdraw.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understood the hon. Member to withdraw it; but if there is any doubt about it I will again require him to withdraw it.

MR. T. FIELDEN: I withdraw.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman asks me to reveal a name given to me in confidence. I cannot do it in honour. The hon. and learned Attorney General had the opportunity of revealing the name, because my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) when in the House wrote it down and offered it to him.

(10.35.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I do not think, Sir, that any complaint can be made after what has happened to-night that it should be found necessary to discuss this question at some little length. I am afraid that neither the Ministry nor hon. Members on the opposite side of the House understand the gravity of the issues in this case. An impression has been created, and is likely to be extended, that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. I am afraid that the natural heat of the discussion has led occasionally to some little misapprehension. I should be sorry, indeed, to bring any charge of anything like corrupt collusion in the escape of criminals against members of the present Ministry. I should be very far, indeed, from endorsing a charge of criminal conspiracy, except in the innocent and merely political sense that is necessarily attached to that phrase in some particular circumstances. All that I accuse the Ministry of — and I cannot but

consider that, at any rate, a *primâ facie* case has been proved — is a somewhat wrongful negligence. They may have thought that they had a discretion to exercise; but, in my opinion, they exercised it improperly. We can well understand the natural unwillingness of the Government to meddle with such a disgraceful matter at all, but when the exposure took place, and the law dealt with such a case, the law ought to have been evenly and impartially applied; and the question is, whether that has been the case? There are certainly gaps in the Attorney General's argument. He assured us that the Ministry throughout the history of this dreadful case always intended when the evidence warranted it to proceed. I quite believe that; but I cannot help thinking that they formed an over-estimate of what was necessary evidence to enable them to proceed. An impression has been created that they would have been satisfied with much less evidence in the case of poor men than in the case of certain rich men. Then, again, in every criminal case it is always considered as of the utmost importance to arrest the criminal before he has time to escape. The police frequently arrest men suspected of murder if they have a reasonable amount of suspicion, and why should not the same rule have been applied in the case of a dreadful crime like this? I cannot but think that a grave error has been committed by those responsible in allowing these criminals to escape while even suspicion existed. The Attorney General has denied that any arrangement was made by which the persons arrested were to plead guilty. Of course I know nothing about law, and I may not have understood the language of the Attorney General properly; but it seems to me that the Attorney General did not exactly deny what was alleged on this side of the House. The allegation is not that Mr. Poland arranged the counts on which the accused should plead guilty; but that there was a general understanding that if the men pleaded guilty they would be dealt with leniently. As far as I understood the Attorney General, he did not deny that.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to re-read the passage from Mr. Poland's letter which the Attorney General has already read? It is as follows:—

"I wish to say I neither directly nor indirectly made any arrangement with the prisoners' counsel as to what counts they should plead guilty to. There was no undertaking of any kind, either expressed or implied, as to what should be done by me or the prisoners' counsel."

MR. PICTON: Mr. Poland states there was no arrangement made as to which counts the prisoners should plead guilty to; but he does not say there was no understanding whatever that they should plead guilty generally. These poor men know nothing about counts. The allegation is that they pleaded guilty generally, on the suggestion being made to them that if they did so they would be leniently dealt with. Of course, that may not be so; but all I say is that the denial given to us does not absolutely contradict what has been said on this side. Then with regard to Hammond, we are told by the Attorney General that he could not possibly have been arrested. It was on the 4th July that the first revelations were made, and had there been prompt action taken Hammond could certainly have been arrested. Hammond did not escape until the 5th. One cannot help thinking that if the same energy had been displayed as would be displayed, we hope, in the case of a murderer, the man might have been arrested before he left the country. Then, it is said, he could not possibly have been brought back by extradition. But we have been told, and it has not been contradicted, that Mr. Phillips, who is connected with the Post Office, went to Belgium and telegraphed, on the 14th of September I think, that as soon as assurance was given that demand for extradition would be formally made, action would be taken by the Belgian police. If the Belgian police were anxious to co-operate with the police of this country, why was not advantage taken of their willingness? Even if the Extradition Treaty did not apply to the case literally, arrangements might have have been made by which the man might have been expelled the territory of Belgium and so brought into the hands of justice. I do not think that the case made by my hon. Friend has been quite answered, and I cannot but think that the impression created by this debate in many parts of the country will be a very disagreeable one. It is

most important that the law should be enforced regardless of rank or position. ["Hear, hear."] Yes, but the impression has been created that this has not been done in the present case, and the Government will have to make a very much better defence than they have made to-night if they would convince all sections of the community that the law in this case has been applied equally and impartially.

(10.48.) MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Very early in the life of this Government I came to the conclusion that they would if they could introduce Irish methods into English administration, and the facts that have been elicited to-night have gone very far to bear out the justice of that conclusion. This debate has been interesting in a literary point of view; it has brought out a fresh letter from Lord Salisbury, but a letter very unlike those written to the Portuguese Government, a letter equivalent to the plea of the man who said, "Not guilty, but I will not do it again." The answer given by Lord Salisbury to the anticipated attack of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) convinces me that bluntness is hereditary, for I see the style of the Prime Minister in answering questions bears a remarkable family likeness to the style of the Chief Secretary in answering Irish questions. Now, there are various coincidences in this case to which I should like to direct the attention of the country. The 5th of July is a remarkable date in these transactions. On that date the warrant was issued for the arrest of Hammond, and on the same date Hammond escapes. No matter how the hon. and learned Gentleman shakes his head——

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I had better correct the hon. Gentleman. The information was put into the hands of the police on the evening of the 5th. The warrant was not issued until the 6th; and that was obliged to be because there had to be sworn informations obtained. Hammond escaped early on the morning of the 5th.

MR. MAC NEILL: That makes the case against the Attorney General stronger. We shall make him a very fine criminal lawyer before we have done, as good a criminal lawyer as the Lord Chancellor. On the 4th of July these unfortunate boys were dismissed from the Post Office. They were told for what they were dismissed. That gave them an opportunity of communicating with Hammond. We have been told of the difference between misdemeanour and felony; and that Lord A. Somerset could not be extradited because he was only accused of misdemeanour. What were the boys accused of? If of anything, they were accused of felony; and if the Government had wished justice to come home to Hammond, they would have at once arrested Hammond's collaborateurs in iniquity, and not given them an opportunity of communicating with the wretch. When I heard the description of Hammond's escape just at the lucky moment I thought of our old friend Richard Pigott and his escape just at the lucky moment. If we do not see to these matters the administration of justice in this country will become rather more Irish than it is in Ireland. The next date is the 18th of October. That was the date on which Sir Dighton Probyn interviewed the Prime Minister in reference to a criminal matter; and on that evening who escaped from justice? Lord Arthur Somerset. When Lord Arthur Somerset was well out of the way the Government issued a warrant against him. The Dowager Duchess of Beaufort died in October, and Lord Arthur Somerset attended her funeral. Constable Hanks was sent to arrest Lord Arthur Somerset, but when he got to Badminton his orders were countermanded. Why were his orders countermanded? I would suggest was out of kindness—it would have been an ungracious thing to arrest a man at a funeral. But no such considerations enter into the system of Irish administration. We know that Irish funerals are happy hunting grounds, not only for arrests, but for baton charges. Lord Arthur Somerset, a member of the classes, is to be allowed to go, while John Mandeville, who is a member of the masses, is to be arrested. I respect the Attorney General as a lawyer, and I always thought he was an independent man. When, however, he was consulted in this matter what did he do? He asked the opinion of two of the highest persons in the land, the Lord Chancellor and Lord Salisbury. When did Lord Salisbury become a criminal lawyer? I do not think even the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would be

satisfied with his criminal knowledge. It is rather singular that in a case of this kind the Attorney General should consult these high personages, when we know that in a case in which the character of the Irish Members was involved, he studiously kept aloof from any Members of the Cabinet. He confers with the Lord Chancellor and Lord Salisbury in this wretched case, but in a case in which perjury and forgery went together, in which violence and fraud kissed each other, he depended upon his own unaided judgment. I think if the Solicitor General were defending a criminal in a case like this, in a case where there might happen to be a conflict of evidence between two men, such as there is between the Marquess of Salisbury and the hon. Member for Northampton, he would consider the probabilities of the case as to where the truth would be likely to be. Did the Attorney General act in this way? The hon. Member for Northampton, when there was a conflict of testimony between himself and the Marquess of Salisbury, invited in support of his own case the name of a certain person. Now, I ask the First Lord of the Treasury and the Attorney General do they know the name of that person?

*Sir R. WEBSTER: No.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury know? [Mr. W. H. Smith dissented]. Well, I pass it by, for I fear that if I press the question further the right hon. Gentleman will move the Closure, having regard to his sense of duty to the House and the country. The right hon. Gentleman keeps locked up in his own breast the secret he challenged an irresponsible Irish Member of the House to give to the House and the country. Why did not the Attorney General in his investigation of the truth take for what it was worth the evidence put forward by the hon. Member for Northampton? Why did he, a lawyer with 30 years experience at the Bar, and a high reputation in this House, why did he when he rejected that evidence, reject it with the blushing modesty of a young lady of 16? Why was the good man nonplussed? Because he knew that the personage whom he does not know but whom he strongly suspects—perhaps he has no legal proof, perhaps he only has the name of hear-say—because he knows that the name being known would at once give predominance to the truth of the allegations of the hon. Member for Northampton. I do not accuse Lord Salisbury of falsehood; I simply say there is an inaccuracy of recollection. Were I called upon to give judgment as between the testimony of Lord Salisbury and the testimony of the hon. Member for Northampton, I should find myself on the horns of a dilemma. The hon. Member for Northampton has always been a very good friend, an honourable and a true-hearted friend of ours, and therefore I would, with all my heart and soul, believe him. But, on the other hand, I would believe Lord Salisbury because he is a Member of the House of Peers. But I would point out—and I am sure the Solicitor General will agree with me—that in judging in a conflict of testimony between these two, and if the hon. and learned Gentleman were, say, engaged in defence of the hon. Member for Northampton, he would naturally, by examination, test the memory of Lord Salisbury. Suppose the noble Marquess in the witness-box, one of the questions would be:—"Do you remember the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum, the existence of which you at first denied, but afterwards confessed, amid the cheers of the opposite Party?" In this matter of recollection, it would be fair to judge Lord Salisbury and the hon. Member for Northampton by their antecedents. I do not impute inaccuracy of statement to hon. Gentlemen, but I ask them, do they know what truth is? The hon. Member for Northampton has done good service in noting a difference in the administration of justice as between rich and poor; he has made a gallant fight, and I do not think that eventually he will get the worst of it. If for a season we are deprived of his voice here, I have no doubt it will be heard with effect in speaking to the Commons at large in St. Pancras.

*(11.5.) Mr. C. HALL (Cambridgeshire, Chesterton): I will detain the House but a very few minutes. I was in the United States when these occurrences took place, and up to this point I thought it better to leave to those better qualified by knowledge to speak on the matters which form the subject of this discussion.

I should not have interposed now but for some observations that fell from the hon. Member for S. Donegal, in which he alluded to what he called the "marvellous coincidence" between the date of Lord Arthur Somerset leaving London, and the date of the interview between the Prime Minister and General Sir Dighton Probyn. It is necessary to refer to the charge originally made in this respect by the hon. Member for Northampton, for it is practically repeated by the hon. Member for S. Donegal. Now, what was this charge? The charge brought by the hon. Member for Northampton was, that Lord Salisbury having told Sir Dighton Probyn that a warrant would be obtained the next day or immediately, that information was conveyed to Lord Arthur Somerset, who left London the same evening. The hon. Member went on to say that the information was given with the intention that it should be conveyed to Lord Arthur Somerset. Now, there is no mistake about that being the allegation and I hope by the recital of a very short statement of facts to show not only that information was not given, but that it was impossible that it should have been given. I will not deal with the question of the honour of Sir Dighton Probyn; his name is too well known to suffer from any attack from the hon. Member for Northampton, but I will show first of all that it is impossible that the information could have been communicated by Sir Dighton Probyn to Lord Arthur Somerset, or anyone on his behalf; secondly, that Lord Arthur Somerset's flight was the very last thing that any man connected with the household of Marlborough House wished. The facts are simple, and I will recite them as far as I can without any expression of feeling. The interview between Sir Dighton Probyn and Lord Salisbury took place at King's Cross in the evening. When that interview was over Sir Dighton Probyn drove home to dress for dinner. It was then late, and having dressed he went to his club and commenced a late dinner. Before Sir Dighton Probyn had finished his dinner, and before he had spoken to anyone on the subject, Lord Arthur Somerset had left London, and it has since been ascertained that he gave orders to his servants to have his things ready for his leaving London before the interview between Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn took place. Now, if that be the case how can it be suggested that Lord Arthur Somerset's flight was in any way connected with any information given by Sir Dighton Probyn, or through Sir Dighton Probyn? I have only to add that Sir Dighton Probyn and Lord Arthur Somerset's Colleagues in the Household believed him to be innocent, and it was their most anxious desire that he should take steps to clear his character from what they believed base and scurrilous accusations made against him; and on that very day Sir Dighton Probyn had urged him, pressed him, to vindicate his character, and Lord Somerset said he would take steps to do so. How, in the face of these facts, can it be alleged that Sir Dighton Probyn behaved as has been suggested. I have stated the facts, and they speak for themselves. I venture to say that when these matters are looked into, when the facts are considered dispassionately, it will be seen that so far from being true it was absolutely impossible that Sir Dighton Probyn could have given information to Lord Arthur Somerset, or anybody on his behalf, before he left London.

(11.10.) MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): I do not personally take any interest in this matter, but, after the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Hall), it is right that somebody should say a word on behalf of the hon. Member for Northampton, who is not here to speak for himself. The hon. and learned Gentleman has given us a very fair account of Sir Dighton Probyn's experiences on the evening of the interview with Lord Salisbury, but he has expressed some indignation that anybody else should have put things in a contrary way. Up to the present moment, however, we have not heard any hon. Member who is able to speak so authoritatively as the hon. and learned Gentleman. I am glad to have heard him for several reasons, but especially because just as he was resuming his seat he said that his statement of facts would be borne out when the thing came to be examined. Now, it is for this that I have risen, because the hon. Member for Northampton said he wished for a Select Committee to inquire into the matter. He did not ask for a decision as the result of this debate. He asked the Government to appoint a Select Com-

mittee for inquiry. Now, from the time the hon. Member for Northampton sat down many hours ago, the Government have made no answer whether they will grant this Committee or not. All we heard on the subject from the leader of the House was that the matter ought to be decided to-night, because this was not the sort of thing the Government could allow to hang over them. Well, it is rather hard that we should be required to accept the vote of a mechanical majority on a matter which the hon. and learned Gentleman says ought to be inquired into.

*Mr. C. HALL: What I said was, when the facts are looked into dispassionately.

Mr. PHILIPPS: Quite so, when the facts are dispassionately looked into, but can that be done by the Committee to-night? How can the facts be best looked into? The Government, I believe, do not like Select Committees; perhaps they would prefer a Royal Commission. The hon. Member for Northampton would prefer a Select Committee, but no doubt he would be satisfied with any impartial tribunal. The hon. and learned Gentleman seems to take it for granted that there is going to be an inquiry because he talked about it when these things are inquired into.

*Mr. C. HALL: I must really ask the hon. Member not to misrepresent me. I said nothing about an inquiry by Committee, or of any sort whatever.

Mr. PHILIPPS: I took down the words, and I thought the hon. and learned Gentleman said when these matters were looked into dispassionately. Well, surely that must refer to some time other than to-night. One good service the hon. Member for Northampton has done is bringing before our notice this very curious interview which took place between Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn. Now, when my hon. Friend was making his speech and gave an account of this interview, I thought that this surely would be denied. I never thought that any Member of the Government would admit that such an interview had taken place between the Prime Minister of this country and a private individual in reference to a criminal prosecution. I say that interview, whichever account of it you accept, that interview of Lord Salisbury's showing was a very curious affair. As to the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman that this gentleman who has left the country did not leave in consequence of that interview because he had arranged his departure before that interview took place, I have no doubt that the statement was made in good faith, but, speaking as a lawyer, I should like to have all that kind of thing tested by cross-examination; it is not to be settled by any hon. Member coming here and giving us an interesting account of the proceedings of an hour or two. The Committee cannot decide fairly upon the materials before them. The Attorney General asked us to point out to him anything that he had not awswered fully, and I must say I do not think he has explained how Lord Salisbury came to be mixed up in these matters at all. He has told us that he took the legal opinion of the Lord Chancellor, and he said of course that the Lord Chancellor's opinion was valuable on a matter of Criminal Law. He says he also took the opinion of Mr. Poland, but he did not say why or when Lord Salisbury was brought into these transactions. Why in the world should the Prime Minister, with, I should think, work enough on his hands be consulted about a criminal action? There is another little point the Attorney General did not deal with and which I will recall to his recollection. The hon. Member for Northampton mentioned that this gentleman now absent from the country left the Army under somewhat peculiar circumstances. His resignation was accepted, whereas the usual course in such matters is to issue a *Gazette* notice that his services are dispensed with. Whether that is so or not I, of my own knowledge, cannot say; I only know that such was the statement made by the hon. Member for Northampton, and the Attorney General has not said a word about it to-night. These among other things ought to be cleared up by a Member of the Government before we go to a Division. It is unfair that we should be called upon to vote to-night. It is a very important matter that people should know why it is that a Prime Minister and other Members of the Cabinet should mix themselves up in criminal matters. We cannot determine these things to-night, and it is because these matters must be inquired into, because the demand of the hon. Member for Northampton for a Committee is

reasonable, that if the present Motion is carried to a Division I shall support it.

(11.20.) MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am the first of the Metropolitan Members to speak upon a matter upon which London is specially concerned. I am not going into the whole controversy that has occupied the evening; I regret that the hon. Member who introduced the matter is not here to bring it to an issue; but what I wish to draw the attention of the Government to is that they have not said one word expressing their opinion as to an inquiry. Let me ask them seriously to consider this. I speak with some knowledge of what has been in the public mind in London during the autumn and winter. The people of London have had a great scandal in their midst, and in connection with this scandal many rumours have been going about, growing as rumours do until they took shape that has filled the public mind with anxiety. The names of many influential persons have been mixed up in matters with which the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton is concerned, and in the public interest it is necessary that these matters should be cleared up. I ask the Government to consider, can they grant this inquiry—whether there is anything in the allegations freely made outside or not? Let the thing be sifted. Let the worst be known—let public confidence be restored. One thing there is that fills the public mind with anxiety. I do not say it is true, but it has been forced on the attention of the people of London, that, owing to the intervention of the higher authorities, the police have not been permitted to perform their duty in connection with these cases. It is a most serious charge to make, and I do not say it is true, but bring it to the light of day, and if it is only wild rumour show that it has no foundation in fact. Let us have it searched into and settled once for all. I know the rumour has great hold on the public mind in London. Even this evening after listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton and the reply of the Attorney General, one cannot help noticing in connection with the action of the police referred to by the hon. Member, that there was not an answer from the Attorney General as to whether the best possible means were taken to bring the criminals to justice. The whole question cannot be settled by a Vote in this House. Whether the majority against the hon. Member for Northampton be large or small, it will leave the public mind exactly where it was before. No one who was in London through the autumn could have failed to recognise that these scandals have produced a great effect on the public mind. The wildest rumours are prevalent; let us for Heaven's sake know what is the truth. I earnestly urge the Government again to agree to an inquiry in order to restore public confidence.

*(11.25.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I understand that it is deliberately suggested by the hon. member that a Committee of the House of Commons, or some similar body, should be appointed to inquire into the truth or falsehood of the rumours that have prevailed in connection with these charges—that is to say, that the names of a number of gentlemen, or rather of persons, because all people are equal before the law, who, according to the opinion that is entertained by the Law Officers of the Crown, have been falsely accused should be dragged before the Committee or other body appointed to carry out the inquiry, and that they should be pilloried and gibbeted, and perhaps injured and ruined for life by the institution of inquiry into the truth or falsehood of these rumours. Well, I think that a Government who undertook to authorise such an inquiry of such a character would be guilty of the greatest possible wrong to a number of persons against whom, according to the information that has been received, no sort of evidence exists. I will say at once that the Government will not be a party to such a proceeding. I can also say that we rely upon the completeness and fulness of the answer given by the Attorney General, and that we claim the judgment of the House upon the matter.

(11.27.) MR. J. ROWLANDS: I did not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman while he was speaking, but he has made such a parody of my statement that I must explain. Nobody asked that any persons should be pilloried or gibbeted. We have had a distinct statement made us on a matter of fact that the police were not so active as they might have been, because the higher authorities checked them. That is the question I urge should be inquired into. No man in his senses would propose that all the names

associated with rumours should be brought to light and be gibbeted; I only mentioned the disquieting effect of an impression that action taken by the Government had prevented that being done by the police which could have been done. With all respect to the Attorney General his statement will not be satisfactory to the people of London. One effect it certainly will have, to strengthen our determination to have the control of our own police, and take it from the Home Office.

MR. PICTON: The right hon. Gentleman has entirely misinterpreted the object with which this question has been brought on. It is not rumours with which the proposed Committee would concern itself, but the action or inaction of the authorities — surely a proper subject to bring before a Committee. No innocent man need fear being gibbeted by the inquiry. If the name of any person falsely accused comes up before the Committee, he will have the opportunity of clearing himself. No harm can come to the innocent person, but if the guilty escape it is a curse to the whole nation.

(11.28.) MR. MAC NEILL: I am most anxious that the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Hall) should not have a false impression of what I said earlier. I simply said it was a remarkable coincidence—and I only put it as a matter of comment—a remarkable coincidence that the flight of Lord Arthur Somerset took place on the self same day as that memorable interview between the two friends, Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn, an interview which seems likely to become as famous as the Parnell-Carnarvon interview. The hon. and learned Member says—and I believe him—that Sir Dighton Probyn in no way had any communication with Lord Arthur Somerset between the interview with Lord Salisbury and the flight of Lord Arthur Somerset. But it is remarkable, and it is a fact we did not know before, that Sir Dighton Probyn came straight from an interview with Lord Arthur Somerset to the interview with Lord Salisbury. He saw Lord Salisbury at some railway station on the day of his last interview with Lord Arthur Somerset, and then the hon. Member, in a short description of the habits of Sir Dighton Probyn, told us how that gentleman went home to dress and afterwards dined at his club, both important occupations, but he did not come into personal contact with Lord Arthur Somerset. But the principal question is, what communication had Sir Dighton Probyn with Lord A. Somerset after the interview with Lord Salisbury?

*MR. C. HALL: I stated distinctly that he never communicated directly or indirectly with Lord Arthur Somerset or anybody on his behalf.

MR. MAC NEILL: It is perfectly certain that Lord Arthur Somerset was able to find out the result of the interview.

(11.34.) DR. TANNER: After the discussion which has taken place in the House this evening, I think people outside will ask themselves "What is it that the Government wish to hide?" Not so long ago, when charges and allegations were made against us, we were asked why we would not go before a Court of Justice, and now I am inclined to ask why the Government do not propose the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the charges brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton. The Attorney General may smile and smile, and smile again, but we are growing accustomed to his smiles now. I want to know, seeing that these charges have been made in the strongest possible way, what it is that the responsible Ministers of the Crown are trying to hide. I think the Government have put in a poor, shabby, paltry, and mean defence. Lord Arthur Somerset, against whom these abominable charges are made, is a member of the aristocracy; he held a high position, and I want to know what was done to prevent him escaping from justice. Just compare the action of the authorities in this matter with their action in regard to persons suspected of offending against the Coercion Act in Ireland. Why, in my own case, when I was served with a summons for telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, a big force of police was employed to serve the document, although it was only an ordinary civil proceeding not even arising under the Coercion Act. Hon. Members who wish to address their constituents in Ireland are dogged all over the place, but the course taken is different when a member of the aristocracy is concerned, although he may be accused of a most abominable crime.

Why not give the people an opportunity of forming their opinion on this matter? I should have thought that, in the interests of justice and fair-play, we should, instead of this conspiracy of silence, have had some answer from the responsible and paid minions who are at present decorating the Front Bench opposite.

(11.38.) MR. PICTON: I understand the question before the Committee is whether the whole Vote on Account shall be passed? At present we have not had an opportunity of discussing it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is in error. The question now before the Committee is the reduction moved by the hon. Member for Northampton.

MR. PICTON: When a Division is taken on the reduction shall we still be able to discuss other points in connection with the Vote on Account?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. PICTON: I do not think the question has as yet been thoroughly discussed, and I therefore move that you do now report Progress.

(11.40) Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes 82; Noes 202.—(See Div. List, No. 19.)

Question again proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Services."

Whereupon, Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

(11.53.) MR. COBB (Warwickshire, Rugby): I only wish to make a few remarks. I was glad to hear the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire tell us for the first time in this discussion of the interview between Sir Dighton Probyn and Lord Salisbury. He said Lord Salisbury had no intention whatever of giving information to any one that a warrant was to be issued for the apprehension of Lord Arthur Somerset. I do not presume to dive into the intentions of the Prime Minister——

*MR. C. HALL: I never said one word about Lord Salisbury's intentions. I never referred to them. I simply quoted the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton. He said it was intended that the information should be communicated to Lord Arthur Somerset. I said nothing as to what Lord Salisbury's intentions were.

MR. COBB: I should be sorry to in any way misrepresent the hon. and learned Gentleman. He told us that after the interview Sir Dighton Probyn went home to dress for dinner, and then went straight to his Club. The only assurance we have got is that he did not communicate either directly or indirectly with Lord Arthur Somerset or any one on his behalf. But we have not been informed whether Sir Dighton Probyn told any one that evening what Lord Salisbury had said to him. If he did, it is quite possible that without any intention on his part to communicate directly or indirectly with Lord Arthur Somerset, the information may have got to Lord Arthur Somerset through some third person. We have been told that Lord Arthur's luggage was packed in readiness for his flight before the interview between Lord Salisbury and Sir Dighton Probyn took place. But is it not probable that a man, knowing the position in which he was placed and the crime he had committed, would have everything ready to go away directly he heard that a summons was out against him? I take no interest in the facts of this case, but I am interested in ascertaining whether the law is administered impartially to rich and to poor. I think we are carrying on this discussion under great disadvantages in consequence of the absence of the hon. Member for Northampton, and I hold that we ought to have further time to debate this Vote on Account, as there are other questions which we desire to raise. I therefore think I should not be doing my duty to my constituents if I did not move that you now leave the Chair.

(11.57.) THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is under a complete misapprehension. The Vote can be discussed even if the present question is disposed of.

Motion made, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

But the Chairman, being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

(11.58.) MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I desire to support the reduction of the Vote. We have frequently been told that equal laws are applied to Ireland and to England. Recently, when we complained of the Statute of Edward III. being put in operation in Ireland, we were told by the Home Secretary that it could be put in force also in England. Within the last few days we have seen a venerable pastor in Ireland and a lot of his parishioners——

(11.59.) Mr. FORREST FULTON rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

(12.2.) Question put, "That the Question be now put:"—The Committee divided:—Ayes 196; Noes 78.—(Div. List, No. 20.)

Question put accordingly, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,725,003, be granted for the said Service."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to say that no division was challenged, Mr. Courtney.

MR. SEXTON: When you declared the Ayes had it that declaration was not challenged.

THE CHAIRMAN: I heard it challenged.

(12.10.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 206.—(Div. List, No. 21.)

Original Question again proposed.

It being after Midnight, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [27th February] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1889—90.

CLASS VI.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £8,101, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for Superannuation and Retired Allowances."

2. That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £828, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, in aid of the Local Cost of Maintenance of Pauper Lunatics in Scotland."

Resolutions agreed to.

COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION EXPENSES BILL. (No. 152.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.

Address for—

"Return showing the working of the Regulations made in 1886 for carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with Statistics setting forth the Number, Nature, Costs, and Results of the Proceedings instituted by the Director in accordance with those Regulations, from the 1st day of January 1889 to the 31st day of December 1889 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 38, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

HOP INDUSTRY.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the causes which have produced the steady decrease in the acreage of land under Hop cultivation, and the serious displacement of labour occasioned thereby, and to report as to the best means, if any, of providing a remedy.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Agg-Gardner Mr. Biddulph, Mr. Channing, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir Edmund Lechmere, Sir Roper Lethbridge, Mr. Long, Mr. Jasper More, Mr. Norton, Mr. O'Keeffe, Mr. Pomfret, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Stack, and Mr. Brookfield.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum."—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

MOTIONS.

ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES.

ARRANGEMENT OF VOTES.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Statement laid before the House, showing the changes in the Arrangement of Votes made in the Estimates for 1890-91, be referred to the Committee of Public Accounts."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Mr. Speaker ruled this evening that the functions of the Public Accounts Committee are strictly limited by the Standing Order; and as the Committee will require a special instruction, I

would ask the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the present Motion, and put one on the Paper sufficient for the purpose.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I have been in consultation this evening as to the form which will best carry out the intentions of the House expressed to-day. I have consulted with the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, and it is his view that the reference to the Committee must, of course, be limited by the functions of the Committee as defined by the Standing Order. I hope that explanation will satisfy hon. Gentlemen. I will endeavour as far as I can to give effect to the wish of the House as expressed to-day, and to act with the concurrence of the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

(12.31.) MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): The hon. Gentleman has entirely missed the force of the objection urged by the Public Accounts Committee themselves, namely, that the Committee as at present constituted are not empowered to deal with such a subject as this, and that a special Resolution would be required to enable them to deal with it. Both the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee on Estimates Procedure, of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was a member, have recommended that any change in the form of the Estimates should be submitted to the approval of the House, and not referred to the Public Accounts Committee. If this matter be referred to the Public Accounts Committee we shall not be able to deal with it except as far as it deals with matters of mere account.

(12.33.) MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the interests of public business to re-consider their decision in this matter. If the account be referred to the Public Accounts Committee in its present shape we shall merely be compelled to send a second Report down to the House, such as we have sent this week already. Unless the reference be accompanied by a special instruction from the House, the result will be the wasting of a week of the public time and a day of the time of the Committee, which has enough work thrown on its hands every year already.

*(12.35.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): My hon. Friend (Mr. Jackson) was under the impression that he was acting according to the views of the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee in the course he has taken. We by no means wish to oppose the feeling of the Committee in the matter, and we will postpone the Motion for two or three days. In the meantime, we will consult the Chairman and Members of the Public Accounts Committee to see whether we can agree upon a reference.

Question put, and agreed to.

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT.

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House,

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said: I wish to ask when the Vote on Account will be taken again?

MR. JACKSON: I have put it down for Monday; but it will not be taken on Monday.

IRELAND—THE CLONGOREY PRISONERS.

MR. SEXTON: I regret, Sir, that the Government has not considered the urgent case of the Clongorey prisoners; but perhaps the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) will now be able to make a statement. The House is aware that the tenant on the estate agreed that some of her out-houses, which were her own property, should be enlarged for the purpose of affording shelter to a number of evicted tenants who were in a poor and friendless condition. The agent of the estate made an affidavit, to the effect that the enlargement involved unlawful waste. The Act of 1860 defines the manner in which the summons shall be served. It must be served on the occupier or posted on the principal door of the dwelling. It was not served in either way; and the precept was not sent at all to the workmen who were employed. The Government acted under a complete

misapprehension in the case, and on the insufficient basis of an improperly served summons they proceeded with a number of acts of violence—the arrest, the handcuffing, and the housebreaking. Three batches of prisoners were arrested. The first batch was called on to answer a charge of disobeying the precept, and the second a charge of unlawful assembly. In the case of the third, which included Father Kinsella, the magistrate did not proceed to any action on the charge, but, in default of bail, sentenced them to imprisonment for two months—which was double the maximum term to which they could have been sentenced under the precept. The first batch was brought up the day before yesterday before two Castle resident magistrates. It turned out that the precept had not been duly served, and the Government Justices agreed that the case fell to the ground. The Government counsel asked that a case might be stated. The curious thing is that when we ask for a case to be stated we very rarely get it; but in this instance the application was granted, and the proceedings were adjourned for two months. The defendants went free, and the cases pending were adjourned for two months. The second batch was tried yesterday and to-day, the Court being again composed of two stipendiary magistrates. In the event, one of the magistrates held that there was no case against the accused, and the other took the contrary view. The result was that the men went free. The third batch of prisoners were brought before a solitary magistrate. They asked to have a case stated on this very point of whether the precept was duly served. The magistrate refused to state a case, and called on them to give bail. They declined to give bail, were sent to prison for two months, and are suffering imprisonment now. I am not competent, and not disposed, to go into this question in its strictly legal aspects; but I would ask the Government whether it is desirable that this priest and these 17 men should be detained in prison when if the same procedure had been adopted in their case as in the case of the others they would have been free at the present moment. I hope the Government will be able to see their way to order the release of the third batch of prisoners.

Mr. Sexton

*(12.43.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The hon. Gentleman has imported into this question certain controversial elements which, under other circumstances, I should have thought it my duty to reply to. I think that at this late hour I can pass them by, and I am far from complaining, speaking generally, of the tone of the hon. Gentleman's speech. The analysis of facts which the hon. Gentleman has brought forward is one which appears to me to be substantially accurate. It is a fact that two batches of these people have been released, in one case because the Court thought the precept had not been properly served, and in the other because the members of the Court differed on the point whether there was unlawful assembly or not. On both grounds a case has been stated to a Superior Court, and I am far from saying that my opinion is adverse to the action originally taken. But no doubt the substantial conclusion is that two batches of men are free at this moment and the others are in prison. The two batches released cannot be tried afresh for two months, and an interval of indefinite length must elapse before we can learn on proper authority whether or not the precept was properly served. Of course, if no action were taken in the matter the persons imprisoned under the Statute of Edward III. would undoubtedly remain in prison during all that time, with the possibility that at the end of that time it might be held that the precept was improperly served, and therefore the root of the action of the magistrates was not supported by reason or by law. Under these circumstances, I shall take the opportunity to-morrow of consulting my noble Friend the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as to whether some steps may not be taken for the purpose of releasing the persons still confined to prison. I hope that answer will content the hon. Gentleman.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 3rd March, 1890.

SAT FIRST.

Lord Ampthill, after the death of his father.

COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION EXPENSES BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next.—(*The Lord Herschell.*) (No. 32.)

INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.—(No. 28.)

SECOND READING.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I wish to ask the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India whether he would postpone the Second Reading of his Bill to Thursday next, because, unfortunately, the Papers he promised have not yet reached us; at all events, I have not seen them, nor has my noble Friend behind me.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): With regard to the Papers to which my noble Friend refers, I am sorry there should have been any mistake made. But I should like to explain to the House, because I think it ought to be known, that they were sent to the Queen's Printers early last week. I had a copy of them in my hand last night, and I had been told distinctly that they would be delivered on Saturday morning. It was my desire that that should be done, as the discussion upon the Bill was coming on. It is quite clear some mistake has been made in the matter, and I can only say that I had nothing to do with it. I will, of course, postpone the Second Reading of the Bill to Thursday next as the noble Earl desires.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I need hardly say that I am quite satisfied the delay in delivering the Papers has arisen from an accident.

Second Reading put off till Thursday next.

THE WEST END SCANDALS—PERSONAL EXPLANATION—THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, before the business of the House is proceeded with, I wish to make one or two remarks in reference to a matter with regard to which I see that my conduct has been called in question in the other House. My Lords, it is said that I met Sir Dighton Probyn with the view of enabling a person who was exposed to a serious charge to escape from justice. My meeting with Sir Dighton Probyn happened in this wise. I was coming from France—I think it was on the 18th October. When I landed at Dover I found a telegram from Sir Dighton Probyn asking if he could see me in London. I had no notion what it was about—I imagined it had something to do with Foreign Office business connected with the journeys of the Prince of Wales. I replied that I should be passing through Town, and that he would find me at the Great Northern Railway Station in time for the 7 o'clock train. I missed the 7 o'clock train, but I arrived in time for the half-past 7 train, and Sir Dighton Probyn came to me there. He then informed me what he wanted to do was to ask whether there was any ground for certain charges which had been made in the newspapers against sundry persons whom he named. My reply was, that so far as I knew, there was no ground whatever for them, no vestige of evidence against anyone except one person, whose name it is not necessary I should mention, and I said that, as against that person, I understood that the evidence was not thought to be sufficient in the judgment of those whose business it was to decide. I think I added—but of that I am not quite certain—that rumours had reached me that further evidence had been obtained, but I did not know what its character was. My Lords, I am not ashamed to say that that is all I recollect of a casual interview for which I was in no degree prepared, to which I did not attach the slightest importance, and of which I took no notes whatever. The train started very soon afterwards. The interview

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was brief and hurried; and, as far as I know, the rest of the conversation principally consisted of expressions on the part of Sir Dighton Probyn of absolute disbelief in the charges which were levelled against the person whom I have indicated, and of answers of a more reserved character on my part. I cannot give your Lordships any positive information as to the precise language that was used at that interview; but I can give you negative information. I am quite certain that I never said, as has been imputed to me, that a warrant was about to be issued the next day, because such a statement would have been absolutele inconsistent with what I am certain I did say, that, in the judgment of the legal authorities, the evidence was insufficient. You cannot issue a warrant against a person if the evidence is insufficient. I certainly conveyed no secrets to Sir Dighton Probyn, for the best of all possible reasons, that I had no secrets to convey. I had been abroad, and I had no further information except mere rumour of the precise condition in which the affair stood; and I may add that I can aver in the most confident manner that the suggestion which has been made that a man of Sir Dighton Probyn's character and career could have appointed an interview with me for the purpose of worming out matter which he might use for the purpose of defeating the ends of justice is the wildest and most malignant imagination that has ever been conceived. For the rest, my Lords, the subject is not one that lends itself to extensive treatment, or that commends itself for lengthened debate; but I thought it right to say these few words, in order to give any noble Lords who might wish to avail themselves of it the opportunity of questioning me on the matter, should they desire to do so. To this House I am responsible, and I desire to act fully up to that responsibility.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.
(No. 23.)

SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Your Lordships are aware that a new edition of the Revised Statutes is in rapid progress, and that Bills of this nature are required in order to enable the expurgation of the Statute Book to be carried on. If is desirable that this Bill should be passed as soon as possible, as there is a volume waiting to come out as soon as the requisite authority is given by this Bill becoming law. The substance of this Bill has already passed your Lordships' House. It was comprised in a larger Bill which I introduced last Session, but which, to my great regret, was opposed in another place and dropped. Every care is taken to remove Bills of this nature entirely out of the region of controversy; and I would gladly have availed myself of any opportunity to obviate any possible source of objection rather than delay the progress of the work I have referred to, that is the issue of the volumes, which when their publication is begun ought to follow one another as quickly as possible. This Bill contains only so much of last year's Bill as deals with Acts of Parliament down to the end of the reign of William IV. That will cover the extent of the volume which is waiting to come out. I shall introduce, as soon as possible, another Bill to cover the ground of the remaining volumes which are intended to be published this year. I should add that there are some additional verbal repeals made in this Bill by reason of the Interpretation Act of last Session.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

LUNACY (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.
(No. 24.)

SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: This Bill is introduced to complete the legislation undertaken by the Government as to lunacy. Many of the enactments contained in the Act passed last year were inserted with a view to the consolidation of the Lunacy Acts, and in the Act of 1889 it was provided that it should not come into operation until the 1st May next, in order to give time for this Bill to be passed. It is simply a measure of consolidation, and it is hoped that every facility will be given for its passing. I may take this opportunity of saying with how much satisfaction I have observed that the Government have stated in another place their intention of appointing a Select

Committee to deal with any further Consolidation Bill with a view to the new edition of the Revised Statutes, and also that the statement appeared to meet with general approval.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 3rd March, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

THE PRESS GALLERY.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if, having regard to the fact that there are 1,800 newspapers in the United Kingdom, reporting the proceedings of the House of Commons, it is possible to provide accommodation in the gallery for more than some 50 journals?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): I should be very glad if I could provide more space for the Press than is at present allotted to it, but I fear that it would not be possible to do so by any re-arrangement of the existing reporters' gallery, or to add to that gallery, without encroaching upon the places now reserved for Members of the House, and which, as is well known, are on crowded nights insufficient. I am afraid I could not, under any circumstances, undertake to provide seats for the representatives of all the 1,800 journals referred to in the question, but we do our best for the gentlemen connected with the various Press agencies by whom reports of our proceedings are distributed through the country.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland how many tenants on the Olphert Estate, in the County of Donegal, who applied to the Land Commission before the 1st of November, 1887, to fix the fair rent of their holdings have subsequently accepted judicial leases at a rent agreed upon by landlord and tenant without adjudication by the Land Commission; and do the agreements so entered into between landlords and tenants on this estate out of Court owe, in many cases, their origin to the delay of the Land Commission in hearing applications to have fair rents fixed?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): From the Report received from the Land Commission it appears that there were no cases of the nature indicated in the first paragraph of this question. No agreement or consent fixing a fair rent for any holding on the Olphert estate, in the County of Donegal, has been lodged with the Commission since November 1st, 1887.

THE OFFICE OF HIGH SHERIFF.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government propose to take any steps towards relieving commoners who own land from liability to serve the office of High Sheriff, in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1888?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of the subject to which my hon. Friend refers in his question, and the matter is now receiving their consideration.

THE TOWER WHARF.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what number of barges were moored to the Tower Wharf in 1889 for the purpose of loading or unloading goods on the quay; and whether such goods could not be received and despatched by road?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincoln, Horncastle): Forty-seven barges were so moored. The goods conveyed by them could, of course, have been carried by rail and delivered by waggon, but the cost of transport would be heavily in-

creased, especially on stores from Woolwich, for which the river is a most convenient highway.

SOLDIERS' DISCHARGES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is

"The authority from which the Commander-in-Chief derives the power of cancelling the discharges of soldiers, with the grave effect of practically misrepresenting the facts of their military service,"

as described by the Auditor General; whether H. Holdgate, who was discharged from the Army by purchase in 1885, had his discharge cancelled in 1883, and thereupon has obtained deferred pay for 11 years' service in the Army, for more than three years of which he was in civil life, while in regard to more than three and a half years, although in military employment, it was as a civilian and not as a soldier; and whether, in addition to receiving deferred pay for nearly seven years, whilst absent from the colours, he has also received a pension based upon service supposed to have been rendered during that absence?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The War Office is in correspondence with the Treasury on the subject of the cancelling of discharges as to the best way of giving the benefit of former service to soldiers who may have been re-enlisted. The case referred to, like all those to which my hon. Friend has recently called attention, is about to be considered by the Committee on Public Accounts, to which a full explanation will be given. It will then be seen that the case of H. Holdgate would have been a singularly hard one if no means existed of giving him the full benefit of his service. During the greater part of the time mentioned he was rendering excellent service to the State in South Africa.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT COMMISSIONERS.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, N.E., Clitheroe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Government propose to ask Parliament to extend the period of sitting of the Local Government Act Commissioners for the Settlement of Financial Differences beyond the present statutory limit of December next?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It appears to me probable that the Commissioners will not be able to complete the duties imposed upon them by the Local Government Act before the 31st of December next, when their powers expire. It is too early for me at present to form a positive opinion upon the point, but should an extension of time be necessary I shall be prepared, if the Commissioners concur, to propose legislation for the purpose.

ARMY AND NAVY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what action he has taken, or intends to take, with reference to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the pay, status, and conditions of service of the medical officers of the Army and Navy, which was laid upon the Table of the House in August, 1889; and whether it his intention to print the evidence taken before that Committee for the information of the House?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The recommendations of the Committee would, if carried out, involve an annual increase of expenditure exceeding £100,000, for which no sufficient grounds appear to me to have been brought forward. I do not propose to give effect to the recommendations involving expenditure; and as regards the recommendation to confer combatant titles on medical officers, as I find that my military advisers are unanimously opposed to it, and the naval medical officers do not desire it, no change is pro posed in the titles. It is not intended to publish the evidence, but if the hon. Member would like to seeit I shall be happy to show it to him, or to any other hon. Member who may be interested.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland how many of the National teachers of Ireland notified their desire to be admitted to the July Examination of 1889 as candidates for pro-

motion and were not admitted, and what were the grounds on which they were refused admission; have all the teachers, candidates for promotion from class to class, to give nine months' notice of their desire to be admitted to examination, and did the two teachers who passed the July Examination of 1889, and were not promoted, give this nine months' notice; did the Commissioners of the Irish National Education ascertain the efficiency as school-keepers of these two teachers before authorising their admission to examination as candidates for promotion; were the schools of these two teachers in an efficient condition before the holding of the July Examination of 1889; and, if not, what were the reasons for summoning them to that examination as candidates for promotion, in contravention of the rules regulating the promotion of teachers; what were the dates of the unfavourable Reports upon the school of the teacher from whom promotion has been withheld, and what were the dates of the inspections to which these Reports referred; what was the condition of the school of the teacher whose promotion has been deferred at the inspections which took place since July, 1889; and, will he recommend the immediate promotion of the two teachers who, in July 1889, successfully passed the final stage in determining a teacher's fitness for promotion, and were not promoted?

MR. MADDEN: The National Education Commissioners report that the teachers referred to in the first paragraph numbered 123. The grounds of refusal were various—such as unsatisfactory proficiency of pupils, falsification of school accounts, &c. The general rule is as indicated in the second paragraph. Both the teachers seem to have given due notice. As regards the inquiries in the third and fourth paragraphs, the cases of both teachers were at the time, in the opinion of the Commissioners, very doubtful, and it was with much hesitation they were admitted to the examinations. In the case of the teacher referred to in the fifth paragraph, his school was examined for results on August 16, 1888. The Inspector's Report showed that the school was not in an efficient condition. This Report caused the Commissioners to hesitate about admitting the teacher as a candidate for promotion. It was next examined on June 24, 1889, with very unsatisfactory results; but the Report did not reach the Office until it was too late for the Commissioners to countermand the teacher's admission to the examination. A subsequent communication was also received from the Inspector of a highly unfavourable character. The Commissioners, weighing all the circumstances, decided that the teacher, though a good scholar, was an inefficient teacher, and therefore could not be promoted to the first-class. In the case of the teacher referred to in the sixth paragraph, the examinations of his school for results on June 11, 1888, and June 17, 1889, were not satisfactory; and he was admitted to the July examination for promotion on the distinct understanding that if his answering proved satisfactory his promotion would depend upon the results examination of his school in June, 1890. The Government cannot interfere with the discretion of the Commissioners in the matter.

INSPECTION OF RESERVOIRS AND WATERWORKS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the increasing number of reservoirs and waterworks now being built in this country, and of the danger to life and property resulting from any insufficient construction of the retaining walls, the Government will take steps to provide some system of inspection similar to that now in force with regard to railroads?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): There might be danger to life and property if such works as are referred to in the question were improperly constructed; but it seems to me that such danger would be local in its origin and effects, and wholly different in its nature from the danger possible from the improper construction or administration of railways. If it were deemed necessary that there should be statutory inspection of such works, I think it should be conducted by officers of the County Council, rather than by those of a Department of the State.

IMPORTATION OF STORE CATTLE.

MR. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Minister for Agriculture whether it is within the knowledge of his Department that there is a strongly-expressed desire by agriculturists in Scotland for the same facilities to be given for the importation of store cattle, for feeding purposes, from the United States as from the Dominion of Canada; whether there is in his Department trustworthy information of recent date with regard to the existence of disease amongst cattle in the United States justifying the continued enforcement of the regulation, that all American cattle must be slaughtered at the port where they are landed after crossing the Atlantic; and whether there are any objections to such information being laid upon the Table of the House?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincoln, Sleaford): The question of admitting store cattle from the United States of America has frequently been urged upon the Department; but, as the Government of that country is unable to comply with the conditions laid down in paragraph 4 of the fifth schedule to the Act of 1878, the present restriction cannot be relaxed. The Department is in possession of trustworthy information as regards the existence of disease in the United States. During 1889 no less than 47 cattle from America were found to be affected with pleuro-pneumonia after landing in this country. So recently as the 21st of last month a bull affected with pleuro-pneumonia was landed at Deptford from New York. The diseased portions of the lungs are now in the possession of the experts of the Central Department; and I am informed that they were shown to the Deputy Consul General for the United States, and it is believed that he has communicated that fact to his Government.

PRISONS.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department for what articles other than mats do contractors furnish materials to the prison authorities; are any of such articles sold in the open market in competition with their respective trades; and, if so, will he name them; and will he undertake that the information given in the Annual Reports of the Prison Commissioners, in accordance with the Prisons Act of 1877, shall be in the hands of Members a reasonable time before the Prisons Vote comes on for discussion?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): I have obtained from the Prison Commissioners, and will show to the hon. Member, a list of all the articles made in prisons for which materials are obtained from contractors and which are sold to the public, distinguishing those in the case of which the contractor who supplies the material also purchases the product. The list is too long to read to the House in reply to a question. I regret that I cannot undertake to arrange an earlier presentation of the Annual Report. The year in respect of which it is made does not end till March 31. The preparation of the Report entails the examination of voluminous and complicated accounts, and the preparation and printing of elaborate statistical tables. The dates of the presentation of the Report of late years have ranged between July 24 and September 9. Every effort to secure the earliest possible presentation will continue to be made.

MR. QUILTER: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the information he has just alluded to is not in the hands of the House until the Vote has actually been taken, so that Members have no opportunity of studying the Report?

*MR. S. WORTLEY: That is undoubtedly the case, not only in respect to this Report but in respect of other Annual Reports which relate to periods which end on the 31st of March.

IRELAND—LAND COMMISSION SITTINGS AT LONGFORD.

DR. FITZGERALD (Longford, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland what is the cause of the delay in holding a sitting of the Land Commission in the County of Longford; and if he is aware that the Commissioners have not held a sitting since February, 1888, and that there are an enormous number of cases pending?

MR. MADDEN: It appears from the Land Commissioners' Report that the hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to the last sitting in the County of Longford. The Commissioners will arrange for another Sub-Commission sitting in that county as soon as possible. There has been no unavoidable delay. There are in the County Longford at the present time 561 cases undisposed of.

POSTAL FACILITIES AT KNOCK.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if his attention had been called to the pressing necessity that existed for greater postal and telegraphic facilities at Knock, County Down, and, as this suburb has attracted a large number of residents, and was now a most populous as well as popular district, would he consider the propriety of giving the desired facilities at the earliest moment consistent with the convenience of his Department?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the hon. Member, I am glad to be able to state that, so far as postal facilities are concerned, arrangements have already been sanctioned for carrying out the improvements desired by the inhabitants of Knock. As regards the question of telegraphic facilities, I have to state that an offer was made in the early part of 1888 to open a Telegraphic Office at Belmont under a guarantee of £24 a year, but the offer was not accepted. I shall be happy to make inquiries as to whether the circumstances have changed.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have any information as to the contemplated sale of the Delagoa Bay Railway, which Article II. of the Decree of 25th June last, purporting to forfeit the concession, directs to be made by public auction, and whether, in view of the importance of the Railway as a great commercial highway, the Government will take care that British interests in respect thereof will be duly protected?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have laid before Parliament all the information in their possession in connection with the railway. The Papers show the anxiety of the Government to use their utmost efforts to protect British interests connected with it. The Portuguese Government have replied to our remonstrances that they were willing to treat with the representatives of the Portuguese Company with a view to compensation for the seizure of the Railway, and have indicated that the English Company is in a position to influence the selection of those representatives, promising, in case of failure, to refer the point to arbitration; and it is understood that a Director of the English Company has gone to Lisbon with a view to the negotiations mentioned.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

MR. CAUSTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade has determined, without inquiry into the circumstances of the case, not to proceed with any applications for Provisional Orders to supply electricity, if the Local Authorities refuse their consent, and thus to ignore the power vested in them by Section 1 of "The Electric Lighting Act, 1888," which provides for dispensing with such consent?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir; no such determination has been arrived at. In view of the Sessional Orders of Parliament, the Board of Trade informed promoters of Provisional Orders that they could not proceed with applications unless the consent of the Local Authority was produced by the 25th February. Where, however, as has already been the case, the promoters request the Board of Trade to dispense with such consent, their application will be carefully considered, and if there appear to be exceptional circumstances connected with the refusal of the Local Authority, an inquiry will be held.

SCOTCH SCHOOLS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a letter, addressed by the Secretary of the

Scotch Education Department on 27th of September last, to Mr. C. Jamieson, a member of Forfar Burgh School Board, in which it is stated that—

"In view. . . of serious risk that, as now conducted, it (Forfar Academy) may in some particular be found to contravene the provisions of the Code, my Lords are strongly of opinion that such a resolution should be adopted,"

that is, a resolution by the Forfar School Board converting Forfar Academy into a higher class school; in what particular, if any, has Forfar Academy been conducted in contravention or alleged contravention of the Code; whether, and when, the Forfar Burgh School Board were informed thereof; if he will explain what are the circumstances referred to in the letter from the Secretary to the Clerk of the School Board, dated 21st of September, 1889, which create the "grave doubts" in the minds of the Scottish Education Department as to the propriety of considering the academy as a school entitled to share in this Grant, *i.e.* the Probate Duty Grant, and whether, and when, these have been brought under the notice of the School Board; whether, inasmuch as the question of converting an existing parish school into a higher class public school is left by Statute to be determined on the initiative of the School Board, the Scotch Education Department have any power to compel School Boards to take such initiative; whether the Scotch Education Department can refuse payment of any Grant which is lawfully earned by compliance with the Code, in respect of any non-compliance, or alleged non-compliance, with conditions outside of the Code; and if not, whether he will explain the note appended by the Education Department to the Inspector's Report of Forfar Academy, 9th of May last—

"That before Grant is paid to any part of the school next year, my Lords must, of course, be satisfied that the conditions attached to any payment under the Endowed Scheme recently before Parliament have been fulfilled;"

and under what authority the Scotch Education Department are acting in bringing this pressure to bear on Forfar Burgh School Board?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): I am acquainted with the terms of the letter addressed to Mr. Jamieson on September 27 last by the secretary to the Scotch Education Department. The question of the status of the Forfar Academy has long been matter of discussion, and, looking to the position and organisation of the school, the endowment which it enjoys, and the conditions imposed in connection with a Grant made under a recent scheme of the Educational Endowments Commissioners, the Department felt it right to point out the risk which they believed existed that the higher department of the school might fail to fulfil the conditions of the Code either in regard to school fees or otherwise, and thus forfeit grant. On educational grounds the Education Department agreed with the view that the higher department of this school should be made a higher class school under Section 62 of the Education Act of 1872. The initiative as to this rested with the School Board, who have, I understand, adopted this view. The Department had no power to bring pressure upon the School Board except by drawing attention to the conditions under which the Parliamentary Grant is distributed. Before paying Grant the Department must be satisfied that the conditions of the Code and the provisions of the Education Acts are complied with, and in connection with this they would have to inquire whether the conditions upon which a certain sum is contributed to the school under the Endowment Scheme sanctioned by Parliament are fulfilled.

INDIA—COOLIES IN ASSAM TEA GARDENS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the high rate of mortality among the coolies employed in the tea gardens in India; whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of Dr. Eteson, late Sanitary Commissioner of Assam, that—

"The ratio of sickness and mortality among the tea garden labourers as a class has been always very great,"

and that—

"In many gardens it is above what is counted a frightful epidemic in civilised countries;"

that

"In 1886 the largest death-rate in any garden was 270 per 1,000, while in the following year even this terrible figure was far

outstripped, for in one garden the chances of life and death were almost equally divided, there having been a mortality of 465·9 per 1,000;"

that the Civil Surgeon of Debrugurh, in his Report for 1884, states that—

"The conditions of child life in a tea garden are altogether so unfavourable that the wonder is how so many children succeed in passing childhood's stage;"

whether his attention has been drawn to a case which happened in 1886, in the Mesaijan Garden in Lakimpur, in which the Deputy Commissioner states that—

"A large body of coolies left the garden, and came to the station complaining of ill-treatment. They stated that both men and women had been flogged; in the case of women, that they had been tied to a post in the porch of the manager's house, their clothes lifted up to their waists, and that they had been beaten on the bare buttocks with a stirrup leather by the orders of the assistant manager;"

whether he is aware that in 1886 there was in existence in some tea gardens a dungeon in which refractory coolies were confined and tied down with ropes; and whether he can state that such abuses are now prevented; whether he is aware that, although by Section 116 of the Act the coolie is entitled to one day of rest every week, there is a tacit understanding between employer and labourer that the rights of the latter under the section would not be claimed, and that the Government is believed to support the planter in this arrangement; and what measures the Government propose to take under these circumstances?

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will, at the same time, answer a question which I have placed upon the Paper on the same subject. I beg to ask the Under Secretary, with reference to the employment of coolies in the Assam tea gardens, whether the Inland Emigration Act of 1873 limited the term of labourers under contract enforced by penal laws to three years, with many provisions for the protection of such labourers, and at the same time, with a view to the gradual substitution of free labour, provided an alternative system of free recruiting under ordinary engagements, not enforceable by penal methods; whether the more recent law has extended the term of enforced labour to five years; whether complaints have reached him that the provision in favour of free recruiting and free labour has been evaded by a system under which labourers enlisted without the safeguards of the labour law are brought to the nearest part of the Assam territory, and there, when far from their homes and when they have not the means of returning, are induced to sign long labour contracts, before they have seen the gardens where they are to be employed or have had any opportunity of offering their labour in the free labour market; whether he is aware that of late years the labourers compulsorily employed on many gardens have suffered terribly; and whether any steps are being taken to mitigate the severity of the system introduced under the last law?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): In answering these questions the Secretary of State wishes me to say that questions on the condition of the coolies in the Assam tea gardens are frequently asked in this House. They are based on facts picked out of the official Reports for many years past, and calculated to give an exaggerated impression. They are suggested to hon. Members either with the object of procuring the substitution of a system of free recruiting for the safeguards of the Act of 1882, or with that of stopping migration from Bengal to Assam. They give a most incorrect impression of the general condition of the coolies. As to the specific allegations contained in these questions, I may say, in answer to the first question of the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), yes; the mortality has engaged the most anxious attention of the Secretary of State and of the Government of India for many years. My answer to the second paragraph of the hon. Member's question is that the Report of Dr. Eteson refer to byegone times and particular districts. The death-rate on an individual garden is often frightfully enhanced by an epidemic of cholera. In answer to the third paragraph of the question of the hon. Member, I have to say that I was questioned on this case last year, and I then stated that the manager in question was prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to 10 months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine. My reply to the fourth paragraph of the

question is that the Secretary of State has no reason to suppose that any such abuse exists now. In answer to the fifth paragraph, the Secretary of State is not aware of any such tacit understanding, and is certainly not supported by the Government. In reply to the questions of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), my answer to paragraphs 1 and 2 is in the affirmative. As regards paragraph 3, such complaints have been made, and have been carefully investigated by the Chief Commissioner of Assam and reported by him to be greatly exaggerated. This question illustrates one of the difficulties to be encountered in doing away with the safeguards of the Act of 1882. In regard to the general question asked by both hon. Members, I have repeatedly stated to the House that the Government of India has been for some time engaged, under the direction of the Secretary of State, in making the most careful investigation into the condition of the coolies in the Assam tea gardens, and the working of the Act of 1882, with special reference to the question whether that Act shall be continued any longer. As to the general condition of the coolies, the House will perhaps like to hear the evidence of an entirely impartial witness, the Rev. Isaac Row, Secretary to the Anglo-Indian Evangelization Society. He writes in the Indian newspapers as follows:—

"I am much interested in the correspondence in your columns with reference to the tea planters of Upper Assam, and their treatment of the coolies under their charge, and I shall be glad if, in the interest of the cause of truth, you will kindly allow me to give my testimony on this subject. I think I may fairly claim to speak with some authority, as during the past two years I have spent nearly 12 months in the Brahmaputra Valley, and during that time travelled very widely over the country. My observations, therefore, have not been superficial and confined merely to a few gardens in the more settled districts; but my work as a Minister of the Anglo-Indian Evangelization Society led me to visit a very large number of out-of-the-way gardens, seldom, if ever, visited by strangers, and my testimony is that of an impartial witness, equally the friend both of the coolie and of the planter. As a rule, all the coolies that I saw, numbering tens of thousands, were remarkably well cared for by their employers, and I could specify many instances of special kindness and consideration on the part of the latter, of which I was myself an eye-witness. I am quite sure that there are hundreds of starving poor in England to-day who would be most thankful if they could only be as well fed and as well housed as are the great bulk of the people employed on the tea gardens of Upper Assam. I say this the more emphatically, because, in former years, I laboured much among the destitute poor of London. The misrepresentations so persistently made with reference to this subject are a great wrong, not only to the planters, but to the coolies themselves, of whom there are tens of thousands half-starved in over-crowded districts, in Bengal and elsewhere, who should be encouraged and helped to emigrate to Assam, where they might readily find lucrative and easy employment."

SIR G. CAMPBELL: As the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to read a long passage from an advocate of the continuance of the system, may I call his attention to the 4th paragraph of my question—

"Whether he is aware that of late years the labourers compulsorily employed on many gardens have suffered terribly."

No doubt the hon. Member for Flintshire did quote statistics which are three or four years old, but I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether during the last three or four years there has not been an excess of mortality in some of these gardens?

*SIR J. GORST: The question of the hon. Member is whether I am aware that of late years the labourers compulsorily employed on many gardens have suffered terribly. In the opinion of the Secretary of State that statement is the result of a misapprehension.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I think I am bound to say that, personally, I have made no such statement. The words are not mine. All I ask of the right hon. Gentleman is that he shall tell me whether the fact is so or not. I repeat that I made no statement on the subject.

SIR J. GORST made no rejoinder.

CEYLON.

MR. PHILIP STANHOPE (Wednesbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware of the general dissatisfaction existing amongst officers of the Crown in Ceylon at the manner in which appointments in the Public Service have been made by Sir Arthur Gordon, the present Governor, and whether instructions will be given to his successor to inquire into and remove any causes of just complaint?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): Permanent appointments, except to the smaller posts, in Ceylon are made not by the Governor but by the Secretary of State. There is no general dissatisfaction in Ceylon at the manner in which Sir A. Gordon has filled temporary, or acting appointments, which it is supposed are referred to in the question. As a rule the Secretary of State does not interfere with such appointments, but in certain cases the propriety of the Governor's selections has been questioned by or on behalf of officers who conceived themselves to have better claims than those actually selected; and after careful examination the Secretary of State has decided that the action of the Governor ought to be upheld, and that the complaints made were not well founded. In filling acting appointments, or in recommending officers for promotion, the Governor is required to give weight to other considerations than that of seniority.

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND AFRICA.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government has occupied any part of Africa on the coast opposite to Aden, or sent any troops there on its own account, or on account of the British or Egyptian Governments; and whether, as reported in the newspapers, a small force of Indian soldiers were lately engaged in some expedition into the Hara country and suffered considerable loss on their return; and, if so, what was the object of the expedition? In putting this question, I should like, with the permission of the House, to explain that I had not forgotten the observation of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that the time of the House would be saved by putting certain questions as to facts to the heads of Departments at their offices instead of inside this House. A fortnight ago I put a question to the Under Secretary for India on this subject, and I have not yet been favoured with an answer.

SIR J. GORST: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that if he has not received an answer, it has not been my fault. In answer to the first part of the question, I have to say that small detachments of troops from the garrison at Aden occupy the ports of Zeyla, Bulhar, and Berbera on the Somali coast. With regard to the second paragraph of the question, the object of the expedition was to punish the authors of a raid upon Bulhar in August last, in which 100 persons were killed.

BURMA AND SIAM.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any, and, if so, what, progress has been made in the delimitation of the respective protectorates of this country and of the Chinese Empire in the Shan States, under the provisions of the Treaty of 1886 between Her Majesty and the Sovereign of China; and whether it is the fact, as has been recently stated in the newspapers, that steps are being taken to determine certain questions of boundaries between British Burma and Siam?

*SIR J. FERGUSON: No steps have been taken to demarcate the frontier between China and Burma; but surveys are being made by the two Governments concerned of the frontiers of Siam and Burma.

THE SCOTCH MAILS.

MR. LENG: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is cognisant of the fact that the mails despatched from Dundee and the East of Scotland on Saturdays, the most important mails of the week to the American merchants, to catch the Cunard steamers at Queenstown for New York, have repeatedly missed the connection where they should be taken on with the London mails to Holyhead; whether the Cunard Steamship Company have repeatedly remonstrated with the Post Office Authorities on the subject, their representations remaining entirely unheeded; whether the Dundee mail, which should have gone by the *Aurania* on 25th January, did again miss the connection; and whether it is in the power of the Post Office Department to enforce such reasonable regularity in the conveyance by railway in this country of important mails for America as will prevent the serious inconvenience to which British and American merchants have been of late subjected?

*Mr. RAIKES: I cannot say that the Scotch mails for America have repeatedly missed the steamers from Queenstown; but, owing to exceptionally stormy weather on the 25th of January, the mails from Scotland missed the junction with the Irish mail at Warrington, and thus lost the packet from Queenstown to New York. No remonstrance on the subject has been received from the Cunard Steamship Company. The Post Office is in constant communication with the Railway Companies, with the view of preventing delay in the mail services; but occasional irregularities will happen from causes over which the companies have no control.

THE NEWINGTON VESTRY.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the clerk of the Newington Vestry is alleged to refuse to make any later Annual Report than one dated 1887, though requested to do so by the Vestry; and will he order an inquiry into the matter?

*Mr. RITCHIE: The Vestry clerk of the Parish of Newington is not subject in any way to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, and the Board are not empowered to order an inquiry into the matter to which the hon. Member refers.

*Mr. C. GRAHAM: May I ask to whom this Vestry is to address itself?

*Mr. RITCHIE: Perhaps the hon. Member will put the question on the Paper.

FISHERTON NATIONAL SCHOOL, SALISBURY.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he has received complaints from the parents of children attending the Fisherton National School, Salisbury, that their children have received religious instruction contrary to their expressed wish and desire; and whether his attention has been called to a letter in the *Daily News* of 21st February, to which is attached the names of four whose children attend the same school, and for whom the benefit of the Conscience Clause had been claimed, complaining that, during the time of religious instruction, their children, with others, have been shut up in a porch, between the inner and outer doors, in darkness and cold, and without instruction?

*Sir W. HART DYKE: The Department has received complaints of the kind described. It is admitted by the managers that owing to the confusion caused in the school by a sudden influx of scholars some children did, inadvertently, receive religious instruction, contrary to the wishes of their parents. The Department is making inquiries into the matter, including the allegations of the writer in the *Daily News*, and if the facts are proved is prepared to take ample security against any repetition of the circumstances complained of.

IRELAND—
BAILIEBOROUGH NATIONAL SCHOOL.

Mr. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he has seen the following paragraph in the *Daily Express* of the 24th February, 1890:—

"Bailieborough National School.—The examinations in this school were held in March, 1889, and as yet neither have the results been made known nor the premiums distributed;"

and will he explain the cause of the delay which has occurred?

Mr. MADDEN: I have not yet received a Report. I must, therefore, ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the question.

SCIENCE AND ART GRANTS.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Regulation of 1889, requiring before a grant is made a certificate in all cases from the Committee having management of a Science and Art Class, in which the principles of agriculture are taught—

"That the students are, or are going to be, employed in a trade or industry to which that subject applies, or are going to be teachers of that subject,"

has had a very detrimental effect on many of these classes; and whether he will consider the withdrawal of this Order in respect of classes in agriculture?

*Sir W. HART DYKE: In some cases the Regulation in question has diminished the classes in which instruction in the principles of agriculture is given, but

only in localities where the subject is an unsuitable one. The general effect of the Regulation has not been detrimental to the classes in localities where that subject of science can be properly taught; for, as the principles of agriculture are an applied rather than a pure science, it would be a waste of public money to pay grants on students who were neither likely to be employed in agricultural industry nor to become teachers of the subject.

WEIGHING OF CATTLE ACT.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: I beg to ask the Minister for Agriculture whether he is disposed favourably to consider the extension of the provisions of "The Market and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1887," to auction marts where fat cattle are sold?

*MR. CHAPLIN: The administration of the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act rests with the Local Government Board; but I should have no objection to proposals for increased facilities for the sale of cattle by live weight. There is a Commission now sitting on market rights and tolls which, I understand, has had submitted to it, amongst other questions, proposals for the amendment and extension of the Statute referred to by the hon. Member, and it may be desirable to wait for their recommendations before any decision is taken on the question.

SCOTTISH FISHERY BOARD.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether any provision is made in the Scottish Fishery Board Vote for the present year to increase the salaries of the Board's officers; and what decision the Government have come to on the subject, in consequence of the consideration promised on the 28th March, 1889?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: No increase in the salaries of these officers is made in this year's Estimates, as the Government have not yet come to a final decision on the question.

CONNEMARA RAILWAY.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the Report of the Commissioners on the line of Railway through Connemara will be published in sufficient time before the Galway Spring Assizes to permit of the selected line being brought before the Grand Jury?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Yes; the Report will be published in sufficient time.

COLONEL NOLAN: When?

MR. JACKSON: It has not yet been decided.

THE ZULU CHIEFS.

MR. ALEXANDER M'ARTHUR (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will inform the House as to the authority under which the Chiefs Dinuzulu, Ndabuko, and Tshingana, having last April been sentenced to imprisonment in Zululand, have now been transported to St. Helena; what arrangements have been made, during the detention of these Chiefs in St. Helena, for the maintenance of the family of Cetewayo, which is dependent on Dinuzulu, and for the wives and children of Ndabuko and Tshingana; and whether Her Majesty's Government has sanctioned or modified the sentences passed on the seven other Zulus who were tried by the Special Court at Etshowe?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The authority for the removal of these Chiefs is the "Colonial Prisoners Removal Act, 1884." Sir Charles Mitchell reports that the families will be no worse off on account of the absence of these Chiefs, as the latter, of course, never did any work. They have plenty of cattle and lands; and the Secretary of State is ordering that they are to be fully protected in the enjoyment of their property. The cases of the 10 other Zulus have been carefully considered; the sentence in all but one case will be modified; and I may add that the sentence of death in Umpikwa's case will not be carried out. I shall be happy to show the Despatch to the hon. Member at a later date; but it is obviously undesirable that its details should be made public in this country before it reaches the hands of the Governor, which will not be for another three weeks or so.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. RICHARD POWER (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as regards the proposals of the Ridley Commission, as set forth in their Second Report, presented in August, 1880, in connection with the Higher Division of the Civil Service; and when the Superannuation Bill will be laid upon the Table, the interests of the Service having suffered by the prolonged anxiety occasioned in the various Public Departments owing to the uncertainty as to the steps that may be taken to give effect to the proposals referred to?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to put the question down for to-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVANTS—CASE OF MR. W. S. FOULSHAM.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a claim to compensation, made under the Local Government Act of 1888, by W. S. Foulsham, an Inspector of Weights and Measures for the old County of Middlesex, has been rejected by the Treasury on the ground that Mr. Foulsham held office subject to annual re-appointment; whether the Clerk of the Assessment Sessions, many of the Justices' Clerks of old Middlesex and other "transferred" officers, who, with the Inspectors of Weights and Measures, are declared by the Act to be entitled to compensation, hold their offices upon the same tenure; and whether the annual re-appointment was a mere formality, the office being practically tenable for life during good behaviour, Mr. Foulsham's two predecessors having in fact (though re-appointed annually) held the office for periods of between 30 and 40 years respectively?

MR JACKSON: I am informed that Mr. Foulsham on the appointed day held an office for one year ending November 12, 1889. On the termination of that period he was not re-appointed. In this case the Treasury did not consider that they were empowered by the provisions of the Local Government Act, Section 120, to require the County Council to pay any compensation. I may mention that the Treasury are informed that on the termination of his appointment Mr. Foulsham was offered by the County Council and declined other employment. There is no information at the Treasury which will enable me to answer my hon. Friend's question contained in the two last paragraphs.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to the writers in the Out-door Department of Customs (some of them of long service) now being dismissed from the Department, who were sent from their permanent employment to temporary duty to meet a pressing emergency, and, on the completion of the latter, were refused permission to return on the ground that the duty they had been engaged on had been completed; whether such dismissal is intended to exclude such writers from the benefits which the forthcoming Order in Council will confer on those writers serving in other branches of the Customs?

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I wish also to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is a fact that the usual Annual Statement of Imports and Exports, which is prepared for the Board of Trade in the Statistical Department of the Customs, was offered as overtime to the writers in that Department who are in receipt of 1s. per hour; whether these writers unanimously refused the account, upon the ground that they were offered less remuneration for overtime, namely, 10d. per hour, than they were in receipt of for the normal official day; and whether, as the result of their refusal, a number of the writers who were engaged in the outdoor department of the Customs, and whose services range from 8 to 18 years were removed from their posts, and transferred for the convenience of the Statistical Department, and placed upon the preparation of the annual statement; whether they have recently been informed that they will be returned to the Civil Commission, thus breaking their prolonged service at a critical juncture, and run the risk of depriving them of any benefits which may be conferred upon their class under the im-

pending Order in Council; and whether, in view of the circumstances referred to, some assurance can be given that, in the event of their return to the Civil Service Commission, they shall not be sufferers by the transfer?

MR. JACKSON: The preparation of the annual statement of trade necessitates the temporary addition of copyists to the Statistical Office. It is ordinary work, and always paid for at the rate of 10d. per hour. It was offered to some of the copyists in the Statistical Office who are paid at the rate of 1s. an hour for certain special work, but they asked to be allowed to decline it, because the rate of pay was less than the 1s. an hour which they are paid for the special work in the normal official hours. The work was then given to copyists employed in the outdoor department. These copyists will, on the conclusion of the additional work in the Statistical Office, be returned to the Civil Service Commissioners, from whom I learn that work can speedily be found for them in other Departments.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: May I ask whether it is not a fact that some of the gentlemen who have been appointed to work on these statistical abstracts have been in the service of the State for a long period of years, some of them 20 years, and whether these persons are about to be dismissed?

MR. JACKSON: There is some misunderstanding about that. It has been decided that the work on which these writers have been employed will be better done by some other officers. When a Department has completed a certain work on which it has been engaged, the necessary order is made, formally dismissing all the writers who have been engaged on the work for the time being. It is well understood that although these writers may have been employed for a great many years, they are not in the permanent service of the Department, but are being temporarily employed, and it is quite open to any Department, having completed its work, to dismiss the writers engaged for that purpose. As a matter of fact, I understand that the Civil Service Commissioners have been on some occasions rather shorthanded, and I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulty in finding employment for these writers, nor is it intended to inflict any penalty on these men by dismissing them.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Are we to understand that these men, who are under notice to leave to-morrow, will not be turned out of the Service?

MR. JACKSON: I think it may be taken that a notice from a Department with regard to the work of that particular Department does not amount to notice to leave the Service entirely.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: As this constitutes a great grievance to this class of men, I must press for an answer to the last two paragraphs of my question, namely, whether it is contemplated by the Civil Service to deprive these men accidentally or otherwise of any of the benefits their long service may have entitled them to, and whether, secondly, some assurance will be given that, in the event of their return to the Civil Service Commission, they will not be sufferers by the transfer?

MR. JACKSON: I do not think I ought to enter into any engagement. I have endeavoured to explain the circumstances. The hon. Member refers to some benefit which may have come to these men under an impending Order in Council. It would be obviously wrong for me to give any pledge on the subject.

THE SILVER COINAGE.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer the amount of profit realised on the Silver Coinage Account in the year ended 31st December, 1889?

MR. GOSCHEN: I propose to make a statement upon this subject in the Budget, and I trust I may be excused if I do not anticipate it.

MR. CRAIG: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the year ended upon the 31st of December last?

MR. GOSCHEN: Quite so; but I prefer to make a general statement.

THE CHELSEA TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the total amount of the defalcations at the Chelsea Trustee Savings Bank; the number of Friendly and other Societies depositing in such bank; and the amount

of their deposits; whether he is aware that since the failure some of these Societies have been unable to draw any money with which to discharge their obligations to members in respect of sickness and death; and whether some arrangement can be made for the payment of a dividend on account at an early date, so that Societies may be able to meet these obligations?

MR. GOSCHEN: The total amount of the defalcations cannot be ascertained with certainty till the books can be verified on receipt of the claims from the depositors. According to the Society's Annual Report of 1888 (the last one made) there were as depositors five penny banks, £356 8s. 6d.; 32 Charitable Societies, £2,640 10s. 9d.; 112 Friendly Societies, £9,045 5s. 11d., but this has not yet been verified. I have no doubt this is so. The liquidator would not be able to make these payments at the present stage of the proceedings. By direction of the Court the usual advertisement under the Companies Act has been issued to depositors to send their claims before March 18. The 21st of March is appointed for adjudicating on the claims, after which the liquidator will be able to proceed with the distribution of the estate. To assist depositors the official liquidator has prepared a special form of claim, which has been sent to each depositor, and all he has to do is to insert the amount of his claim and send it to the liquidator. This form has been approved by the Court.

THE VICTORIA DIVORCE ACT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies is it true that the Government of England has advised the Queen to assent to the Divorce Act recently passed by the Parliament of Victoria; and whether he can briefly state in what respect does the said Act differ from the Law of Divorce in England?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The reply to the first paragraph of the question is in the affirmative. It is not possible, within the limits of an answer, to give a correct statement of the provisions of the Act, which are numerous, or to compare them with those of the English law; but it may be stated generally that the grounds for divorce are largely extended.

CHARGE AGAINST AN EMERGENCY MAN.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to a case heard at Woodford Petty Sessions on the 24th inst. before Messrs. Hickson, R.N., and Burke, J.P., in which an emergency man named M'Keever was summoned by Constable Sheehan on a charge of being "drunk in the streets of Woodford on the 14th inst., and having a loaded revolver in his possession;" if it is true that a few hours after his arrest he was brought before Mr. Burke, J.P., by whom he was discharged, and who added that no further action should be taken; has his attention been called to the report of the trial, from which it appears that it was proved by Constable Sheehan that M'Keever, on being arrested, threatened to shoot him; that Mr. Burke, notwithstanding the protest of the presiding magistrate, persisted in cross-examining the policeman, and finally called him a "blackguard;" and that after M'Keever had been fined £2 and costs, and had paid that sum, Mr. Burke stood up in Court, advised M'Keever to appeal, and ordered the money to be handed back; and, if the above facts are correctly stated, whether the Lord Chancellor will make inquiry into the action of this magistrate?

MR. MADDEN: I have called for a full Report of what occurred, but have not yet received it.

*MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman be able to answer the question to-morrow?

MR. MADDEN: Possibly.

ARBITRATION IN TRADE DISPUTES.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the increased organisation of labour since "The Arbitration Act, 1872," Her Majesty's Government will appoint a Select Committee to inquire how far that Act and its predecessors have succeeded in promoting arbitration in trade disputes; to obtain information, as far as practicable, regarding Councils of Arbitration in Foreign countries; and to report on the propriety, or otherwise, of further legislation being initiated in

support of the principle of arbitration by regularly constituted Boards of conciliation?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Having regard to the fact that a Conference is about to sit in Berlin on this question, the Government think it would not be expedient to appoint a Committee until they are in possession of the information which will, no doubt, be placed before that Conference, and of the result of that deliberation.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the memorials presented to him in 1888 and 1889, largely signed by Members of this House, asking that a day might be kept for the discussion of the Women's Franchise Bill, he will undertake not to take Government business on Tuesday, the 4th March, before the Motion on this subject is disposed of?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry I cannot give an answer satisfactory to the hon. Gentleman. The debate on the Report of the Special Commission will take precedence of all other Orders until it is concluded. I am therefore afraid the hon. Gentleman will lose his day.

MR. M'LAREN: Then, when the right hon. Gentleman makes his Motion, I shall move that the debate be postponed until after my Motion.

MR. CREMER (Haggerston): Do the right hon. Gentleman's observations apply to Wednesdays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Looking at the importance of the debate it would hardly be expedient to interrupt it until it is concluded.

MR. CREMER: Will the right hon. Gentleman give an opportunity for discussing any of the important Motions which are down for those days?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That question had better be asked at a later date.

MR. COBB (Warwick, Rugby): Will the right hon. Gentleman name a day for the Second Reading of the Allotments Act Amendment Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No; I cannot name a day.

THE VAN AND WHEEL TAX.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what number of memorials he has received from County Councils and other Local Authorities, asking him to supply the deficiency in the contribution promised in aid of rates, caused by the abandonment of the Van and Wheel Tax?

MR. GOSCHEN: In answer to the hon. Member I have to state that I have received memorials from 15 County Councils, 50 Highway Boards, and six Unions in favour of the re-introduction of a Van and Wheel Tax; I have received memorials from three County Councils in favour of a Horse, Van and Wheel Tax, and from 23 County Councils for aid to supply the deficiency arising from the withdrawal of the Bill, while five County Councils send suggestions by which, in their opinion, the amount required might be raised. I wish to draw the especial attention of the House to the fact that only three County Councils definitely state they are in favour of the Horse Tax, although the House will remember that of the £800,000 which the County Councils wish to obtain, over £500,000 would, according to my original proposal, have been drawn from that tax, and there appeared to be much less objection to its imposition than to that of the Wheel Tax. The enactment of the Horse Tax would replace £500,000 or more of the amount involved in the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill of 1888.

TRANSFER STAMP DUTY.

MR. MONTAGU: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer can he state the amount received for 1889 on account of the Transfer Stamp of 1s. per cent. on bonds and shares; and whether he is aware that men of business are by no means reconciled to this tax, on account of the trouble and loss of time caused by the stamping?

MR. GOSCHEN: I will take the opportunity of the Budget to make a statement of the amount received in the current financial year on account of the Transfer Stamp. I am aware that some objection was taken to the tax on its introduction. But no recent complaints have been made; and, indeed I have

never heard of any tax which is not attended with complaints from those who have to pay it.

PRE-VICTORIAN SOVEREIGNS.

MR. MONTAGU: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer the amount of pre-Victorian sovereigns and half-sovereigns sent into the Bank of England up to the end of February; and, whether he contemplates demonetising such coins which shall not have been sent in by the end of March?

MR GOSCHEN: The amount of pre-Victorian sovereigns and half-sovereigns received up to the end of February is:—Sovereigns, £1,500,000; half-sovereigns, £80,000. The answer to the second question is, yes.

ARMY AND NAVY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

DR. FARQUHARSON; I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what action he has taken, or intends to take, with reference to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the pay, status, and conditions of service of the medical officers of the Army and Navy, which was laid upon the Table of the House in August, 1889?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty have had under their consideration the recommendations, three in number, relating to the Naval Medical Service, which are contained in the Report referred to by the hon. Member, and they are in communication with the Treasury on the subject. The third recommendation, relating to Yarmouth Hospital, involves an important administrative question, which has already occupied the serious attention of the Board of Admiralty. Owing to the peculiar difficulties of the case no satisfactory solution has yet been found.

PENSIONS TO SEAMEN.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether an arrangement has been made with the Treasury to provide for the payment of pensions to seaman pensioners without taking the money from the amount properly available for Greenwich Hospital pensions; if not, whether the Board will cease granting seamen's pensions at 50 years' old until proper provision is made for them, and discontinue what they have themselves publicly stated to be "a misappropriation of the Greenwich Hospital funds, which they do not feel justified in continuing"?

LORD G. HAMILTON: No arrangement has yet been made with the Treasury on this point. In reply to the second part of the question, the Admiralty, whilst adhering to their opinion, are not prepared to withhold from the members of the Pensioner Reserve the payment of pensions to which they have a claim.

THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that the Crofters' Commission have determined 7,377 applications for fair rent since their appointment; whether it is the case that the total rental in these cases on application was £40,498, and the fair rent fixed £28,448, a reduction of from under £6 each per annum to under £4 per annum; and what is the number of cases where there has been a compulsory enlargement of the crofters' holdings under the Act?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Up to December 31. 1889, the Crofter Commissioners had decided 7,377 applications, the total rental involved being £40,503, or an average of about £5 9s. per croft, the fair rents fixed amounting to £28,450, or an average of £3 17s. per croft. Two hundred and eighty-six crofters in all have had their holdings enlarged under the Act; 35 of these cases were contentious to the end. In the other cases, where there was any opposition at the outset, the applicants and the landlords came to an adjustment during the proceedings.

LORD G. HAMILTON AND MR. LABOUCHERE.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty a question of which I have given him private notice, namely, whether he is correctly reported in the *Times* this morning as having said at St. Pancras on Saturday evening, referring to a speech delivered in Committee of the House by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that—

"He himself listened with amazement to Mr. Labouchere as he sat there deliberately concocting and fabricating his tale, and endeavouring to associate Her Majesty's Government with this offence by charging them with a criminal conspiracy for the purpose of condoning the offence by enabling those who participated in it to escape from justice."

I wish to ask the noble Lord whether he used those words or any words to a like effect?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Sir, the substance of the sentence read by the hon. and learned Gentleman, though I believe not verbally correct, accurately represents the sense of what I said. To be literally accurate, I believe the sentence should read as follows:—

"He himself listened with amazement to Mr. Labouchere as he sat there deliberately concocting and fabricating the tale by which he endeavoured to associate Her Majesty's Government &c."

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Mr. Speaker, if I am in order, Sir, I wish to ask you whether the words admitted by the noble Lord to have been used by him on that occasion constitute in themselves a breach of the privileges of this House?

*MR. SPEAKER: I am not the judge of what constitutes a breach of privilege outside of this House. These words were used outside; had they been used within it I should have considered them a breach of Parliamentary etiquette. I am aware that several speeches have been made outside the House which I should regret if they had been made inside.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I now wish to address a question to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury—in his capacity of leader of the House and the guardian of its privileges—whether he is prepared to consider the propriety of taking steps to deal with language which, on the face of it, appears to be a breach of the privileges of this House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think, Sir, that my task would be a very serious one if I were called upon to deal with language used by Members outside of this House. I do not wish in the slightest degree to extend my responsibility, which is already sufficiently great. I am not, therefore, in reply to the hon. and learned Gentleman, able to give him the assurance he desires.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he accepts or disclaims, according to old Parliamentary usage, responsibility for the language used by a Colleague of his own in the Cabinet?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hardly know, Sir, whether it is fitting I should be addressed with regard to the conduct of a Colleague of my own outside this House, and not in the discharge of any official duty. I say, again, that I think it is unreasonable on the part of the hon. and learned Gentleman that he should ask me to express an opinion on a question of this kind.

PASSENGER TRAINS (CORRESPONDENCE).

Copy ordered—

"Of Correspondence between the Board of Trade and the London and South Western, London, Brighton, and South Coast, London, Chatham, and Dover, and London and South Eastern Railway Companies, with reference to the Return relating to the running of Passenger Trains on their railways."—(*Mr. Baumann.*)

FEE-PAYING (SCOTLAND) SCHOOLS.

Return ordered—

"Giving the name of each School Board in Scotland, in which fee-paying schools have been sanctioned under the Minute of the Scotch Education Department, issued in terms of 'The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889,' with the name of each such fee-paying school, the total number in average attendance therein respectively, and the average attendance of infants and of children in each of the six standards and Ex. VI. in each of the said fee-paying schools, all for the four weeks immediately preceding the making of said Return, together with the scale of fees charged in each of said fee-paying schools."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

NOTICE OF MOTION.

RULES AND ORDERS OF DEBATE—MR. LABOUCHERE'S SUSPENSION.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I rise, Sir, for the purpose of giving a notice, and of putting a question with reference to that notice, upon a matter of so much interest to the House that it is, I think, invested with an exceptional character, and I trust the House will permit me to make a few observations in order to make my notice intelligible. My attention has been

directed to an occurrence which took place in this House on Friday night, at a time when I was not present, and which resulted in the suspension of the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere.) The ground upon which he was suspended appears to have been the use of certain language with reference to an assertion of the Prime Minister's, and doubts have arisen in the minds of many Members whether or not that proceeding, unless it be accompanied by some explanation or declaration on the part of the House, might result in some limitation of the liberty of Members of the House to impeach the conduct of a Member of the Government in cases where the Member of the Government whose conduct happens to be impeached is a Member of the House of Lords, and where he disclaims or denies the matter of fact imputed to him. I am quite certain that the feeling on the part of the House that there should be no limitation of that liberty is general; and it is right that attention should be called to the subject, for it is a question of the utmost importance to hon. Members with reference to the discharge by them of their highest duties, and it is also one that should be set at rest at the earliest possible moment. I was not surprised to learn, on your authority, Sir, that this question could not be raised as a matter of privilege, and I thought it could not be raised on a Motion for the adjournment of the House, when matters are never allowed to be discussed which relate to the Rules and Procedure of the House. I have therefore framed the following Motion:—

"That this House deems it necessary to declare that when a Member of this House prefers a charge against a Minister of the Crown, which charge is denied on behalf of the Minister, such Member should not be restrained from refusing to accept such denial and persisting in his charge by reason that the Minister is a Member of the House of Lords."

That notice is framed with the view of clearing up the question. I may express the hope that it may not come to be a subject of hostile debate; but the question ought in any case to be cleared up. As it is constitutional in character, and approaches nearly to a question of privilege, I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) whether he will agree to allow me, as far as he and the Government are concerned, to make this Motion at the beginning of public business to-morrow?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am, in a measure, taken by surprise by the question of the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): I beg pardon. I gave notice to the right hon. Gentleman half-an-hour ago.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I understood the right hon. Member for Derby to say that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would probably ask for a day; and I am somewhat taken by surprise by the request that this Resolution should be considered to-morrow, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to consider to-night what course it will be right for the Government to take in the matter. I admit the importance of the question, and therefore I do not wish unnecessarily to delay the Debate upon it; but the right hon. Gentleman must see that it would not be well to allow any but the gravest matter to interrupt the important Debate upon which we are about to enter this evening.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I shall reserve the notice at my disposal until I know the final decision of the right hon. Gentleman.

MOTION.

IRELAND—SPECIAL COMMISSION (1888) REPORT.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the Motion which I have placed upon the Paper is intended to complete what may be termed a judicial procedure. The words of the Special Commission Act, 1888, directed a Commission to be appointed to inquire into the truth of certain charges and allegations made against Members of this House, and to report upon those charges and allegations. It appears to me that this Motion is not only the natural result, but the only right consequence and conclusion of an important judicial procedure. We desire to place on record the findings of the tribunal appointed by Parliament solemnly and seriously, after prolonged Debate, and the Motion will in our humble judgment effect this fairly, impartially, and justly. We consider the course which we propose to take is one which will do absolute justice to all the

parties concerned—justice to hon. Members whose conduct has been impugned; justice to the other persons included with them in the allegations; and justice to the newspaper which, in the first instance, gave publicity to these charges. [*Ironical cheers from the Irish Members.*] I notice the cheers of hon. Members opposite, but I apprehend that there is no one in this House—no one who is not extremely prejudiced—who would not wish to do justice even to the newspaper in question. I have always been of the number of those who have most deeply deplored the circumstances in which certain publications were made in that newspaper. I deeply deplore the publication of the forged letters, and I join in the satisfaction which has been expressed in all quarters of the House that the personal charges which were based on them have fallen to the ground. I have from the first joined most heartily and sincerely in that congratulation, but I will also do justice to those who, in the performance of what they deemed to be a public duty, have brought forward certain charges, some of which have been maintained, and some of which, fortunately, have been disproved. The Commission was one which was absolutely unique in its character. Happily for this House and the history of this country there has been before no occasion for the employment of any such machinery in connection with what is affirmed to be, and believed to be, a conspiracy against law and order. The body of learned men who conducted this inquiry are, entitled in my judgment to the thanks of the whole English community for the absolute impartiality with which they discharged their duties—an impartiality which has been recognised even by the warmest supporters in the Press and elsewhere of hon. Members opposite. It must be remembered that the charges made were the subject of frequent debate in this House. On April 18, 1887, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, answering the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) said—

"The hon. Member for West Belfast can bring on the owner and editor as serious a punishment as he could desire through a Court of Law . . . Let him bring his case into Court; let him have it tried where it can be tried fairly."

Subsequently, in May, the hon. Baronet the Member for North Belfast proposed that the printer of the *Times* should be summoned to the Bar of the House, and, after a long debate, the Government offered to hon. Members opposite that a State prosecution of the *Times* should be undertaken in the name of the Attorney General. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] Again hon. Members think it right to cheer; but there is not a lawyer in this House who does not know perfectly well that it would have been necessary to use the name of the Attorney General in a prosecution of this kind. The prosecution itself need not have been under the direction of the Attorney General, for the offer was made that any Queen's Counsel and any solicitor whom hon. Members opposite desired might be employed in the conduct of the prosecution, the only object and purpose of the Government being that in some way or other the charges which had been made should be investigated by a tribunal which was able to take evidence on oath and do justice to all parties concerned. That offer was not accepted by hon. Members opposite. They did not desire to place their case before a jury, and I make no complaint against them in respect of the course which they then thought right to take. The rejoinder that came from them was a demand for a Committee of this House to investigate the matters, and I then said, on behalf of the Government, what I still believe, that no tribunal could be imagined that would be more unfit to undertake the duty. We are charged sometimes with being unfair as to our views of acts which may be committed by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but it may be imagined what would have been said if, claiming to deal with charges brought in this way in a spirit of absolute impartiality, we had constituted ourselves, by a majority, the tribunal before which all these charges should be considered. It is obvious that any political tribunal of that character would have been perfectly unfit to try questions of the gravity and importance of those which would have been submitted to it. The right hon. Gentleman opposite asked for the Committee, and the debate lasted for a considerable period. In the course of that debate the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy) said not that the only question was that of the

forged letters, but that the question was the personal charges brought against individual Members of the House. The hon. Gentleman said—

"You know it is the Irish representation which is on its trial, and the Irish representation challenges you to the combat."

Then the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) said that in his view the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and his Colleagues were not only charged with falsehood, but that they were further charged with being the associates of, and in league with, assassins and some of the vilest criminals of the United States. Therefore, they recognised in 1887 that these charges went much further, and extended considerably beyond the personal charges to which reference is made in the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and which are dealt with by the Commissioners in their Report. We were asked by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. V. Harcourt) to submit the question of the forged letters and the truth of all the charges that have appeared under the head of "Parnellism and Crime" to a Committee; and from time to time it was pressed upon us that a complete and full inquiry should be made by a Committee or some such tribunal. The question was again raised in 1888, after the famous trial which is referred to in the Act which was passed, and a Motion was again made for a Select Committee of this House by the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth (Sir W. Lawson). The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) himself asked for a Committee; but the Government again felt that they must decline to submit to a political tribunal of this House the very grave questions which would have to be dealt with in respect of the conduct and character of Members of this House and those implicated with them. It is hardly necessary for me to go through the story of the Bill that was passed through this House, but I will remind hon. Gentlemen that it was an offer by the Government, in the first instance, as an alternative to the inquiry by a Select Committee. That offer was accepted in this sense—that the Second Reading and the previous stages were passed without a Division, and it was only in Committe that questions arose as to the extent to which the inquiry should be carried, and these questions produced very long and heated discussions. Hon. Gentlemen, therefore, were agreed as to the principle of an inquiry by a Commission. ["No, no" *from some Members of the Opposition.*] Well, I remember perfectly well that the hon. Member for Cork on one occasion said that he would "hold the Government to this inquiry, and would not allow them to sneak out of it." The House and the hon. Gentleman himself may draw what conclusions they please from the fact that there was no Division whatever against the Second Reading of the Bill; and therefore, according to Parliamentary usage, the principle of the Bill was accepted without a Division. I admit that hon. Members objected in Committee to the scope of the inquiry and to the fact that it included other persons than Members of this House. But they accepted decidedly and completely the principle. How did Lord Chief Justice Coleridge define the charges which were made? In the trial of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter" the Lord Chief Justice said that—

"Members of Parliament and others"—not Members of Parliament only—"are accused frankly and plainly of abominable crime, not so much having been guilty by their own hands, but of having lent themselves to a system which must necessarily as its reasonable effect be accompanied with crime, and of having had a personal knowledge of many of the crimes which did accompany it."

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) said—

"An investigation into the conduct of Members of Parliament to enable them to clear themselves was not the primary object of the Bill. The primary object of the Bill was to investigate charges which my right hon. Friend has correctly described as constituting a catalogue of melancholy and disgraceful crimes which had been left uninquired into and uninvestigated by those most concerned."

We thought it right, as a matter of public interest and importance, as a matter of duty, that not only the truth, but the whole truth, should, if possible, be ascertained with regard to all the charges, without exception, which were made in the *Times*. I think I have now said enough to vindicate the course which Her Majesty's Government think it right to take upon the present occasion. We say that this Body was set up by Act of Parliament to make this inquiry—an inquiry in answer to the repeated

demands made by hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, as they had failed to avail themselves of any other method of ascertaining the facts of the case, and we now say that the complement and completion of the whole business is the record of the result at which the Judges have arrived. What is the alternative presented to the House? The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian thinks it right to ask the House not to adopt the Report, not to thank the Commissioners for their just and impartial conduct, and not to order the Report to be entered on the Journals of the House. His opinion is that a Resolution should be placed on the Journals of the House expressing

> "reprobation of the false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery;"

and he also asks the House to declare

> "its satisfaction at the exposure of these calumnies, its regret for the wrong inflicted and the suffering and loss endured, through a protracted period, by reason of these acts of flagrant iniquity."

Now, if this were adopted there would be a record in the Journals of the Act of Parliament constituting the tribunal, but no record of the verdict, the exhaustive judgment, or of the labours of this tribunal. Instead of that there would be, if the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment were carried, a statement from which any one would assume that all the charges which were made were to be considered as false charges and were all based on calumnies and forgeries, that they all merited condemnation as acts of flagrant iniquity, and that, in short, the conduct of hon. Gentlemen, which is detailed in the evidence upon which a true finding has been given by the Judges, is conduct which is not reprehensible, which is not deserving censure on the part of this House, and which is, in point of fact, on the whole so meritorious that it deserves the expression of this House's sympathy. I am not in a position to accept that Amendment. It appears to me that we should do injustice to the very great gravity of the utterances of the learned Judges, who have found that in some cases, some of them important, the hon. Members accused have been completely exonerated from the charges made against them; but who have also found that other, and some of them very grave, charges, had a foundation in truth, and that the action of hon. Members had a serious effect upon the peace and good order of an important part of the country. These were very much wider than the personal charges, as the hon. and learned Member for Longford admitted when he said that—

> "When Members are charged with complicity with assassins and dynamitards, with treason against the Queen, and other forms of political and human villany, there is no question whatever to be referred to a Select Committee."

And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton said, on the same day, that it was charged against hon. Members that they were associated with some of the vilest criminals in the United States. Language as strong as that has been used, but I think it can be shown that the association has been proved to have existed to some extent, and if hon. Members did not know the character of their associates before, they know it now. The exposure of the character of their American allies has rendered, in my humble judgment, a great service to the country and some service to the House. The hon. Member for East Mayo was willing that the inquiry should be widened, so as to include every charge which could be brought against hon. Members opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) accepted that on behalf of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). The charges have also been summarised in the language of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge in the action of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter." Lord Coleridge says:—

> "The main issue is whether what is called in the *Times* 'Parnellism' is or is not founded on a system of cruelty, and rapacity, and murder, and crime."

And again—

> "The articles contain a great variety of statements, and statements deeply incriminating a number of persons—Members of Parliament, persons not Members of Parliament, but well known to the world, and a number of prominent men, who are accused, if I may say so, frankly and plainly, of abominable crime, not so much, perhaps, that they themselves have committed with their own hands abominable crime, but they have lent themselves to a system which must necessarily as its reasonable effect be accompanied with crime, and that with regard to many of the crimes by which it was accompanied they themselves had personal knowledge."

Such, in effect, was the charge, and the Report with regard to it states—

"While we acquit the respondents of having directly or intentionally incited to murder, we find that the speeches made, in which landgrabbers and other offenders against the League were denounced as traitors, and as being as bad as informers—the urging 'young men' to procure arms, and the dissemination of the newspapers above referred to—had the effect of causing an excitable peasantry to carry out the laws of the Land League, even by assassination."

Now, while we must all feel sympathy for men against whom baseless charges have been brought, and though we admit that they have been acquitted of the graver charge of directly inciting to murder, we cannot pass by altogether that of which they have been found guilty. The Commissioners add:—

"We find that, whilst some of the respondents, and in particular Mr. Davitt, did express *bonâ fide* disapproval of crime and outrage, the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effect."

If the respondents generally had acted as Mr. Davitt did in this matter what an amount of suffering might have been saved! Then the Commissioners go on to point out the effects of boycotting—

"The effects of boycotting," they say, "were such as might be expected to and did create a well-grounded terror in the minds of those who suffered under it, and we come to the conclusion that this was the intention of those who devised and carried out this system. It is further to be observed that, though boycotting led in many cases to actual outrage, yet it was persisted in for years against the same individuals, and was generally recommended, notwithstanding the evils which plainly resulted from it."

The respondents are found guilty of

"persisting in intimidation with knowledge of this effect."

and though exonerated

"of knowing that murder in some cases was going to take place,"

yet it is found that

"they were present at meetings where murder was talked of, and did not disown it."

Thus at a meeting of the Land League, at which several of the respondents were present, Mr. Redpath referred to the murder of Lord Mountmorres in these words—

"He had had the misfortune to be in Clonbur when Lord Mountmorres was killed. The friends of the Irish peasantry had been altogether too gentle in their talk about the infamous rascal. He was a Government spy, and once bragged that he was in the pay of the Castle. He made very disrespectful remarks about Fenians. If they were going to do that they should keep out of the west of Ireland, or they would be hurt."

Upon this the Commissioners state—

"We find no repudiation of this speech by those present, and on the 29th of November, 1880, two Resolutions of the Land League were passed, one thanking Mr. Redpath for his services in the cause of the toiling masses in Ireland, and the other requesting him to give his services in the Land League movement in America in lieu of Mr. Davitt, who was coming back to Ireland."

And then there is Mr. Davitt's letter in May, 1882, to the *Standard*, in which he expressed the loathing which he felt for outrage, his belief that a pilgrimage to denounce assassination and outrage ought to be made, and that, had it been made before, he firmly believed that the terrible tragedy of the Phœnix Park and many another tragedy which, though it had not attracted so much attention, had wrung heart-strings as bitterly, would never have occurred. There was one man above all others who could have effectually denounced crime, and if he and the hon. Gentlemen associated with him had done so, and had acted as Mr. Davitt did, what an amount of misery might have been saved! Well, such are some of the charges which have been proved. No doubt the Commissioners find that others of the charges —personal charges — were without foundation. But the Amendment would pass by unheeded the grave charges which have been proved, and practically exonerate hon. Gentlemen opposite in respect to them. Such an exoneration would, in fact, practically applaud them for having entered into a criminal conspiracy, "illegal both in its objects and the means which were adopted." We cannot accept this course. The respondents are found to have entered into an alliance with and to have been supported by the American Fenians, including the Clan-na-Gael—"a body actively engaged in promoting the use of dynamite for the destruction of life and property in England." The Report finds that they invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force Party, including the Clan-na-Gael; that they abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that Party; that they invited the assistance and co-operation of,

and accepted subscriptions from, Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite. This finding would rather seem to imply that they knew all about the Clan, and invited their assistance, but that it is not proved that they knew the particular fact of the complete supremacy of the Clan in the American League, and that the Parliamentary Fund was supplied by the Clan. They are entitled to the benefit of that. Lastly, there is the grave charge of conspiracy to obtain separation. It will be admitted that this is a political charge of the most serious importance. It is proved that Mr. Davitt and seven other of the respondents are guilty of this charge. It is found that some of them established and joined in the Land League organisation with the intention to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. The organisation was established for that purpose. In its origin it aimed at separation. This is the charge which is held to be proved. The Commissioners said guardedly,

"Some at least of the leaders of the movement joined it as a means of obtaining the complete separation of Ireland from England, but we do not think that the mere joining the Land League necessarily implied a desire for such separation."

They also say that a large force in favour of complete separation would follow such leaders is apparent, and the Report finds too that Mr. Parnell

"Used language indicating a desire for the complete separation of Ireland from the United Kingdom."

Well, Sir, I think few will deny that these are grave charges, and cannot permit a "clean bill" to be given to the respondents. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman would practically be a condonation of crime. It cannot be said even that the respondents considered that they were unimportant charges, and that the whole accusation was contained in the personal charge against the Member for Cork. But now, Sir, I have no doubt I shall be asked why the Government propose to proceed no further. Why is it the Government proceed no further than the Resolution I move to enter the Judges' Report on the Journals of the House; my answer is because it was no part of our intention at any time to constitute a Commission for the purpose of obtaining evidence to inflict punishment. The primary object was to obtain the truth whether the charges were true or false, and the Bill specially provided that all who gave witness of the truth would receive indemnity for so doing. On this point the Bill was clear. Sections 10 and 11 are as follows:—

"10. (1) Every person examined as a witness under this Act who, in the opinion of the Commissioners, makes a full and true disclosure touching all the matters in respect of which he is examined, shall be entitled to receive a certificate signed by the Commissioners, stating that the witness has on his examination made a full and true disclosure, as aforesaid. (2) If any civil or criminal proceeding is thereafter at any time instituted against any such witness in respect of any matter touching which he has been so examined, the Court having cognizance of the case shall, on proof of the certificate, stay the proceeding, and may, in its discretion, award to the witness such costs as he may be put to in or by reason of the proceeding; provided that nothing in this section shall be deemed to apply in the case of proceedings for having given false evidence at an inquiry held under this Act, or of having procured, or attempted or conspired to procure, the giving of such evidence."

"11. This Act may be cited as the Special Commission Act, 1888."

And as my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary stated—

"The primary object of the Bill was to investigate charges which have been left uninquired into and uninvestigated by those who are most concerned."

My right hon. Friend spoke definitely on this point. He said—

"A statutory Commission has never been used as an instrument for the prosecution of people, and that is why you cover it with indemnity. You use it as the instrument for discovering the truth on an occasion of such great public importance as to warrant the creation of an extraordinary tribunal of this sort. Why is it that you shut the door against punishment and against all those consequences which are the root and foundation of all that is precise and accurate in your Criminal Law? It is because you want to discover the truth of the matter."

As I have said, our desire was to obtain the truth in the interests of the whole community, including the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. It was on that ground the Commission was granted. I ask the House to adopt the Report without colour, without adding a word by way of preface. I ask the House, in the second place, to give its thanks to the Judges, who have so ably and laboriously discharged their duties. The task imposed upon them

was a most painful one, and it was with great satisfaction that in a newspaper representing hon. Gentlemen opposite I observed it stated that the Judges had vindicated the absolute impartiality of the English Judges. It is with regret that I observe the right hon. Gentleman omits to include in his Amendment any recognition of the services of the learned Judges who have acted as Special Commissioners. Whatever may be the view which the right hon. Gentleman and his friends entertain of the conduct of the Government in asking the House to pass the measure which became law in 1888 under which these learned gentlemen were appointed, there can, I imagine, be but one opinion as to the absolute impartiality with which they discharged the most painful duty which was imposed upon them. I am glad, as I have observed, to notice that even the strongest partisans in the Press of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends have recognised frankly and fairly the absolute impartiality of the Commissioners. It is no more than I should expect from honourable opponents, but I venture to think for myself that we owe a great debt of gratitude to those gentlemen for the patience, the justice, and the discrimination which they have shown in the discharge of, I admit, the painful duty imposed upon them. The labour has been severe, but I can best express the temper and the spirit in which they have approached the discharge of their duties by quoting the words of the President himself, who says—

> "Conscious that throughout this great inquest we have sought only the truth, we trust that we shall be guided to find it, and set it forth plainly in the sight of all men."

There can be, I think, no doubt in the mind of any man, whatever his political feelings may be, that the Commissioners have indeed "sought and set out the truth plainly in the sight of all men." The attempt to call the offences political was absurd. Time cannot change the character of the offences or their nature, nor can Party exigencies. [*Ironical Opposition Cheers.*] I am exceedingly glad to hear those cheers and that there is a disposition on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to return to those ancient methods—[Mr. T. P. O'Connor: Ancient alliances]—those ancient methods—[Mr. T. P. O'Connor: Alliances]—of honesty. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I beg pardon; I do not impute to them dishonesty, but my contention is that the influence they have exercised on the unfortunate tenant-farmers of Ireland has been destructive of their ancient character for honesty. Is it seriously contended by the Liberal Party that the methods denounced by the Commissioners are legitimate weapons of Party warfare? Is that the view of the right hon. Gentleman? Do they identify themselves with acts which up to 1885 they condemned? Are Home Rule and an Irish Parliament to be set up on the ruins which boycotting and intimidation have left, on the abolition of all personal liberty and freedom, on the destruction of any rights of property which the law has solemnly recognised, and on the misery, suffering, and destruction of all who refuse to obey, or hesitate to obey, the mandates of an irresponsible League? Is this to be the basis on which a representative and responsible Government is to be created in Ireland, and if in Ireland, why not in England? The right hon. Gentleman may say that the misery which has existed in Ireland, the difficulty of paying the rent (which is alleged as the cause of these offences), is an excuse, if not a justification, for the outrage and disturbances and defiance of the law which have existed in connection with the Home Rule agitation; but he must remember the occasions on which he has himself alleged that the Land Laws of Ireland are more favourable to the tenant and to the occupier than any which existed in any quarter of the civilised globe. He must remember his own declarations that the provisions of the Land Acts, for which he is responsible, ought to give satisfaction to the tenant and security to the landlord; and he will know that it has always been held that even hardship does not justify the contempt of all law, and the infliction of suffering and misery upon perfectly harmless and helpless individuals who refuse to carry out the behests of a society which seeks to enforce its rules and its laws regardless of the interests of the community at large. If these things are to be done in Ireland, why should they not be done in Scotland and in England? Why, if they are to be done with reference to the land, are they

not to be done with regard to the other relations in which debtors and creditors stand to each other in the same position of hardship so far as the debtor is concerned? Are we now, in the 19th century, to depart altogether from those conditions which have hitherto been held to be necessary to the prosperity of any civilised land? It is true "political economy" is banished to Jupiter and Saturn, but there has been hitherto a belief in the necessity of enforcing the obligations which the State itself has revised and recognised as fair and just. In our progress towards liberty, in our advance towards good government, are all the experiences of past generations to be set at naught? Is the mandate of an illegal Association alone to determine whether legal obligations shall or shall not be discharged, which have not only been the result of contract, but have received the approval of the State itself? Sir, this prospect afforded by the alliance of a great Party with doctrines which can only be regarded as anarchical is one which must make a man pause and hesitate. If political necessities compel them to imperil the very existence of society, it may become a question whether even the maintenance of Party government in this country, which has in the past done so much to advance and develop our Parliamentary institutions, may not be regarded in these latter days rather as a curse than a blessing. If only a few years ago I or any of my hon. Friends had ventured to prophesy that the Liberal Party would be found ranging itself on the side of those whose language they denounced, whose acts they alleged to be, and believed to be, criminal, no words of condemnation would have been too strong in the mouths of our political opponents in denouncing us for such an anticipation. Alas! it has come to pass; and I can only hope and believe that the people of this country, and even the people of Ireland, will come to realise how dangerous to the best interests of the State are the temptations to which the right hon. Gentleman and his friends have succumbed.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, Parliament having constituted a Special Commission to inquire into the charges and allegations made against certain members of Parliament and other persons, and the Report of the Commissioners having been presented to Parliament, this House adopts the Report, and thanks the Commissioners for their just and impartial conduct in the matters referred to them; and orders that the said Report be entered on the journals of this House."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

(5.35.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Amendment of which I have given notice. It is to leave out all the words after "House," in line 5, in order to add the words—

"Deems it to be a duty to record its reprobation of the false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery, which have been brought against Members of this House, and particularly against Mr. Parnell: and, while declaring its satisfaction at the exposure of these calumnies, this House expresses its regret for the wrong inflicted and the suffering and loss endured, through a protracted period, by reason of these acts of flagrant iniquity."

In the temperate speech of the right hon. Gentleman there are several passages which would invite remarks. I do not propose to dwell on them, though I might be tempted to ask what are those periods in the past when the application of honest principles gave, as he says, prosperity to Ireland? On one of his observations I wish to make a comment, and it is on the construction he has given to the Amendment. He states that in the Amendment, fairly construed, the language is such as to lead to the impression that everything noticed by the Commissioners, everything done by Irish Members, receives the sanction of that Amendment. Now, I should have thought it hardly possible for the right hon. Gentleman to fall into such an error, because the reprobation which is recorded is directed to—

"The false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery, which has been brought against Members of this House."

It is impossible that the right hon. Gentleman can suppose that it is intended by the Amendment to convey that all those assertions of censure which have been made by the Parliamentary Commission "are charges of the basest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery." Consequently, I put it to the House that the right hon. Gentleman's construction of the Amendment entirely falls to the ground. He is quite right in stating that the Amendment bestows no censure upon the conduct of

hon. Members, and to that part of the subject, of course, it will be my duty to refer. The right hon. Gentleman occupied the earlier part of his speech with a defence of the conduct of the Government. Now this subject, I must own, to me, as connected with the Opposition, is, in that point of view, a tempting one, but I will not follow the right hon. Gentleman on this occasion. I desire to avoid on this occasion, for a reason which appears to me even more than sufficient, all Party-recrimination. Tempting as the opportunity is, I entirely refuse it. For I ask myself, whose character and honour are at issue to-night and will be principally affected by the Vote the House is about to give? In some sense the three Judges are upon their trial; in some sense the Irish Members of the Nationalist Party are upon their trial; in some sense the Government may be upon its trial; but, Sir, it is mainly the House that is upon its trial. It is the character of the House, which, when brought to the tribunal of history, no Parliament, as well as no Party, can finally avoid; it is the character of the House which will suffer or gain according as on this occasion its course is wise and just, or according as it has been led into setting a precedent in my opinion unworthy of its high honour and highly dangerous as an example of future Parliaments. There is one point which I will explain at once, for it is one on which I do not think there can be any quarrel on principle between the right hon. Gentleman and myself. He invites us to thank the Judges of the Commission "for their just and impartial conduct in the matters referred to them." It is not on account of a fundamental difference as to the conduct of the Commissioners that I have hesitated to embody these thanks in my Amendment. It appears to me to be a questionable and hazardous proceeding to introduce into the course of our political action the practice of rendering formal thanks for the performance of judicial duty. I own that I have very considerable apprehensions on that subject. This House must necessarily be swayed from time to time by passion leading it in this direction or that. It has been our object to keep the action of the Judges separated by the widest possible interval from all our proceedings and from the temper and heat that here occasionally prevail. Here is an occasion in which all feelings have been stirred and roused from their depths, and in which the Judges have been called in to deal with a large portion of the subject matter, and I own I have very great doubts indeed as to the policy of rendering to them the formal thanks of the House. But I will not grudgingly render to the Judges what personally I can. An hon. Friend of mine sitting behind me has expressed a desire to insert words in the Amendment, "To acknowledge the zeal of the Commissioners in the discharge of the arduous duties imposed upon them." Well, I am ready to acknowledge their zeal, and I am ready to acknowledge more than their zeal. I acknowledge their ability, their assiduity, and their perfect and absolute good faith. Though I may reserve to myself the right to criticise freely some of their statements, yet I do not think there is a line of that Report from beginning to end which has not been written by the Judges in absolute honour and good faith. And accordingly in what I may now say I beg it to be remembered that it is under the reservation of what I have just said and which I do not, in the slightest degree, desire to qualify. What I have said of the Judges I think I may have been able to say of many a speech I have heard delivered in this House. Such temper and disposition and such honour and good faith do not expel from the human mind and from human action all the effects of prepossession. In this Report, as I think, along with the amplest evidence of every quality I have described, there are defects, and there are errors—

> "Quas aut incuria fudit,
> "Aut humana parum cavit natura."

I hope I have satisfied the House that I do not look in a grudging or unworthy spirit at the action and proceedings of the Judges, and accordingly if I claim, and it is a duty to claim—I am compelled by the action taken by the other side to claim—a liberty to criticise that Report, that will not imply any defect of fair and equitable intention towards those on whom we imposed a heavy burden, and who, I am bound to say, whatever view we may take of the political prepossessions—well, political sentiments, I will not even say prepossessions

—with which they entered on the inquiry, have in every respect, I think, fulfilled the best and fullest expectations which we could possibly have entertained of them. So much for the Judges; and now I come to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman. I will not dwell upon the serious addition that he proposes to make to the burden of the Journals of this House by inscribing upon them the 120 pages of this Report. I should have thought that if the House were to deal with this Report it ought to have been presented to us not wholesale but in parts. As far as I know, that is the course which has been pursued upon former occasions—not upon occasions of Commissions like this, for, as the right hon. Gentleman says, there has been no Commission like this before, and I hope there may never be again. When bodies acting by delegated powers, or by powers not supreme—for example, a Committee of this House — have made a Report, and when it has been intended to induce the House to adopt the Report, the regular and Parliamentary course, I believe, has been to move that the Report be read, in order that it may be adopted freely and with full consideration of all its parts. But was there ever seriously made to a deliberate body such a proposal as is now made to us when we are asked, with reference to a document of 120 folio pages, bristling throughout with contested and disputable matter, to accept it in the lump, and at once to pledge ourselves to every proposition it contains? If the purpose of the Government had been to secure our adhesion to the main propositions of the Report—namely, to the findings—the course was obvious and open for the right hon. Gentleman to follow. He had only to propose that the findings should be adopted by the House, and undoubtedly then the decision of the House of Commons would have been taken upon a considerably narrowed issue. But I submit that the demand he now makes upon us, that we should adopt this Report of 120 pages, considering the multitude of varied propositions it contains, is alike contrary to the usage of Parliament in analogous cases and, I must say, to the dictates of propriety and of common sense. If it is said that we are totally unable through a Select Committee to deal with a question of this kind, are we more fit to adopt the present course? Observe, that when the right hon. Gentleman refused the repeated demand for reference to a Select Committee he stood in this position of advantage—that in acceding to it he would have had the unanimous assent of the House. The demand was the demand of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork and the whole of the Irish Nationalist Party. It was thoroughly supported and approved by the Liberals on this side of the House. But the right hon. Gentleman, with his extreme scrupulousness and tenderness for the position of the Irish Members, would not allow their case to be submitted to the consideration of a Select Committee, a political tribunal. If because of our political colour we are unable to investigate the facts, I want to know how we have acquired a better capacity for that purpose now when we are called upon without examination, without inquiry, and without the slightest discrimination between any one proposition in the Report and another, to swallow the whole from beginning to end. Now, Sir, I will illustrate what I have said about some of the judgments in this Report in respect of which I find it necessary to reserve my liberty of criticism, and I will point out a few of the propositions to which hon. Members are going to be invited to-night to append their subscription and approval. I say that this Report contains a number of opinions given upon issues which are in no sense and in no degree judicial. A serious question arose before the Commission whether the agitation and the Land League were the causes of crime in Ireland, or whether it was due to other causes. Four other causes were brought before them as causes of crime, or causes of the cessation of that crime. The first was eviction and fear of eviction —I am now in 1879 and 1880. And I must offer this practical criticism upon the Report, that it is extremely unfortunate that in these findings generally there is no reference at all to period. We shall presently see that that is a matter of the most vital importance. The Commissioners say, on the top of page 86, that evictions and the fear of evictions were not the causes of crime but on the bottom of the page they say that the increase of evictions and the

result of the agitation against the landlords were contributory causes; consequently, it all comes back to the agitation. We are told that we have no right to look at evictions as having contributed to the increase of crime. They have of themselves, we are informed, induced to crime; but we must look to the causes of evictions, and the causes of the evictions are the causes of the increase of crime. This is an issue which is absolutely non-judicial. In what way can these three Judges, sitting 10 years after the fact, have authority to determine with more weight and influence than any other man that evictions were not the cause of crime, or, if they were the cause, still that the evictions themselves were due to agitation? Observe, in that statement we are given to understand that in the creation of those crimes in 1879-80 distress and extravagant rents had nothing to do with it. This opinion, so irrational in itself, we are called upon to adopt without question or correction. Then there is the statement that crime was due to secret societies. I will not criticise that conclusion, because I admit that the question as to whether there were secret societies or not is a question of fact which may fairly be called a judicial issue. Then we come to another issue, absolutely non-judicial, and yet we are called upon to declare to-night—every one of us—that the rejection by the House of Lords of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in 1880, which was the remedy we sought to apply to the great difficulties of Ireland at that moment, had nothing to do with the increase of crime at all. I cannot conceive a more astounding assertion. It appears to me to be in defiance of all the first rules of common-sense and of every likelihood of the case. It may be said that the Irish ought to have met their distress more in the spirit of philosophers or angels, and to have drawn upon an unbounded stock of patience, and to have had unbounded faith in Parliament; but the Irish were men, and, according to the view of the Commissioners, they were men with a fair share of human imperfections; and to say that the provocation offered by the rejection of that Bill, which drew from Mr. Forster a most indignant denunciation—to say that it is not to be reckoned one of the causes of the increase of crime in Ireland, is indeed not a matter for censure, for no doubt it is an honest opinion on the part of the Judges; but it is an astounding proposition to submit to us in the year 1890 and to ask us to subscribe to. Then the land legislation of this House is brought upon the carpet. It was alleged by some persons before the Commission that the land legislation had been a great cause in mitigating the condition of Ireland and procuring the decrease of crime. Nothing of the sort, say the Commissioners. They say that the legislation of 1881 had no such effect, and they reject the proposition in like manner in respect to the Arrears Act of 1882, and say the suggestion that the Arrears Act tended to produce, and did produce, a diminution of crime, is a suggestion not well founded. That is a statement entirely untrue, in my opinion; but, whether true or untrue, it is a judgment upon an issue entirely non-judicial, and one which, in virtue of the authority we gave to the Judges, we ought not to be asked to subscribe to. I will give one other instance, perhaps in one sense of a different description; but I will give an instance of what I think disproportionate and ill-balanced judgment. It will be for the Law Officers of the Crown to correct me, and contend that in this case the amount of censure has been justly apportioned to the amount of guilt. The Commissioners unearthed in the course of their inquiry the history of a miserable and obscure Irish paper called, I think, the *Irishman*—a paper so obscure that my noble Friend Lord Spencer, whom no one will accuse of insufficient attention to Irish affairs and the duties of his office—Lord Spencer has said that he was not even aware of its existence. However, this paper has at length attained to fame through the labours of the Commission, and several pages of the Report are filled with extracts from it, and these extracts from the paper, with the concurrence of Archbishop Walsh, are termed most abominable. I do not object—I do not complain; but what I ask is that you should be equally liberal in according blame to other things as abominable, when, as I think I can prove, these extracts from the *Irishman* were—I will not say pardonable at all, but insignificant from obscurity as compared with other things as abominable,

blazoned forth to the world. When we come to the grand and capital offence, the nature of which I will do my best to set forth to-night—when we come to that, there is not a word, there is not a citation of one of the aggravating circumstances; all that is given is a statement that the letter upon which a certain detestable charge was founded is a forgery. That I call an unbalanced judgment, a disproportionate assignment of blame. I did not wish to enter into minute criticisms of this kind; but you have forced me by compelling me, through your Motion, to become responsible for each and all of these assertions from beginning to end. There is one other objection to adopting this Report which I will dwell upon by-and-by; but it appears to me to be so conclusive, so simple, that I own I do not understand in what way it is to be met on the other side, or how the Motion is to be justified. We have it on the declaration of the Judges themselves—a declaration they were justified in making, and bound to make—that great portions of the evidence, and what we know to be essential portions of the evidence, were entirely excluded from their view. They have arrived at these conclusions; they have recorded them; they have passed censure upon certain acts; but they have shut out from their consideration—as they have told us, and, moreover, in my opinion, they were justified from their position and point of view in shutting out from their consideration—essential portions of the evidence. What those essential portions were I will endeavour, by and by, to explain; but surely it is hard to believe the right hon. Gentleman can maintain this contention, that a judgment has been passed upon the Irish case by a body of men who were precluded from looking at many of the most important topics that bear upon it. They have said that they were so precluded. But we are not precluded from looking at them—we are bound to look at them, we cannot do otherwise than include them. We are totally unfit for our office as politicians and as legislators unless we do include them, and give to each its due weight. How is it possible to so accept, on the authority of the Judges, the conclusions they make upon a portion of the evidence, when you are both able and bound to look at the whole evidence which the Judges were prohibited, by the nature of their Commission, from examining? These are, I think, conclusive reasons against adopting the Report *en bloc*, as has been suggested. The right hon. Gentleman calls upon us to adopt this Report, but in what circumstances? It comes to us with the authority of the three Judges, who have most laboriously, zealously, and, so far, meritoriously, taken an enormous amount of evidence, upon which mass of evidence they have founded their conclusions; but you cannot separate the conclusion from the evidence on which it is founded. That evidence is not before us. There is not a man in this House who has read it—he cannot; it is morally impossible, it is physically impossible. Is it decent? Is this what the right hon. Gentleman describes as being the due conclusion of judicial procedure, if, when certain conclusions have been adopted by other people and upon evidence, we are to adopt them wholesale, the evidence being out of our knowledge, out of the recollection probably even of those who heard it, and not having been heard by one in 10, or 20, or 50 of those who are called upon to accept the conclusions? Now, consider what is the sum of this great and important Constitutional case. In my opinion it is this. There has been a controversy in which the Nationalist Members for Ireland were accused of two classes of offence. One of those classes was a class of infamous and dishonourable offences. The right hon. Gentleman has expressed his joy and satisfaction, if I understood him rightly—and I should be sorry indeed if I did not—that justice has been done to the Members accused in respect of the personal charges. By that I apprehend he means those infamous and dishonourable offences. There was also another set of accusations of acts which were not in the nature of infamy or dishonour, but which were of a character which attach to all great and passionate popular movements and crises of agitation. On the first and great charge they have been acquitted, and our contention is that that acquittal, viewing the nature of the charges, absolutely demands notice from the House. The censure, as we contend, is not a subject for a Vote of Parliament at the present day and in present circumstances. Now, let us see what are the arguments which

bear on those several propositions. Let me consider what are the points upon which the Nationalist Members of Ireland have been censured. I will endeavour to gather them into heads in a manner to which I do not think hon. Gentlemen opposite will object. I bring them into three heads. I admit that I take no notice of two charges which do not fall under those heads. One is the charge that they disseminated newspapers tending to crime. That is the charge the formation of which is said to imply the application of the high doctrine of constructive conspiracy. Some of the agents of the League were found disseminating some of those newspapers, and consequently the 65 Members of Parliament, who sit in this House and who are not ashamed to belong to the League, are implicated. Yet the right hon. Gentleman really thinks that it is the business of Parliament to adopt and make such a contention as that. There is another head which may be called the £6 case, or it may be called the £12 case—because in all there were £12 spent for the purpose of relieving persons who had been or were supposed to have been engaged in committing crime. I think a more trumpery charge to appear in a State indictment than this, standing as it does and supported as it is, it would be difficult to conceive. Now, the main charges are three; and I do not think there is any doubt about it. One is that seven of the respondents joined the Land League with the ultimate view of separating Ireland from England. I here lament, as in many places I have to lament, that the Judges do not point out the time when this offence was committed. The time when this offence was committed was a time when desperate distress prevailed in Ireland, and when she was on the brink of famine; when unrighteous, unjust, and impossible rents largely prevailed in Ireland, as we know from subsequent experience of facts. It was in 1879 and 1880 that they joined the League with a view to the ultimate separation of Ireland from England. For my part I rejoice to believe that the idea of the separation of Ireland from England—which, even in the worst circumstances, I think was both unreasonable and impossible—I rejoice to think that that idea is an idea which is now dead. If anything would tend to revive that idea it would be the vote which is now proposed to be given in condemning a portion of our fellow Members because they have given countenance to that idea. I am compelled by the love of truth to say that, in my opinion, to deny the moral authority of the Act of Union was for an Irishman no moral offence whatever. Yes, the hon. and learned Gentleman may take me down [referring to the Attorney General making a note of the last observation]. I heard the Attorney General cross-examine his witness from a pedestal, as he felt, of the greatest elevation, and endeavouring to press home the monstrous guilt of an Irishman who did not allow moral authority to the Act of Union. In my opinion the Englishman has far more cause to blush for the means by which the Act of Union was obtained than the Irishman has to blush for anything, even of excess or error, into which he may have been betrayed in his recollections of that Act of Union. It was, Sir—and this I speak not in temper nor in heat, but after having done the best in my power for years past to learn the case—it was the off-spring of tyranny, of massacre, of bribery, of fraud. It is no doubt a very serious responsibility to disturb a country that is under a Government procured by those means, because every man is responsible for the consequences of that disturbance; but to treat this as a great moral offence, and to come forward now in 1890, and in a sanctimonious vote, to condemn Irishmen because they held opinions in which it is highly probable, if not almost certain, that Grattan would have concurred had his life been prolonged, is a monstrous proposition. I do not object at all to the recital of the Judges; they have made it in fair and temperate terms; but the adoption of this Vote of Censure by the House of Commons I object to in the strongest manner. I deem it not only unjust to the Members so designated — and who will suffer from it extremely little—but flagrantly absurd and unwise. The other two censures of the Judges are more to the purpose—I mean more to our purpose, more to the purpose of the present Motion. I think those two propositions sum up the assumed guilt of the Irish Members. First, they incited to intimidation by

speeches, with knowledge that intimidation led to crime. I do not think that, as far as I can judge, that is an unfair statement of the case on that head against the Irish Members. I believe it is quite as much as the Judges themselves have stated. I think the citations of the right hon. Gentleman were not entirely fair on the subject. I do not understand what was his object in citing from the charge of Lord Coleridge, where he set forth the nature of the accusations which have been made on the part of the *Times* as if he were favouring us with Lord Coleridge's opinion. Some one will, perhaps, kindly explain what in the world those have to do with the Vote now before the House. But I would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to a passage on page 76 of the Report, where the Commissioners speak of the connection between agitation and crime. It is about 15 lines from the bottom, and it runs as follows :—

"We may say at once that the charge that the respondents, by their speeches or otherwise, incited persons to the commission of murder, or that the Land League chiefs based their scheme on a system of assassination, has not been substantiated."

But, in the opinion of the Judges, it was substantiated that the Nationalists incited to intimidation by speeches with knowledge that it led to crime. I am not in a position to say that intimidation did not produce crime. I contended and argued from that place [pointing to the Treasury Bench] that it did, and I have seen no reason to reverse that opinion; but again I observe we are now speaking of what happened in 1880 and 1881. The proofs connecting those speeches with intimidation, and with intimidation which led to crime, belong to that period, and do not belong to a later. The prosecutors of this case arrived at an arrangement with my hon. and learned Friend which I think excluded everything after 1885 or 1886 from that investigation. [Sir C. RUSSELL: 1886.] It was not worth their while to enter upon it; but we are now speaking of a former period. The hon. Member for Cork has himself frankly and ingenuously confessed and stated in this House his opinion that much had been done at that time in the way of boycotting which was questionable or improper, and I do not imagine that they deny the Judges' case in which they say there were cases in which intimidation led to crime. What was the other great charge? It was that the Nationalist Members never placed themselves on the side of law and justice; that they did not assist the administration, and did not denounce the party of physical force. I believe that I have stated fairly the charges against the Nationalists as they have been given by the Commissioners. Let us see what follows. In the first place, let me point out that these charges of continuing to encourage intimidation, after its association with crime had become known, are charges perfectly general in their character. It is a question of the general prudence or imprudence, propriety or impropriety of the language that they used in its action upon the temper of an excited nation; it is not a question of having ministered to this crime or that; it is not a question of the slightest personal complicity with crime. There is not one here who will not share in the opinion held by Lord Spencer on the subject from the first: that personal complicity with crime was not charged against any one of the Members returned to this House. These charges are charges made by the Judges, and I am going to give you some weighty and conclusive reasons against voting in affirmation of them. In the first place, they are 10 years old. It is a bad and a dangerous precedent to go back upon these long dates in order to obtain matter to hurl at the heads of political antagonists. In the second place, being 10 years old—what happened at all happened in 1880, 1881, and 1882, chiefly in the two former years, 1880 and 1881—were the facts then unknown? Were these things done in a corner? Were they not the subject of incessant discussion and denunciation in this House? Is there anything now affirmed against the Irish Members by the Judges which was not affirmed by Mr. Forster and, in part, by myself and by others at that time? If these things deserve condemnation now by a Vote of this House, why did you not then condemn them? Well, I will tell you why. The Liberals of this House desired the matter to be fought out fairly in debate, and I do not think there was any reason or ground—not a rag of reason or ground—for a Vote of Parliamentary condemnation. That was the Liberal idea; was

the Tory idea more severe? Not at all. They thought that these men were good enough to associate with for political purposes. The practice was to arrange with them the Votes and Divisions, and at last, in 1885, how was the crisis of the Liberal Government brought about except by the firm, steady co-operation of the Irish Members with the Tory party, for which I have never blamed them any more than I blame them now, because they thought that the interests of their country were superior to those of any British Administration. Right hon. gentlemen opposite climbed to power upon the shoulders of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork—upon the strong shoulders of the hon. Member for Cork, and they have now become a majority; and, having had full cognizance of his guilt upon the charges at the time—the charges not having been added to since—now in 1890 they actually rouse themselves to such a point of indignation that they are, forsooth, prepared to vote the condemnation of a cause and of a policy, the whole benefit of which they took at that period. I am very sorry that I have been compelled, by the nature of this proposal, which left me no choice, to go into the discussion of polemical matters between the two sides of the House, but I am contending that it would be unwise, and, indeed, in the highest degree indecent, now in 1890 to pass this Vote of Censure, and I cannot give my own opinion of that without showing what was your own conduct during the preceding years, when the offences were committed. The right hon. Gentleman read out the ninth finding of the Commissioners, and he seemed to be deeply impressed with the subject matter. What he said was indeed, in his characteristic way, put very mildly, but he felt he was setting forth matters of extreme gravity when he stated that the Irish took money for Parliamentary purposes from men promoting physical force in America—physical force which the Irish Members disapproved; but these men were willing to do what the Irish Members approved—namely, to subscribe money for Parliamentary purposes. If a parallel precedent were wanting to justify their conduct they have nothing to do but to point to you. You disapproved of the proceedings of the Irish in 1881 and the following years; you thought those proceedings led to crime and to mischief, but then the Irish were willing to join you in voting out the Liberal Government, and you took advantage of their good dispositions, notwithstanding their criminal and unworthy deeds. *Mutatis mutandis* is a formula which will well serve to express what the Judges have put into this Report. I ask the House of Commons now to consider the counter-allegations which may be laid before them—allegations made seriously by the Irish Members. They hold the opinion that the agitation, even of 1879, 1880, 1881, prevented more crime than it caused. Crime was caused; what the Judges very properly call increased crime was caused by agitation. But I believe it to be a perfectly serious allegation, tendered in good faith by the Irish Members, that more crime and worse crime, more atrocious crime, was prevented by agitation. But what do you say to the allegation of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork, who has told us from the first that his endeavour, his policy, his scheme has been to draw off agitation and popular action in Ireland from violence to Parliamentary methods? Now, for my own part, I do not hesitate to say that there was a time when I did not recognise that intention. And when was that time? This I shall say, as a matter of fact, that never at any period since the early part of 1882 have I charged the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork, as a Minister or otherwise with any action, any language, tending to the increase of crime in Ireland. I viewed him as a conservative force—I mean conservative in the sense of maintaining the law, the order, and the peace of the country. And when the Irish Members tell me that in their conviction the agitation, even when it was of the roughest and wildest, stopped more crime than it caused, and especially when they tell me that the endeavour of their distinguished leader has been to put an end to violence and to substitute Parliamentary action for what Mr. O'Connell used to call "the wild justice" of popular movements, I will not say that the House ought to vote in affirmation of that statement—that may be left to the historian to decide—but to vote that such a statement is unworthy of credit, and is without force or weight is, in my opinion, a course not very well suited to maintain the dignity of

the House. I ask the House to listen to the words in which the Judges describe the limited scope of the inquiry. I will not quote the entire passage; it will be found on page 5 of the Report, but nearly at the close are these words—

"We must confine our researches to the question whether the respondents, or any of them, have been guilty of the things charged and alleged against them; we have no commission to consider whether the conduct of which they are accused can be palliated by the circumstances of the time, or whether it should be condoned in consideration of benefits alleged to have resulted from their actions."

In the first place, I say this—I am not making it an accusation against the Party opposite for their former conduct, but only against what they propose to-night—that condonation was given in the amplest, in the most solemn manner which is conceivable when, in 1885, the representative in Ireland of Her Majesty's Government, with the knowledge and the sanction of the head of the Government, entered into close, private, confidential communications with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork, the leader of the Irish Party, for the purpose of devising, if possible, a scheme and a policy for the government of Ireland. I ask you to answer that argument, and to show me that the proceedings of Lord Carnarvon and Lord Salisbury—for he was an essential party to them, and it would not surprise me if I were to be authentically informed that no other Member of the Cabinet knew anything about it—I have my own suspicions, but I do not wish to act on suspicion alone—I ask you to show me that the action of the Viceroy and Lord Salisbury, who concurred with the Viceroy, in taking these gentlemen into their confidential counsel, for the purpose of devising a plan for the government of Ireland and their treatment in Parliament, was not a full, absolute, and ought to have been a final condonation and closing of the book of controversy with respect to former acts. I want the House to consider a little what is the meaning of these remarkable words, "palliation and condonation." Suppose this to be true—that there was some evil in the Irish agitation of 1880 and 1881, when, as I conceived at that time—erroneously or not—there was a policy which aimed at the destruction of agricultural rents. That charge I made at the time in good faith; but I am not quite sure now whether it ought not to have been strongly qualified by the circumstances of the time. But supposing I am told that even then the good in the agitation far outweighed the evil, are you prepared to deny that? And here I have a sorrowful confession to make. Suppose I am told further that without the agitation Ireland would never have had the Land Act of 1881, are you prepared to deny that? Are you prepared to say that without the agitation Ireland would have got the Land Act of 1881? I hear no challenges upon that statement, for I think it is generally and deeply felt that without the agitation the Land Act of 1881 would not have been passed. I ask, what would have been the condition of Ireland at this moment—what horrors would have filled the interval—because you are now looking back on a period of comparative calm and tranquillity. I had a controversy with some of the Irish Members—particularly the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy)—upon a point of difference. I always contended, and I now believe, that the abolition of the Irish Church and the Land Act of 1870 were the free gifts of the Imperial Legislature to Ireland. I do not admit that agitation had to do with the passing of either of these measures. I am not endeavouring to convince others. I am only reciting my own opinion. I was glad enough to claim credit for Parliament where I could for an impartial judgment in matters beneficial to Ireland. The abolition of the Irish Church was, in point of feeling and sentiment, a great sacrifice for Parliament to make, and, I think, a most honourable sacrifice, and the abolition of the Irish Church carried in its train the Land Act of 1870. At the time it was passed that Act was a great blessing to Ireland. It was highly favoured by the fortunate circumstances of good seasons, and for some years it seemed as if it might be a settlement of the Land Question. Then came the distress and misery of 1879, and it broke down. As the man responsible more than any other for the Act of 1881—as the man whose duty it was to consider that question day and night during nearly the whole of that Session—I must record my firm opinion that the Act would not have become the law of

the land if it had not been for the agitation with which Irish society was convulsed. You may say, that if it be true that a great law was necessary for the safety of Ireland—to save the people from misery and starvation—and if that Act could not have been passed without popular agitation, and if you are now going to pass censure on those concerned in that agitation, are you justified in saying—"I am precluded from looking at the beneficent results of their agitation"? The truth is this. This is our position. The Judges, under the necessities of the case, have looked at a part of the case. It is our duty to look at the whole. What were the whole facts of that crisis? In the first place, terrible distress; in the second place, the rejection by the House of Lords of the legislative remedy for the time proposed by the responsible Ministers of the Crown, and passed by a large majority in this House; in the third place, the growth of evictions; and, in the fourth place, the wide prevalence of iniquitous and impossible rents. Out of this great group of facts the Judges, acting under the terms of the Commission, absolving themselves, but not absolving us, have selected the agitation, and have said—"We cannot look to the right or the left, or backwards or forwards; all we have to do is to return a verdict upon the dry facts whether we can allege that in some degree or other, and in some circumstances or other, there was a connection between the agitation and the increase of crime." But is Parliament to act upon such a basis? Are we to put out of view the facts I have referred to? Perhaps I shall be told that in the year 1881 I myself expressed my belief that the number of landlords levying iniquitous rents in Ireland was comparatively small. Yes; I did express that opinion, and I did it on the best evidence at my command. That was the evidence of the Commission, at the head of which sat Lord Bessborough; and that Commission reported to that effect. But I cannot plead such ignorance now. Somewhere about 400,000 tenants in Ireland were empowered and enabled by the Land Act to seek judicial rents, or to make covenants with the landlords, which were themselves equivalent to judicial rents. And, in round numbers, 200,000 of them went into the Court or obtained these agreements, by which large reductions were secured. It is not possible for me now to deny that at that time excessive, iniquitous, and impossible rents prevailed widely in Ireland, and that they constituted a gigantic and capital fact in the whole Irish case of that period; and to pass judgment on that case without taking them into account is in itself a monstrous injustice. The fact is this. You are called upon now to weigh certain classes of actions and speeches in gold scales. They are the actions and speeches to which you can trace, as you think, injurious consequences. But all the other acts of far greater consequence, all the great historic force which determined the bringing about of the Irish crisis, and, as one may perhaps now say, the happy determination of that crisis, you are to set aside and say, "No, we have nothing to do with them." And yet you are not Judges in a limited Commission, but statesmen, politicians, and legislators, bound to look at the whole range of circumstances of the case, and guilty of misprision of justice if you fail so to do. I can only show you my meaning in this matter by historical illustrations. My doctrine is this: These acts, with respect to which Irish Members have been censured, are not fit subjects for Parliamentary censure at all, because they are so mixed up with other circumstances that unless you take those circumstances into view you cannot possibly do justice; and when you have taken them into view, you find that the acts are such as are invariably incident to periods of national crisis, struggle, and revolution. Perhaps you think it wrong in me to apply the term revolution to any changes that have taken place, or are likely to take place, in Ireland. But remember who it was who connected revolution with Irish affairs. It was your own greatest authority—it was Lord Beaconsfield, as Mr. Disraeli. In the year 1844, in one of the most remarkable, and perhaps, the wisest, passages to which he ever gave utterance in Parliament, he pointed to Ireland and told the Parliament of that day that the evil features of Ireland were such as could only be corrected in other countries by revolution, and that the duty of Parliament was to correct these evil features without revo-

lution. Yes, that he said in 1844, and for 25 years after that declaration no single Act of importance was passed which in any way touched the conditions, fortunes, and prospects of the people of Ireland. Well, now, Sir, what are the circumstances? The circumstances are that, in the existence of this great necessity to relieve half the population from the pressure of impossible rents, means were adopted which were not ill-intended and which were not purposely directed to crime or mischief, but which were capable in given circumstances of excitement in this case or in that, of operating on excited minds, and of being auxiliary causes of crime in such cases. These are the circumstances. But, Sir, is it not the case that in all great movements in human affairs even the just cause is marked and spotted with much that is to be regretted? Have you ever heard of great changes brought about in the condition of a nation with nothing contrary to honour, nothing contrary to right, nothing contrary to order? Let me take the two charges against Irish Members—one of them that they gave no assistance to justice, and the other that they did not denounce the party of violence. I will take an illustration from our own history. Under Queen Elizabeth—and if ever there was a period of crisis in English History it was during that reign—the body of Roman Catholics of England were strictly and absolutely loyal. Of that there is no doubt, and it is recorded that the venerable Lord Montagu—I do not know whether he was entitled by years, as some others who have taken a share of public action, to be described as venerable—but, at any rate, the venerable Lord Montagu marched to Tilbury to support Queen Elizabeth with a troop of horse; commanded by himself, his son, and his grandson. Such was the loyalty of the body of Roman Catholics. At that time there was a handful or group of Roman Cotholics, young Roman Catholics, chiefly in holy orders, emissaries of Rome, sustained and cherished by the colleges abroad, and continually engaged either in arranging plots or awaiting outbreaks when they might have an opportunity of riveting upon this country a foreign domination, and possibly even of removing by assassination the Queen whose life was regarded by the mass of the people as an inestimable treasure. I have contrasted these two classes of persons—the one small and working against the law, the other as heartily attached to it. But who ever heard—I, for one, never heard—that those loyal Roman Catholics made it part of their active duty to detect the disloyal? They had no share in exposing them; and it is too much to demand when you have got before you an oppressed nation and a system of law which you believe to be in the main radically unjust and bad and administered in a foreign spirit, hostile to the welfare and the feelings of the country—it is too much to expect every man as a test of loyalty and as the only means of extending to him protection, to actively associate himself with the law and to make himself a portion of its train for the purpose of detecting those whom such a state of the law naturally alienates. I take another case, and that is with regard to the fact that the agitation in the eyes of the Judges, and possibly in the opinion of many more, cannot be held to have been wholly dissociated with crime. I will illustrate that in like manner from our history. I will illustrate it from the history of the Long Parliament. Now, I suppose that if there is a body of men who have a secure place from generation to generation in the grateful veneration of the country it is the leaders of the Long Parliament in its early years. I do not speak of the time of Cromwell, of Ireton, and of Lambert, although it has become a great fashion of late to worship Cromwell. It is the time of Pym and Hampden, of Falkland and Hyde, for the incidents which I am going to recite occurred within the last 12 or 14 months of the Long Parliament. Falkland and Hyde themselves in the Long Parliament belonged to the Opposition. I will not quote the passage from Hallam, where he gives a general description of it, but I will quote cases of what was done by those great champions of law and order who now enjoy our gratitude and veneration. I take them from Mr. Hallam, except in one case, which I take from the notes of Sir John Northcote, a very worthy and distinguished ancestor of Lord Iddesleigh:—"The Long Parliament usurped from the first," Hallam says.

"Legislative, executive, and judicial functions. There was a Judge whom they did not like, who was considered to be subservient to prerogative. They sent the Usher of the Black Rod into the Court of King's Bench, and they seized Judge Barclay while the Court was sitting. They required the Judges who had signed the warrants for ship-money to enter into heavy recognisances of many thousands of pounds" (whether they had been students of the Act of Edward III. or not). "When they heard of a clergyman who had performed any ceremony in the Church that they disliked they sent and seized him and committed him to prison as a delinquent. There was a tailor so imprudent as to curse the Parliament."

He was sent to labour in Bridewell for life, not by the House of Commons, but by the House of Lords, so that a congenial spirit prevailed in both branches of the Legislature. Well, Sir, when petitioners petitioned in the most orderly manner for the preservation of the Constitution they were sent for and imprisoned, but when tumultuous crowds brought petitions for a change they were welcomed to the Bar of the House. The climax of all these cases was one which I hope, Sir, will never be repeated during the period of your own experience. This happened on the 10th of December, 1641. A Member of Parliament, Sir William Earle, gave information of some dangerous words that had been spoken. Dangerous words! That is the statement of the charge. What was voted?

"That Mr. Speaker should issue his warrant to apprehend such persons as Sir William Earle shall point out."

Such, Sir, was the admixture of gross and human elements in the popular movement upon which, notwithstanding, we look back as one of the most beneficial and most glorious, at any rate in these early stages, in the whole course of our history. And we have been accustomed, many of us, to toast at our festive gatherings, "the cause for which Hampden bled in the field, and Sidney on the scaffold." Very probably some of those who vote with the right hon. Gentleman to-night have toasted this cause for which Hampden bled in the field, and Sidney on the scaffold. These deliberate, flagrant, constant, wilful, and systematic violations of law and of private right which were thus perpetrated by those great men, and, on the whole, good men, are far graver and far fitter to be put into an indictment than the indirect consequential responsibilities that you throw upon some of the Irish Members, whose motives and whose intentions the Judges themselves have been the first to acknowledge. Perhaps I may be allowed, for it conveniently sums up the whole case, to quote the words ascribed to Lord Chatham. I believe they are not in his speeches; they rest upon the authority of Mr. Grattan. Lord Chatham spoke of that very time which I have been describing. He said—

"There was ambition, there was sedition, there was violence, but no man shall persuade me that it was not the cause of liberty on one side, and of tyranny on the other."

The cause which was marked by sedition and violence was—in the judgment of Lord Chatham, who stands at the head, perhaps, of your orators and statesmen—the cause of liberty; and the cause opposed to them, which no doubt had its catch-words of "law and order," was, in his judgment, the cause, not of liberty, nor law and order, which are the sisters and essential allies of liberty, but the cause of tyranny. For these reasons I say that in my opinion you must raise yourselves a little above the level of the day, and, if you can, endeavour to take the view of the transaction we are now engaged in that the historian will take when he comes to perform his final office; and you will see that these matters—though I will not say the conduct of the Irish Members is free from censure, any more than I will venture to say that my own conduct is free from censure or the conduct of better than I—are not fit subjects for a Parliamentary vote. And that Parliamentary vote, the vote of an adverse, antagonistic majority, delivering itself in consonance with its own views to crush or discredit political opponents, while adding nothing whatever to the weight of the judgment of the Commissioners, will, on the contrary, tend to deprive it of such weight. I will now refer briefly to the acts which constitute the acquittal. I allude to the charges, every one of which would have personally stigmatised and personally disgraced all the men who were the objects of them had these charges been true. I do not think you could ever have made arrangements with these men to conduct along with them the opposition to a Liberal Government. I do not think that in 1885 you would have entered into confidential communications with them for the pur-

pose of arranging informally a scheme for governing Ireland. What are these charges? I take them in their latest edition. There are many editions, and the last edition is the least violent, and, I was going to say, the least atrocious. They were charged with having given incitement by speeches to a scheme of assassination carefully calculated and coolly applied; with having given payment to promote murder; with having entered into personal association with criminals; and with having made payments to aid escape from justice. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has observed that the Commmissioners expressly absolved the Members from this personal asssociation with notorious criminals. Then it was charged that they gave countenance to a murderous association in America, but it was proved that they gave it no other countenance than that which I have described; it was charged that they, in the person of their chief, were intimate with the leading Invincibles, and had probable knowledge of what they were about in the beginning of May. And lastly, Sir, there come the forged letters. These are the charges of an infamous character from which there has been a full acquittal, and we ask you to give effect to that acquittal. Now, I have spoken thus far of the Irish Members without distinction. I must now speak of the chief among them, because he was the object of by far the worst and most atrocious of these charges. I must speak of Mr. Parnell. I believe that the charge brought against him was not only an atrocious charge, but that it was in itself a charge of atrocity entirely unexampled in our history. Had that charge been true the hon. Member for Cork would have been guilty, morally guilty, as an assassin, as a coward, as a liar, and as a hypocrite. Every one of those crimes, the worst and the basest that can be charged to a human being, would lie at the door of the hon. Member for Cork had he been guilty. Such was the charge in itself. If it were true, it was the more needful that it should be made. On whom was it made? It was made on a man who, looked upon in his public career, was charged with the leadership of a people. He was charged from day to day with the daily care of a nation's interest, at a time when he was invited to become virtually a defendant in a Court of Justice that sat for a year and a half. Such was his condition in public. What was his condition privately and personally? The hon. Gentleman was well known to be strong in mind as he was weak in health. He was known to be a man of broken health at the time this charge was made, and finally—there is no indelicacy in alluding to it, because the hon. Gentleman himself has modestly and becomingly spoken of it—he was known to be a man whose lot has not been cast among the rich men either of England or of Ireland. When this charge was brought, under enormous responsibility, what was the assurance that accompanied it? It was not cast at random before the country; it was cast with a solemn assurance that imposed even upon Members of this House, in these terms, that, "after the most careful and minute scrutiny, we are satisfied that the letter is authentic." Was there a scrutiny? Was there a scrutiny at all? Was there anything careful and minute about it? Yes, Sir; there was something careful about it, and that was a carefulness not to know. Mr. Macdonald went into the box, appeared upon his oath, not closed up within the curtains of the office of the *Times* newspaper, but upon his oath personally in the face of day; and what said Mr. MacDonald? "I abstained from asking Mr. Houston why the envelopes were wanting, and from whom he got the letters"; and then, "I particularly avoided the subject of origin." Having ventured upon forgery, having carried calumny to its climax, the whole of this was crowned with falsehood, divulged in the most solemn form, and given to the credulous, those whom Party prejudice for a moment might mislead, to assure them that they would tread in the paths, not of cruelty and tyranny, but of justice. Sir, is it an immoderate demand that, after an occurrence like this, after a poisoned weapon has been aimed, aimed under such circumstances, aimed at such a person, and aimed with the solemn assurance that nothing was so dear to those who launched it as the strict observance of the law—is it too much that I should ask the House of Commons, which by implication and involuntarily at least come to give much countenance to the exterior part of this case—is it too much to ask

that we should record our judgment upon this unexampled occurrence? I have not been able, I admit, to abstain altogether from reference to the conduct of the Party opposite in former years. I have made no charge against the conduct of the Party, or the conduct of the Government, in immediate connection with this matter. I wish to do nothing to give an excuse to prejudice or to prepossession. And now, Sir, as a Member of the minority, to whom am I to appeal? I appeal from the Party opposite to the Party opposite. I appeal from them as a Party to them as individuals. I ask you as citizens—I will not say as Christians—and as men to consider this case. I ask you to acknowledge the law of equal and reciprocal moral obligation; I ask you to place yourselves for a moment — not the mass among whom responsibility is diffused and severed till it becomes inoperative and worthless; but I ask you individually, man by man, to place yourselves—in the position of the hon. Member for Cork as the victim of this frightful outrage. Is it possible, in doing this, after all his cares, all his suffering, all that he has gone through—and I believe there is no parallel to it at least for 200 years—that you can fail to feel that something remains due to him, or that you can bring that something lower or make it smaller than I have put it in the Amendment I am about to move? No, Sir. Then give, I pray you to give; give it as men, but do not be satisfied with giving a judgment that may be sustained by the cheers of a majority of this House upon a victorious or favourable Division; give such a judgment as will bear the scrutiny of the heart and of the conscience of every man when he takes himself to his chamber and is still. Of such a judgment I have no fear. For such a judgment I ask you, I entreat you, I urge you, I might almost say, in the name of that law of reciprocal obligation, I respectfully demand it of you. Give such a judgment in the terms of the Amendment, concur in declaring that which is, after all, but a part, and a feebly drawn and represented part, of the wrongs that have been inflicted—give that judgment, accede to our demand, accede to our prayer, and grant this late, this measured, this perhaps scanty reparation of an enormous and unheard-of wrong.

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "House," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "deems it to be a duty to record its reprobation of the false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery, which have been brought against Members of this House, and particularly against Mr. Parnell; and, while declaring its satisfaction at the exposure of these calumnies, this House expresses its regret for the wrong inflicted, and the suffering and loss endured, through a protracted period, by reason of these acts of flagrant iniquity,"—(*Mr. W. E. Gladstone,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*(7.13.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman, in a passage of fervid and glowing eloquence, has invited this House, and especially those who sit on this side, to give a judgment, as he calls it, in satisfaction of a wrong done to the hon. Member for Cork. But I appeal to anyone who has listened to the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's speech whether in that speech there is not proof that the judgment for which he asks could not, consistently with justice, be given by this House. We have heard that the Report of the Commission has been described as a triumphant acquittal. The whole speech of the right hon. Gentleman shows that he regards it as something very different—as not only, after fair inquiry and deliberate judgment, acquitting the hon. Member for Cork with regard to those infamous and dishonouring charges to which he alluded in the latter part of his speech, but also as recording judgment on other matters, which possibly may seem of even greater gravity to the country at large. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has not accepted the terms in which my right hon. Friend proposes to acknowledge the work of the Judges. He objected to that proposal on this ground—that he objected to render formal thanks for the performance of judicial duties. But, Sir, I venture to remind him that this was no ordinary duty. It was imposed by Parliament upon public servants very much against their desire, I should imagine, and certainly very much beyond

the scope of their ordinary work. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman should have marred what he said with regard to the conduct of this inquiry by the Judges by the suggestion of political sentiment. I think that the Report before us bears on its whole face clear proof of calm, impartial judgment, absolutely devoid of any political sentiment or prepossession whatever; and remembering the suggestions made and the insinuations thrown out before this Commission was appointed, and since it began its work, of unfair bias on the part of those of whom it was composed, I think that the least this House can do is to show that it has no sympathy whatever with such insinuations, and that it trusts and accepts the absolute impartiality with which this Commission has been conducted. The right hon. Gentleman divided the charges under two heads. He classed the first, on which an acquittal has been given, as infamous and dishonouring; and, secondly, as charges of conduct such as accompanied all great popular movements; and the right hon. Gentleman who sits next him, while admitting the other day that the Judges formed a most competent tribunal simply for the investigation of questions of crime and questions of fact, stated that they were, in his judgment, not a competent tribunal for matters involving political considerations. I think, Sir, this is the distinction which is drawn by the two right hon. Gentlemen between the two classes of charges into which the Judges have inquired; but I would venture to point out that the distinction between those two classes of charges really depends upon the opinions of those who consider them. It may be all very well for right hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that there is nothing infamous and dishonouring in a particular class of charges, and that there is something infamous and dishonouring in the other. But I am bound to say, without using the word infamous, I do think that there is something dishonouring in some of the charges which have been proved against hon. Members opposite; and if the matter were looked at from the point of view of a "member of the physical force party" in America who advocates the use of dynamite and assassination, such a person might contend that all the charges related to matters involving political considerations. You cannot classify charges of this kind in this way. I think that the right hon. Gentleman, at any rate by the length of that part of his speech which he devoted to this matter, admits in his own mind the gravity of some of the charges which, in his judgment, are matters involving political considerations. No doubt they are now matters of history; but there is this advantage in that respect—that perhaps we can consider them with somewhat greater calmness, and that we have with regard to them placed upon record the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues in the Government of that day—opinions which singularly corroborate the findings of the Commission. I will venture to divide the charges which have been reported to be true under two heads. In the first place, the Judges find that some of the respondents, including the two most active leaders of hon. Members below the Gangway, established and joined in the Land League organisation with the intention by those means to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. Now I quite admit, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) stated the other day, that in that there is no overt act of treason which could be indicted; but, on the other hand, surely it is a treasonable intention? When right hon. Gentlemen go on to compare this treason with other acts in the past history of the world—with the cases, for instance, of Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington, who, of course, were legally traitors in their day—I thought to myself, would men like Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington have done, in carrying out their treason, what has been proved to have been done by hon. Members below the Gangway? [Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, and a great deal more.] Now, let me just proceed to the points which were hardly at all dwelt upon by the right hon. Gentleman, but which surely have a very close and intimate bearing upon this charge of treasonable intention. The Commissioners report that the respondents disseminated newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of crime. Now the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian passed very

lightly over that. He called it a trumpery charge——

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: No, I said that it was a constructive charge.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I beg pardon. But at any rate he passed very lightly over it. But the Commissioners report that among those newspapers was one purchased by the hon. Member for Cork, maintained by the Land League funds, and the columns of which—as is shown by quotations in the Report—I venture to say contained as outrageous suggestions upon the use of dynamite and assassination as were ever reprobated by the right hon. Gentleman in American newspapers nine years ago. Well, Sir, that is one way in which treasonable intentions manifested themselves in the actions of those whose conduct is reported upon. But there was another way still. It is found that the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation and accepted subscriptions of money irom Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite, and the physical force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and that in order to obtain that assistance they abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party. Sir, the members of that party in America are men—and were men—guilty not only of treasonable intention and treasonable action, but guilty of the most atrocious designs, such as I will venture to say have never been paralleled in any of those political movements of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke — the execution of which has been happily frustrated mainly by their miserable squabbles among themselves. Now, Sir, I do not suppose that there is anything in this—in the conduct which is proved by this Commission to have been committed by the respondents—to justify any indictment for treason. But this I will say, I do think it strange that such conduct as that should be excused and palliated by ex-Ministers of the Crown, who may some day occupy that position again, as involving political considerations. Then there is the second group of charges. What are those charges? That the bulk of the respondents, including the bulk of the party below the Gangway, are found to have been guilty of a criminal conspiracy, one of the objects of which was by a system of coercion and intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled the English garrison. It is shown that boycotting, the instrument of this combination, was a system of intimidation of the most severe and cruel character, that the object of this elaborate and all-pervading tyranny was not only to injure individuals, but the class of landlords, and to drive them out of the country, and that the intention of those who devised and carried out this system was to terrorise, and that it led in many cases to actual outrage. Further, it is found that the respondents incited to intimidation, and that the consequence of that incitement was that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited; that the speeches made by the respondents, though the speakers did not intend it, had the effect of causing the peasants to carry out the laws of the Land League, even by assassination; that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation, but persisted in it, with the knowledge of its effect; that they, through the Land League, systematically and indiscriminately paid for the defence of persons charged with agrarian crime and supported their families; and that the knowledge that such assistance would in all cases be afforded must have had the effect of encouraging persons to commit outrage. Well, now, I was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian should have turned no small portion of his speech into an absolute apology for—nay, justification of—such conduct as that. He stated in so many words that it was the conduct so deseribed by the Judges which led to the passing of the Land Act of 1881. He justified the agitation, the methods, and the procedure which the Judges have so described. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby agrees with him in that view, for he said the other day, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has said to-night, that all this evil came from unjust and impossible rents. Why, Sir, it is obvious to any one who reads the Report of the Judges that this was no case of an attempt on the part of the Land League to deal simply with cases of unjust eviction

or the payment of impossible rents, but that it was a conspiracy deliberately formed against a whole class, and carried out by methods such as are described. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby knew a great deal better than this in 1881. In that year, speaking as a responsible Minister of the Crown, with all the responsibility of office as Home Secretary, with the knowledge of these matters fresh in his mind, he addressed a meeting in Glasgow, and what did he say? He referred to the men who are defended and apologised for by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite, and who, he said,

"had not for their object, or at all events for their principal object, the advantage of the Irish tenant, but were pursuing schemes of political revolution. The land agitation in their hands was not merely a Constitutional agitation to redress land grievances, which was perfectly justifiable, but was an agitation whose object was to destroy the union of the Empire, and to overthrow the established Government of the United Kingdom. Mr. Parnell admits now that what he wants is not fair rent; he wants no rent at all. He wants to get rid of the landlords in order that he may get rid of the English Government, and for this object every kind of intimidation has been employed to deter honest men from doing their duty and fulfilling their obligations. The Land League has employed terms whose avowed object is to set aside and over-rule the laws of the land. It is utterly impossible that any Government responsible for civilised society can tolerate such a condition of things. The Land League has thrown over the false colours of fair rent; it has hoisted the red flag, and the buccaneering craft sails under its true colours. Men who stood by it before, like Archbishop Croke, have repudiated the doctrines of which they must and do disapprove, and the Government have consequently felt it their duty to put in force all the powers that Parliament have granted them, in order to put down a public danger and a public nuisance."

The right hon. Gentleman concluded by saying:—

"It is a great comfort and a great support to us to know that our conduct has generally been approved."

The right hon. Gentleman is of a very comfortable disposition, and I do not doubt that, with perfectly changed opinions, he is equally satisfied with his present position. There is a point in the findings of the Commissioners which I have quoted, which, I think, deserves some further notice—the payments for the defence of persons charged with agrarian crimes, and the support of their families, and payments made to compensate those injured in the commission of crimes. This is the charge which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian described as a trumpery charge. He said only two cases were quoted by the Commissioners, proved by a few letters that were all that could be found out of the very large correspondence of the Land League. But the facts detailed by the Commissioners in their Report are sufficient to show those were not isolated cases, but may have been samples of the regular course of dealing. [An hon. MEMBER? "May have been?"] May have been: Yes, but why was it not proved that they were not? There is nothing more remarkable in the whole of this inquiry than the absolute disappearance of the books, papers, records, and accounts of the Land League. If there is suspicion not only that large sums of money have been spent for such purposes, but even for worse and graver purposes, those who were responsible for the management of the Land League in those years have no one to thank but themselves. What do the Commissioners say as to the singular disappearance of those documents and the absolute failure to account for the large expenditure of the Land League?—

"Thus we have over £100,000 of Land League funds received—(from Mr. Egan)—but no details of the manner in which it was expended. It is proved that the books and documents of the Land League were numerous and bulky. . . . We have been unable to obtain these documents, and no valid excuse has been given for their non-production. . . . Mr. Justin M'Carthy, M.P., stated that he had obtained a list of books relating to the Land League of Great Britain, and which he was willing should be produced. . . . When called for he was unable to produce them or explain the reason for their non-production."

Mr. Parnell refused to give authority to Messrs. Munro, of Paris, to produce the accounts relating to the Land League.

*MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): The right hon. Gentleman does not follow that up by saying that Messrs. Lewis gave an explanation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH [Continuing the quotation]:

"We have therefore been deprived of evidence upon the question how the moneys of the Land League were expended in the years 1881-82. We may say generally that we have not received from Mr. Parnell and the officers of the Land League the assistance we were entitled to expect in the investigation of the Land League accounts, in order that it might be seen how its funds were expended."

I venture to say that that is as remarkable a part of the Report as any in it, that no satisfactory explanation of these circumstances has yet been given at all, and that there must be elements of very grave suspicion, until, in defence of their own honour, those who are able to give an explanation, give it. I now turn to the main part of the second group of charges—the question of intimidation and boycotting. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said hardly anything to-night on the question of intimidation or boycotting. When it is his fortune to take part in debates upon boycotting at the present time, he describes it always, I think, as exclusive dealing. But he did not venture to apply that definition to it in the years now under review by the House. At that time he described boycotting as combined intimidation used for the purpose of destroying private liberty of choice by fear of ruin and starvation, sanctioned by the murder which is not to be denounced: as a monstrous public evil, threatening liberty and interfering with law and order; applied whether the landlord has been tyrannical or harsh; whether he has been indulgent or overbearing; to prevent the occupation of a farm from which, even in the last extremity and to meet his own personal wants, a landlord has felt it necessary to remove a tenant. That is in accordance with the description of boycotting and intimidation given by the Judges in their Report; and I venture to say there was nothing in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to-night to show why he had absolutely changed in 1890 the opinions on that subject which he expressed in 1881, when this terrible system was in full force, except that he now finds it necessary to constitute himself the apologist for this agitation upon political grounds. We were told to-night that evictions and distress, and the action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, were the causes of the increase of crime in those years. Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman did not charge the increase of crime to those causes in 1881. In those days what he said was this—and it is what the Commissioners report—that "with fatal and painful precision the steps of crime dogged the steps of the Land League." Then the hon. Member for Cork was denounced as prominent in the attempt to substitute anarchial oppression for the authority of the law, and imprisoned by the right hon. Gentleman as reasonably suspected of treasonable practices, and inciting to intimidation. Now the hon. Member's wrongs are dwelt upon, and his agitation almost applauded, as having given to Ireland the benefits of the Land Act of 1881. Well, Sir, it does seem to me that by the admissions of right hon. Gentlemen upon the Front Opposition Bench in the past the gravity of the circumstances on which the Judges have reported adversely to the respondents is sufficiently proved, and that for this House to adopt a Resolution dealing with only one portion of that Report—that portion which acquits the respondents—and to take no notice of that other portion of the Report which condemns them, would be as far from an act of justice as can well be conceived. Is there any reason why it should be done? There was an argument, stated by the right hon. Gentleman to-night, which was this:—

> "All this conduct happened 10 years ago, and has been condoned by what is called the close treaty and alliance between hon. Members below the Gangway and the Conservative Party in 1885, when all these things were perfectly well known to the country."

I demur to both those assertions. I demur to the assertion that all these findings, so far as the respondents in this Report are concerned, were perfectly well known to the country in 1885. I contend that there are important facts brought to light by this Report which were not known to the country at that time. As a sample, I would quote the close connection of hon. Members below the Gangway with the dissemination and production of newspapers inciting to crime and sedition, and the relations between the Irish Parliamentary Party and the physical force party and the Clan-na-Gael in America. In so far as those matters were known at all, they were known to us, who were then out of office, solely by the statements of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and if some of us—I confess I was one—did not place the fullest confidence in those statements at that time, I think we may be absolved for not having done so

when they are so absolutely disregarded by their authors on the present occasion. The other point is this—was there a close treaty or alliance between hon. Members below the Gangway opposite and the Conservative Party in order to turn out the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in 1885. No doubt the hon. Members below the Gangway, on the occasion of several important Divisions, voted in the same Lobby that we did, but they voted with us for reasons of their own, which were absolutely and entirely different from our reasons. We recorded our opinions on important matters at that time—the question of Egyptian policy, the question of the relief of General Gordon, the Budget, on which the right hon. Gentleman was finally defeated—we recorded them in Resolutions expressing our own opinions; and if hon. Members chose to vote for those resolutions, how could we help it?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No arrangement?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, none whatever. The right hon. Gentleman asks me whether there was no arrangement. Let me go a little more into that question, because the other day the right hon. Gentleman made a definite charge with regard to it. The charges of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian have been indefinite; but the right hon. Member for Derby made a definite charge with which I will deal. He said that the Tory leaders in 1885 gave a pledge to the Nationalist Party that, if they would only turn out the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, the Tory leaders would not renew the Coercion Act, and further, that Lord Salisbury went to Newport and made an apology for boycotting. Now, what are the facts? In August, 1885, the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. H. Gladstone) said that Lord Salisbury had made a compact with the hon. Member for Cork, and that the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) and Mr. Winn, now Lord St. Oswald, had promised the Parnellites three things in return for their support: firstly, the dropping of the Crimes Act; secondly, a Bill for the benefit of the Irish labourers; thirdly, a Land Purchase Bill on liberal terms. The hon. Member for Leeds made that statement to his constituents, and challenged a denial; and that denial was immediately forthcoming. It was absolutely and completely denied by letters which were published in the Press from Lord Salisbury, from my noble Friend the Member for Paddington, and from Mr. Winn.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg pardon.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Will the right hon. Gentleman wait a moment?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken. My statement was founded upon a speech the noble Lord the Member for Paddington made in Yorkshire, in which he stated that a decision was taken by the Conservative Members sitting on this Bench that the Crimes Act should not be renewed; and that was before the Liberal Government was turned out. He made that statement in public.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir, but that is not the charge of the right hon. Gentleman. Of course we had considered that matter among ourselves before the Liberal Government was turned out. Of course we had to decide, as far as we could without access to official documents, what might be our course; but the charge of the right hon. Gentleman is this, that we communicated our intention to the hon. Member for Cork, and that there was a bargain between us that he should support us if we did not renew the Crimes Act.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I said nothing about a bargain; I said it was communicated, and I say now it was communicated, to the hon. Member for Cork.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The words of the right hon. Gentleman were these—that the Tory leaders in 1885 gave a pledge to the Nationalist Party that if they would only turn out the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian they would not renew the Crimes Act.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I say so now.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman says so now, after I have told him that it was absolutely and completely denied by the three parties I have named. But it was denied by someone else; and if the right hon. Gentleman will not accept denials from this side of the House, perhaps he will accept the denial of the hon. Member for Cork. The hon. Member wrote upon this subject a letter to Sir Frederick Milner, which was published in August, 1885. The hon. Member wrote:—

"Dear Sir Frederick Milner,—I have just received your letter enclosing report of Mr. Herbert Gladstone's speech at Leeds, and directing my attention to a passage in which Mr. Gladstone asserts that there is an alliance for Parliamentary purposes, and also for the purpose of the general election, between Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill on the one side, and myself and my colleagues on the other, upon the basis—first, of the dropping of the Crimes Act; second, of the Bill for the benefit of the labourers; and, third, of the passing of a Land Purchase Bill.

"Your letter also points out a further paragraph in the same speech, in which Mr. Gladstone is reported to have defied me among others to contradict these alleged facts. I can only say that there is not the slightest foundation for any of these statements of Mr. Herbert Gladstone. I have no knowledge of any such alliance, nor have any of my colleagues. I have held no communication upon any of the public matters referred to with any Member of the present Government, or any of their officials, directly or indirectly, except across the floor of the House of Commons. The first intimation I received of the intentions of the Government in respect of these matters was from Lord Carnarvon's speech in the Lords, and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Commons.

"Yours truly,

"CHARLES S. PARNELL.

"Irish Parliamentary Offices, Palace Chambers, 9, Bridge Street, S.W., July 31."

After hearing that letter, I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will see that his charges have been calumnious, and that when he comes to address the House he will express his regret for having made them.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I repeat them.

Sir M. HICKS BEACH not giving way,

SIR W. HARCOURT: I rise to order. I wish to know whether indeed it has been so ruled in this House, when a right hon. Member addresses another Member across the floor of the House, and states that his charges are calumnious, that Member has not the right upon the instant to repudiate such a charge? I do repudiate it, and I say there can be no order in this House unless a Member is allowed to do so.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am the judge of order in this House. I am glad to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity, but so many interruptions are inconvenient when a right hon. Gentleman addresses the House.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: But the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian made another statement to-night. He said the conduct of the hon. Member for Cork and his followers had been condoned by the Conservative Party because—[Sir W. Harcourt rose to leave his seat]—I have not done yet.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, I know; but I am not going to stay to be abused in this manner.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Because of Lord Carnarvon's interview with the hon. Member for Cork. Now, I must say that the extraordinary statements which have been made and persisted in with regard to that interview are not warranted by the facts of the case. In the first place, it was never sanctioned by the Cabinet, or known to the Cabinet until long afterwards. In the second place, Lord Carnarvon has distinctly denied that at that interview he promised anything or held out any hopes whatever, or did anything more than ascertain the views of the hon. Member for Cork. But the right hon. Member for Derby also charged Lord Salisbury with having gone to Newport that autumn, after the dissolution of Parliament, and made an apology for boycotting, implying, I suppose, that this was an attempt to gain the Irish vote. I absolutely deny that accusation. So far from apologising for boycotting, what Lord Salisbury said was this—he pointed out the impossibility of dealing by law with all kinds of boycotting; he instanced a certain kind—that of declining to sit in the same chapel with a boycotted person, with which he said the law could not deal. That is perfectly true; it was true then; it remains true now. Only the other day I saw a statement relating to several cases in Ireland in which that kind of boycotting had taken place. How had it been dealt with? Not by the law, but by the interference of the Bishop of the diocese, who had closed, or threatened to close, the chapel. After that admission, Lord Salisbury went on to say—

"As far as boycotting is liable to the law, as far as legal remedies can reach it, do not imagine that the Irish Government are passive in putting remedies of the ordinary law into action. At the present moment there are 35 prosecutions for boycotting, and that alone will show you that the Irish Government are doing their best with what they consider a difficult evil. I believe that Parliament possessing a full mandate and the Government in power are bound above everything else to exhaust every possible remedy in order that men may pursue freely their lawful industry in any station in life."

I have always been reluctant to trouble the House by reference to any expressions of opinion of my own; but at that time I had the honour to occupy the responsible post of Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House, and, therefore, what I publicly said may, I think, have been received in the country as said with some authority. At the end of September, 1885, in a speech at Salisbury, I admitted that boycotting was rife in certain parts of Ireland. I said—

"Prosecutions have been instituted, and are now being instituted, against persons who were supposed to be guilty of this offence of boycotting, and I can assure you that no efforts will be spared on the part of the Government to conduct their prosecutions to a successful conclusion, so as to punish the guilty and to institute prosecutions in all cases where any evidence can be found to justify them."

Then I went on to say—

"But if these means do not succeed we must look for others. The law must be upheld; a combination against it cannot be allowed to prevail."

Just before the General Election, on the 4th of November, speaking at Bristol, I said—

"The Conservatives had undertaken the government of Ireland at a time of very serious difficulty, and they had undertaken it in the spirit that had always governed the Conservative Party in the matter, and they had resolved that they would not introduce exceptional legislation for the prevention of crime unless it was perfectly clear to their minds that crime could not be prevented by the ordinary law. They were exerting now all the powers of the ordinary law to preserve peace and order in Ireland, and they were exerting them with very considerable success; but he could assure his hearers that, if it should be found that the powers of the ordinary law did not suffice to preserve peace and order in Ireland, the Ministry would not let months elapse, as Mr. Gladstone's Government had allowed months to elapse during their tenure of office, before coming to Parliament to ask it to help them in the matter."

I think I may ask the House whether, at any rate, that was not perfectly plain speaking upon the determination of the Conservative Party to put down boycotting and crime, even by exceptional legislation? It is impossible that any one considering such speeches could have supposed the Government would hesitate, as when the moment came they did not hesitate to appeal to Parliament to strengthen the law; and if at the General Election of 1885 the Irish vote was to a certain extent given to the Conservative Party, that vote was not given out of any feeling of affection for us. It was given, as is notorious, because the Irish Party desired to equalise the two great Parties of Great Britain so as to be able to hold the balance between them. I think I have shown that nothing that occurred in 1885 justifies the charges that have been brought against our conduct in that year by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite; and I would add that nothing that occurred then can, to my mind, be urged as a reason why we should condone now matters which, as I have stated already, have been for the first time completely disclosed and authoritatively established by the Report of the Commission. I will go further and say that I can hardly understand why right hon. Gentlemen opposite should object to record the Report in the Journals of the House, and to adopt the conclusions at which the Commissioners have arrived. I do not understand it having regard to the numberless occasions on which they have expressed opinions absolutely indentical with those expressed by the Commissioners. If it be true, that thanks to the "union of hearts," all these things are things of the past—that crime and boycotting, and all those evils which are referred to by the Commissioners no longer exist, or, at any rate, are now absolutely discountenanced by those to whom they are attributed in the Commissioners' Report—if that be true, I cannot see why the Motion for recording the Report in our Journals and adopting its conclusions should not be accepted unanimously by this House. Some persons have represented the Report as a verdict amounting to a triumphant acquittal. In my opinion, this cannot be fairly stated as the effect of the Report; but if there be any persons who really believe that to be its effect, they certainly cannot object to the Motion to record it on the Journals of the House. On our side we believe that the Report contains condemnation as well as acquittal, and we think it right and just to record both. If it contains acquittal upon those issues which, as affecting chiefly personal honour, are more important to individuals, it contains condemnation upon those issues which are more important to the country at large. Those evils which were rife in the days to which the

Report refers are evils, whatever may be the exculpation or apology tendered for them by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. They may now be dormant or suppressed; but, however that may be, they still remain evils, and their revival under any form of Government would be fatal to liberty and prosperity to Ireland.

(8.38.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(8.40.) MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): As one of those alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol in the opening part of his speech, as one of those referred to by the Judges in their Report as having established and joined the Land League organisation with the intention, by every means, of bringing about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation, I desire to say a few words on this debate. The evidence on which this serious conclusion is based is, that on August 21st, 1880, I delivered a short speech reprehending the action of those who passed a resolution in reference to the men who made a raid for firearms upon the ship *Juno*, lying in the river Lee, at Cork. In that speech I am reported to have said—

"I recognised the services the League had done, but failed to receive, either in that service or in the period of their existence, anything to give them a right to criticise the action of other people."

Now, this is the evidence upon which this serious charge has been founded. For myself, I do not submit the finding to the critical examination of a legal mind; but it occurs to me, as a matter of common sense, that never was a more serious charge based on so flimsy a foundation, and this particularly so because of the fact that, when I was examined before the Commission, I stated that my motive for making that speech was that I was endeavouring to save the new Constitutional movement from the hostile hands of men who looked upon it with jealous and unfriendly eyes. But I am not concerned to defend myself against the charge. The Judges, if they like, may feel themselves justified in ascribing to me ulterior and treasonable motives, but I deny that the Judges had any commission whatever to try me for my motives. Was any overt act proved against me for which I could be arraigned before a jury? I have examined the Report, and I fail to find any such act cited, and therefore I assert that I have been judged by the Commission open to this serious charge for motives, and for motives only. Probably, the Judges did take into account my admission that I was a Fenian. I have sworn it in Court, I have admitted it on platforms, I avow it here, and I am not ashamed to avow it here to-day. Sir, I could not help being a Fenian. I cannot fix the hour of the day when I began to hate England; when I began to hate the English people, the English Government, and everything that bore the name of England. To be a Fenian, to be discontented, was a tradition to me handed down through generations of forefathers. I was brought up in the very atmosphere of disaffection. I might say I lisped what you call treasonable language almost when I began to talk. In this way I grew up and read the history of my country. Then I found the Black Chapter that relates the English conquest of Ireland, the confiscation of Irish land, the robbery and murder of the Irish people. I read this chapter until my mind was so affected that the enthusiasm of the boy became the conviction of the man, the conviction that it was the duty of every Irishman, at no matter what cost, to strike at the hereditary enemies of the Irish race and the Irish nation. The struggles of the Irish people, their battles for freedom, were my studies, and the lives and deaths of Irish patriots were examples I desired to follow. I continued in this state of mind even when in maturer years. I arrived at the conclusion that the policy I was pursuing was the policy of despair. It was to me a patriotic duty that demanded the sacrifice, and I was willing to make that sacrifice. I have run a thousand risks for these convictions. For many years my liberty and my life were not worth an hour's purchase, yet I worked on, toiled on without hope, and with no prospect before me but the convict's jacket or the hangman's rope. I now look back at that period of my life without shame and without remorse. Judges may condemn me, and this House may ratify their Judgment, and place upon its

Journals the record of that Judgment; but I have nothing to recall, nothing to regret. I have everything to be proud of, everything to glory in. A change came over the land. The hon. Member for Cork, my friend and leader, whose leadership I feel a pride in following, and to follow whom I esteem to be worthy of life itself, started a movement and I joined the movement with an honest desire to further its objects. I had no ulterior motive, as attributed to me by the Judges. It is true, perhaps, as well as I can recall my feelings, that I reserved to myself the right, as even now I reserve to myself the right, should Constitutional means fail to re-establish the Constitutional liberties of the Irish people, to be free to adopt whatever course shall seem to my judgment right and proper. But if that unhappy moment should arrive there will be no deception, no two ways about me. If I commit an overt act of treason I shall be prepared to stand the consequences of my action. I repeat that I honestly joined the Land League organisation with the honest intention to further its programme. I had no ulterior motive beyond giving effect to the objects to be found in the constitution of the League, and I am on those same lines still. I am encouraged to remain on those lines by the proposal that has been brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, a proposal that makes for the granting to the Irish people Home Rule—the right to govern themselves. I will go farther and say that proposal, generously made, and I will say loyally and without reservation accepted by the Irish people, has eradicated from my mind and heart the bitterness I once felt towards this nation and this people. Therefore I say I have adopted in its fulness the Constitutional mode of action, and I have now no desire to depart from it. Whether I continue to pursue that course of action it remains for the English Parliament and the English people to decide. But I will say this much, in conclusion, that whether I strive to serve Ireland by Constitutional means or by an appeal to physical force, my life belongs to my country.

*(8.50.) MR. J. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.): Whatever view may be taken of the sentiments of the hon. Member who has just sat down, on this side of the House, at any rate we must feel that he has acted a frank and manly part. He has honestly confessed that he is a traitor at heart. He hopes by Constitutional means to win the object he desires, and so long as he entertains that hope he will follow these means, but if he finds that Constitutional means do not bring about the desire of his heart then he reserves to himself complete freedom of action. I do not think I in any way misrepresent the statement of the hon. Member made in his place in the House. It is a position he has deliberately taken up, and which it appears to me he will have to stand by. We are about to consider the details of this Report. It is a very remarkable document, and will have to be examined in very considerable detail. We are asked to affirm the proposition that it shall be entered upon the Journals of this House, and it will be my endeavour to give the reasons that induce me to think it is right and proper the Report should be so entered on the Journals of the House, and before I sit down I shall express an opinion that, in addition to that, it would be well for the Government to consider if stronger and sterner measures should not be taken. In order to appreciate the real effect of the Report of the Commission there are two preliminary facts it is well to remember. In 1877, say the Commissioners, Mr. Parnell became the virtual leader of the Home Rule Party, and at that time, the Report goes on to say, there existed in Ireland an organisation known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood. This interesting association was referred to by the hon. Member for Cork in his evidence when he said he always understood that it was the practice of the Brotherhood to "assassinate traitors." There existed in addition to this body in Ireland a kindred body in America known by the name of the Clan-na-Gael. The Commissioners find that these two conspiracies were one and the same. At page 6 of the Report I find that in December, 1877, when Mr. Davitt was released from Portland Prison, and the Commissioners insert this remarkable paragraph, to which I would draw very serious attention. Upon Mr. Davitt's release from prison, in 1877, upon ticket-of-leave, the Report says:—

"A Committee to receive him, together with Charles McCarthy, Thomas Chambers, and John P. O'Brien (three persons recently released from imprisonment under sentences for seditious practices) was formed, and a public address, signed by Messrs. Parnell, Biggar, Dillon, D. Curley, Patrick Egan, James Carey, Thomas Brennan, and others was presented to him. This address contained the following words:—'With a self-denying patriotism, like the patriot Marcus Curtin, you made an offering of life, fortune, and liberty on the altar of your country, and if by such sacrifices as yours her freedom has not been achieved, her honour has been saved.'"

It is very well to remind the House that Michael Davitt was released upon ticket-of-leave, having been convicted of treason-felony. Then came the "new departure," the ostensible subordination of the Fenian views to Mr. Parnell's constitutional plan. A telegram was despatched to Ireland proposing a union with the supporters of Mr. Parnell's Party and a letter was addressed to the *Freeman* newspaper in which he referred to this as a "new departure." One of the gravest charges, it seems to me, which has been brought against the Member for Cork is that he was closely identified with the American Fenian Irish Party; that his Party have subsisted for many years on the funds supplied by that party. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to pass lightly over many pages of this Report, as if they had no concern for the Members of this House, but it seems to me that they should have referred to the findings of the Commission as to what took place when Mr. Parnell visited America. Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon were warmly received by all sections of the part yin the United States, and among them by the Clan-na-Gael. And then the Report goes on to say that Le Caron afterwards became a member of the Clan-na-Gael for the purpose of giving information to the British Government. It is desirable to quote this—

"Major Le Caron, a British subject, who had served in the United States Army during the Civil War, afterwards became a member of the Clan-na-Gael for the purpose of giving evidence to the British Government. His evidence, corroborated by the documents he produced, establishes that the Clan-na-Gael endeavoured to arrange and control the meetings held in various places for the reception and hearing of Mr. Parnell. But the evidence does not establish that this was done with the consent or knowledge of Mr. Parnell, who, moreover, stated in his evidence that he did not know, except by rumours in some instances, the antecedents of the persons who organised the meetings which he addressed, and supported him on the platform."

But it must be read in connection with other paragraphs, and the Report goes on to say that—

"Captain O'M. Condon took a leading part on the Committee which procured for Mr. Parnell this hearing before the House of Representatives. Mr. Parnell knew this, and that Condon was a member of the Clan-na-Gael, and one of the released prisoners in connection with the murder of Serjeant Brett."

I am very anxious not to state anything in this House which is not stated in the pages of this Report. Here we have a direct and distinct finding that upon the visit of the Member for Cork to America, we find him acting in the closest connection with the members of the Fenian Party. And now, Sir, I come to matters connected with the hon. Member for the City of Cork, to which it will be my duty to call the attention of the House. I come to a matter on which the Commissioners, having on the one hand the oath of the Member for Cork, and having on the other hand evidence pointing in a different direction, deliberately accepted the evidence in preference to the oath of the hon. Member for Cork. The first matter is with regard to the speech which the hon. Member is said to have made at Cincinnati on the 20th of February, 1880. I need not refer in detail to that speech, but only to concluding words which are set out in the Report at page 21. Mr. Parnell says:—

"None of us, whether we are in America or Ireland, or wherever we may be, will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England."

The importance of that declaration is no so much in connection with the words themselves, which I am perfectly ready to admit are old and have been quoted over and over again, but the importance is this: that that speech was printed for years in newspaper after newspaper, and was circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land, absolutely uncontradicted by the hon. Member for Cork. It was not until one night on the Second Reading of the Bill of the Member for Mid Lothian for the better government of Ireland, when it became of the utmost importance to the hon.

Member for Cork to show, if he could, in the House of Commons, as many were then wavering whether they should support the Member for Mid Lothian or not—that he had not said these words, that he for the first time stated that he never uttered the words which he was reported to have used at Cincinnati. [*Ministerial Cheers.*] We have that denial of the hon. Member for Cork in this House recorded in the pages of *Hansard*. Now let us see what the Commission says. I observe that when he was giving evidence on oath he does not deny using the words in the same clear and pointed way in which he denied them in this House. The Commissioners say—

"Mr. Parnell will not undertake to say that he did not use the expression 'that he would not be satisfied until the last link between Ireland and England was destroyed,' but says it was improbable he did so, and that if he did it must have been largely qualified by other matter, as it is entirely opposed to anything he has ever thought or said."

Now, Sir, in this House he utterly denied using the words, but the Report goes on to say—

"We find that Mr. Parnell did use the words attributed to him, and they certainly are not inconsistent with some of his previous utterances."

But his first charge, and the evidence set out in the Report in connection with it, does not merely confine itself to a finding upon that matter. It sets out another matter in which they positively and distinctly affirm that they decline to accept the word of the Member for Cork. On the same page of the Report the Commissioners say—

"Mr. Parnell left the United States on the 12th of March, 1880, his tour having been shortened in consequence of the Dissolution of Parliament. Before his departure he summoned a conference of prominent Irishmen at New York to which he invited Patrick Ford, for the purpose of forming an auxiliary organisation of the Land League in America, in harmony with the organisation in Ireland, and to assist its objects."

In other words, the Commissioners find that as early as 1880 the Member for Cork was in close connection with Patrick Ford, and being compelled to leave America he is careful to invite Patrick Ford to the Conference for the purpose of forming an auxiliary organisation, for the purpose set forth in the Report. Upon this part of the case, we see that in a speech in the Rotunda, Dublin, in 1880, Mr. Parnell said—

"At one of our meetings in America a gentleman came on the platform and handed me 25 dollars, and said: 'Here is 5 dollars for bread and 20 dollars for lead.'"

The report of this speech in the *Freeman* newspaper adds that loud and long cheers followed this. It is not for the loud and long cheers that I trouble the House with this quotation, but for Mr. Parnell's explanation. The Commissioners says—

"Mr. Parnell stated in cross-examination that his narration of this offer of '20 dollars for lead' was stupid and more than stupid, as there was no object in it, because by lead he understood the person who gave the dollars to mean the Land League. It appears to us, however, that there was an object in it—namely to give his hearers evidence that he had the support of those who advocated the use of lead, and that his hearers were not intended to think and would not be likely to understand that by 'lead' the Irish Land League was signified."

These matters are a little important, because the House is asked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to extend our sympathies to the hon. Member for Cork.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): He does not require your sympathy.

*MR. FULTON: I did not say the hon. Member required sympathy, but that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) had asked us to extend our sympathies to the hon. Member in consequence of these allegations. The Commissioners go on to make this very significant observation—

"After this meeting at the Rotundo, Mr. Parnell does not appear to have encountered any hostility from the physical force party."

I am not at all surprised after that speech that the hon. Member for the City of Cork did not meet with any hostility from the physical force party, because the impression left upon their minds must have been that the hon. Member was in entire unison with their opinions and regarded them as being in the highest degree praiseworthy. On page 23 of the Report I find another instance in which the Commission have failed to agree with the views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork—

"Mr. Parnell, indeed, asserts that the organisation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood constantly and consistently opposed the Land League from the first, but the account of his views given in the *Nation* newspaper of the 2nd October, 1880, does not agree with this;"

and they set out a remarkable interview the hon. Member for Cork had with Redpath. The Commissioners go on to say that

"Mr. Parnell stated in cross examination that the opposition of the Fenian Party became stronger after this, but we find no evidence of it. On the contrary, Mr. M. Harris told us that had it not been for the Fenian organisation the Land League never could have assumed the proportions it did, and he added, 'I know that what I am saying will tell a good deal against what has been put forth in the witness-box, but I want to tell the truth.'"

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian passes over as one of no importance the finding of fact that

"In our judgment the charge against the respondents collectively of having conspired to bring about total separation is not established. But we find that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League organisation with the intention, by its means, to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. We think that this has been established against the following among the respondents:—Mr. Davitt, Mr. M. Harris, Mr. Dillon, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Joseph Condon, and Mr. J. J. O'Kelly."

It is well we should not forget what that finding amounts to. It is not merely a finding, as the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would have us believe, that these persons named in the Report were fighting for the repeal of the Union. It is not the question of the repeal of the Union which is connected with the finding. It is the question of the total separation of England and Ireland, and the establishment of Ireland as a separate nation. That is the matter upon which the Commissioners report. There is a further point on this finding which affects each and every one of the persons named who are Members of Parliament, I mean in connection with the oath of allegiance which they have taken at the Table. A Member of the House of Commons when he takes the oath of allegiance is not entitled to join in a criminal conspiracy, having for its object, not the repeal of the Union, as the right hon. Gentleman would have us believe, but the total separation of England and Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: None of these Members had taken the oath of allegiance at the time when these things occurred.

*MR. FULTON: I am glad to hear that none of these persons had taken the oath of allegiance at that time. I was under the impression they were all Members of the House of Commons. Will the hon. Member deny that the Member for East Mayo was a Member of the House at that time?

MR. SEXTON: No; the League was formed in 1879, and the hon. Member became a Member of the House in 1880.

*MR. FULTON: At any rate, the Member for East Mayo was a Member in 1880, and the Commissioners do not find that this conspiracy ceased in 1879. On the contrary, a proper reading of the Report will show it as a continuing conspiracy, continuing through 1879, 1880, 1881, and 1882, and probably until 1885; and if that be so, I think the hon. Member will, at any rate, admit I am entitled to argue that the Member for East Mayo, and all the other Members, if they were engaged in 1880 in the conspiracy, which the hon. Member seems to admit, they were engaged in it in 1879.

MR. SEXTON: The Commissioners find nothing whatever of an intention, they find no act, and whilst they fix the period when the combination began, they do not say that it continued for any length of time.

*MR. FULTON: My contention is a fair reading of the finding of the Commissioners in regard to the first charge is that this was a continuing conspiracy. I pass to the second charge—a very remarkable and important charge brought against them—

"The second charge," say the Commissioners, "we have to investigate is that one of the immediate objects of the conspiracy was, by a system of coercion and intimidation, to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled the English garrison."

The Commissioners give a very interesting account of boycotting. The right hon. Gentleman for a very long time past has spoken of boycotting in a manner which would lead us to suppose he always regarded it as a praiseworthy occupation. This is what the Commissioners say about boycotting:—

"It will be seen from these instances of boycotting, which might be largely added to, that it constituted a system of intimidation of a most severe and cruel character. . . . We are of opinion that the combination of which boycotting was the instrument is illegal, both

in its objects and in the means which were adopted."

Elsewhere the Commissioners describe boycotting as "an elaborate and all-pervading tyranny." But what the Commissioners say with regard to boycotting is certainly not stronger—perhaps not so strong—as the condemnation which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian made of that abominable practice in 1882. I am not going to detain the House with the numerous instances which the Report contains of the abominable system which was at that time carried out in Ireland. I desire, however, to refer to one case, which is a comparatively light case, but it is important because there is a finding of the Commission upon it with regard to the Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington.) The Commissioners say:—

"Herbert's father, an old man of over 70 years of age, was stoned and wounded; his child, ten years of age, was pursued and terrified; and on the 24th June, 1886, Herbert himself was attacked on his way home from the County Court Sessions at Tralee by three or four men, who fired at him, riddling his coat with bullets, one of which struck him on the right arm, causing him to be confined in the infirmary for about six weeks. Mr. Edward Harrington, M.P., when these extracts from his paper were put to him, upon cross-examination, suggested for the first time that he did not believe Herbert had been wilfully shot, but that the wound had been accidentally inflicted by Herbert himself. This suggestion, however, in our judgment, is entirely unfounded, and, moreover, Mr. Harrington had, in the *Kerry Sentinel*, of the 25th June, 1886, published an article narrating the outrage with great particularity, and stating that a most determined and desperate attempt had been made on the life of Edward Herbert, and, never suggesting that the injury Herbert received was self-inflicted, the article added that no arrests were made."

Then comes the finding of the Commission on the second charge.

"In our judgment the leaders of the Land League who combined together to carry out the system of boycotting were guilty of a criminal conspiracy, one of the objects of which was, as stated in the second charge, by a system of coercion and intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled the English garrison. We consider that this charge has been established against the following respondents—C. S. Parnell, Jeremiah D. Sheehan,"

and forty others. I come to the fourth charge made against the Member for Cork and his followers. This was passed over by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian as almost beneath his notice—

"We now proceed to consider the fourth charge, that the respondents disseminated the *Irish World* and other newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of other crimes. . . . During 1880, 1881, 1882, the League disseminated throughout Ireland a paper called the *Irish World*. It was edited by Patrick Ford, who, in conjunction with O'Donovan Rossa, had originated the Skirmishing Fund. During these years Patrick Ford was requested by Messrs. Davitt, Egan, Quinn (Secretary of the Land League), and Brennan to send this paper to Ireland, and it was proved that it was disseminated by the League, marked for 'free distribution.' Down to the middle or autumn of 1882 this paper was admittedly favourable to the League, and we have been told by Mr. Davitt that three-fourths of the news coming from America were subscribed through the instrumentality of the hundreds of branches of the Auxiliary American League, by reason of the appeals made by Ford in the *Irish World*. Mr. Parnell stated to us, that up to 1882 the *Irish World* had most actively supported the Land League, and that, till then, it never wavered, and that it then ceased to co-operate with the Land League; but that since the introduction of Mr. Gladstone's Bill (of 1886), Patrick Ford again changed his policy. . . . On the 5th of May, 1880, Davitt telegraphed to Patrick Ford as follows:—'Copies of the *Irish World* shall be sent to all parts of Ireland. Bishop Moran of Ossory (a nephew of Cardinal Cullen) denounced it and the Land League. May Heaven open his eyes to the truth! Spread the light.'"

The Report sets out an atrocious article published in the *Irish World*, on the 28th August, 1880, advocating the destruction of London, of the House of Commons, and other public buildings, by dynamite.

"On the 30th Oct., 1880," the Report goes on to say, "Mr. Davitt, speaking at Leadville, in America, characterised the *Irish World* as one of the noblest friends of the Irish people."

Michael Davitt, who is in the most intimate connection with the hon. Member for the city of Cork, who was received when he came out of Portland with an address, signed by the hon. Member for the city of Cork, and I think we may reasonably infer that the hon. Member for the city of Cork did not disapprove of the language Michael Davitt so used in speaking of the *Irish World* as one of the noblest friends of the Irish people. Quinn, the secretary of the League, who was in Ireland, telegraphed on the 5th October, 1881, to Patrick Ford—

"Numerous applications are daily received at the Land League Office for copies of the *Irish World*. I appeal to our friends in America to furnish us with as many copies as they can, so that we may be able to meet the constant demand for it. Its circulation just now can be of immense service to the cause."

The Report goes on to say—

"It would seem that from October, 1881, till December, 1883, Patrick Ford suspended his advocacy of the Skirmishing Fund policy, but in December, 1883, he opened an Emergency Fund, the object of which he thus described in his paper: 'The object of this fund will be to aid the active forces on the other side in carrying on the war against the enemy. It is unnecessary to enter into details. I can only say in a general way what I believe in myself. I believe in making reprisals. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I believe that every informer ought to die the death of a dog. I believe that all the material damage possible ought to be inflicted on the enemy, and that the war against the foeman ought to be persisted in without quarter to the end. I believe that England ought to be plagued with all the plagues of Egypt—ought to be scourged by day, and terrorised by night. I believe that this species of warfare ought to be kept up until England, hurt as well as scared, falls paralysed upon her knees, and begs Ireland to depart from her. This is my idea of making war on England.'"

I find it also said by the Commissioners—

"Mr. Davitt told us that whenever he went to America after 1878, Patrick Ford's was the first house to which he bent his footsteps upon arriving in New York, and that Ford was a man altogether misrepresented in England, and that he (Davitt), knew a large number of people in America and in Europe, and that he had yet to meet a better man morally, both as a Christian and as a philanthropist, than Patrick Ford."

That is the description of Mr. Davitt, the man who is responsible for the matter circulated throughout the length and breadth of Ireland in the *Irish World*, and that is the gentleman whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) thinks worthy of the sympathy of the House. Then there is another matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the House. In the *Irish World* of 18th December, 1880, the following appeared:—

"Outrages, outrages! They haven't begun yet. Out ye vipers of darkness! Out ye hungry wolves! Ye bloodhounds! Out from God's holy isle ere ye are overtaken by that punishment which caught the wicked land-wolves of France from 1779 to 1793."

If any Member of the House will turn to pages 81 to 85 of the Report he will find that miserable prophesy has been fulfilled. Outrages were bad enough in 1880, but they were worse in 1881 and 1882, and I think we may fairly presume from the findings of the Commissioners that those outrages were certainly not diminished by the teachings of these newspapers. There is yet another newspaper mentioned: *United Ireland*. Hon. Members of this House are so familiar with its contents that I need not trouble them with extracts from that paper; but as there is an attempt by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to ignore the facts and appeal to history, I should remind the House that the editor of that remarkable journal was the Member for East Cork, Mr. Wm. O'Brien. The Commissioners state that—

"A large number of extracts from *United Ireland* were read in evidence before us. We do not think it necessary to set out many of these extracts. The obvious intention of many of them was to appeal to men of extreme views."

Then the Commissioners give an extract as an example:—

"On the 26th May, 1883.—Mrs. Curley Fund.—Sir,—As the strangling Commission is over, and honest Dan Curley is killed off by the British Government, I enclose 10s. for his helpless family. I only wish it were pounds."

Daniel Curley was one of the persons convicted of the Phœnix Park murders. In a leading article of the 22nd December, 1883, O'Donnell, the murderer of Carey, is described as

"Having slain a monster for whose destruction he would, in most civilised communities, have been esteemed a public benefactor."

On the 30th of June, 1883, we find Mr. Finnerty described in *United Ireland* as an "Irishman brave and daring almost to a fault." In the *Nation* of 31st of March, 1883, it was reported that Mr. Finnerty had said, in regard to the blowing up of the Government buildings in London, that "he was very sorry that it was not more successful." Then I come to the paper which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian dismisses with the most contemptuous notice. He apparently obtains his facts from the hon. Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith), who said it was a wretched organ, only about 4,000 copies weekly were sold, and it was a matter so insignificant that it was quite unnecessary to take notice of it. If the House of Commons will read what the Commissioners

point out about the *Irishman*, they will find it is not quite so insignificant as the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would have us believe. They say:—

"The *Irishman* newspaper, which was purchased by Mr. Parnell and others, as above mentioned, first appeared under the editorship of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., on the 6th of August, 1881, and was continued down to August, 1885, notwithstanding, as we learn from Mr. Parnell, that its publication involved a loss. Mr. Parnell stated in evidence that he purchased the *Irishman* because it was a disreputable paper which he wished to get rid of, but the editorial notice of the 6th of August, 1881, upon the change of proprietorship, contained these words: 'The *Irishman* has changed hands but not minds. The history of its past is the programme of its future. Thrice in its career a transfer of management has taken place, but not once has it swerved from the great principles for the advocacy of which it was first established. As there has been, so there shall not be, any change in its spirit.'"

Now that is one of the organs—

MR. GOSCHEN: Edited by Pigott.

*MR. FULTON: Yes, as I am reminded, that was one of the organs edited by the patriot Pigott [*Home Rule laughter and ironical cheers*]. Hon. Members opposite, I think, still regard him, as they regarded him then, as a patriot. *The Irishman* newspaper had been the organ of the Physical Force or Fenian Party, and the Commissioners say—

"We draw the inference from Mr. Parnell's purchase of that paper, coupled with the manner in which it was conducted until its extinction in 1885, that Mr. Parnell's object was to address his Fenian supporters through that medium, while *United Ireland* was more particularly the organ of the Land League organisation."

This is the third instance in which the Commissioners, having on the one hand the oath of Mr. Parnell, and on the other hand evidence pointing in a contrary direction, have deliberately accepted the evidence as the more worthy of belief. On this point we have this finding in the Report—

"No denunciation by Mr. Parnell of the action of the Physical Force Party, either in Ireland or America, has been given in evidence, and Mr. Parnell stated before us that he could not say that he had, by speech or action, found fault with the Fenian organisation. We think that the articles from the *Irishman* above cited were deservedly characterised by Archbishop Walsh as most abominable. Upon this part of the case we find that the respondents did disseminate newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of crime."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) may think that a trifling accusation to bring against Members of this House. He may think that the real interpretation of the facts does not altogether support that finding; but if it be admitted that the evidence given before the Commission was true, and that the charge was made against hon. Members, then I think it must be also admitted that the conclusion to which the Commissioners have arrived does not reflect any particular credit upon the persons against whom these charges are made, and the findings are made against all the respondents. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) said—"I dismiss this from my consideration, because it is not direct but constructive." I say it is direct. I say it is not constructive. The worst of all these newspapers was the *Irish World*, because it advocated murder in its most atrocious form, and it was circulated by "free distribution" at the request of the Secretary of the Land League, the President of which was the Member for Cork. Now, Sir, I come to another point which I think is of very great importance. That is the effect of speeches and agitation upon the amount of crime. I desire to remind the House of what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) said in a very important speech which he delivered, I think, in the County of Lancashire, in 1879. At that time the Conservative Party were holding Office, and were occupying the same Benches as they are occupying now. The Member for Mid Lothian was holding them up to ridicule and denouncing their policy, and generally conducting a crusade against them. At that time there was in existence an Act known as the Peace Preservation Act, which was about to expire, and the question was whether it should be renewed or not, and an agitation was being got up in the country against its renewal. In 1879, in Lancashire, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"That in the whole of his political experience, then approaching to 50 years, never was Ireland so peaceful as it was at that time."

It was quite true that was so, for in 1877 there were only 236 reported outrages; in 1878 only 301; and in 1879 only 863. But it was a very remarkable coincidence, to say the least, that the moment the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid

Lothian became the Prime Minister of this country and responsible for the government of Ireland (whether it was due to the fact of his becoming Prime Minister or for some other reason) the fact remains, that the previously peaceful Ireland became a sea of crime. That was a fact that could not be denied. The hon. Member for South Hackney (Sir C. Russell), in his eloquent and exhaustive speech before the Commission, was most desirous of convincing the Commissioners that that stupendous outbreak of crime, which began in 1880 and continued until the passing of the Crimes Act in 1882, was due to other causes than to which it was contended it was due, and amongst other causes he was anxious to show that it was due to evictions. It is interesting to see that the Commissioners say—

"That the landlords in such circumstances should oppose the League and resort to the only weapon they had for their protection, namely, eviction, is not to be wondered at, and, in our judgment, the increased evictions which began in 1879 and continued during subsequent years was the result of the agitation against the landlords. It was sought to liken the crime of 1880-1-2 to that which existed in the years following the great famine of 1846—48, but when the figures as to these years are examined the analogy fails."

Having set out the figures for those years this is the conclusion to which the Commissioners come—

"So that with 3,415 families evicted in 1881 there was more agrarian crime (4,439) than in all the four years together (1849—52), with 58,423 families evicted."

In that way, and by reference to figures and facts, the Commissioners find, in spite of the eloquence of the hon. Member for South Hackney, that—

"We are not able to accept that as the explanation of the crime of 1880 to 1882."

Then I wish to refer to another suggestion of the hon. Member for South Hackney—that crime was caused by secret societies acting in antagonism with the Land League. On this the Commissioners say—

"As to the suggestion that the crime was caused by secret societies acting in antagonism to the Land League, Mr. Parnell, in the House of Commons on the 7th of January, 1881, stated that secret societies had then ceased to exist in Ireland. Mr. Parnell was then alluding to secret societies other than that of the Fenian conspiracy, and in our judgment Mr. Parnell was accurate when he made that statement. Mr. M. Harris has also stated in evidence that no secret societies except that of the Fenians then existed. We find no trace in the evidence of the League, or any of its chiefs or officers, suggesting that the crime which existed was the act of any such societies. It appears to us that this suggestion was first made during this inquiry. Mr. Louden, when in the box, stated that the crime in his part of the country was perpetrated by a society called the Herds League; but upon cross-examination it appeared that he had no facts on which to base his suggestion. As to the third suggestion, namely, that the throwing out of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in August, 1880, was the origin of the increase of crime, we are of opinion that it was not the effective cause of that increase, but that it arose from the agitation of which the rejection of the Disturbance Bill was made the occasion."

So that it follows from the findings of this Report that the Commissioners rejected each and every one of the suggestions made by the hon. Member for Hackney as accounting for the agrarian outrages during those years. Now, with regard to the fourth charge, namely, that the respondents, by their speeches, and by payments for that purpose, incited persons to the commission of crime, including murder, the Commissioners find—

"That the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation, but that they did incite to intimidation, and that the consequence of that incitement was that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited."

Then comes this very remarkable finding, upon which I wish to address a few remarks to the House—

"We find that it was not proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting persons to commit crime."

In a few moments I will endeavour to show the House that the reason why it was not proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting to crime was that they declined to produce the books which might have demonstrated, I agree, their innocence, but which might, and probably would have demonstrated their guilt. With regard to the question of the Land League books, let me refer to page 56 of the Report. It is stated by the Commissioners that the Land League was suppressed on October 18, 1881, and that most of the books were removed to London by Messrs. Campbell, M.P., and P. J. Sheridan, a gentleman who had been concerned in getting up outrages in the West of Ireland

*SIR C. RUSSELL (Hackney): Where is the paragraph saying that P. J. Sheridan was engaged in getting up outrages in the West?

*MR. FULTON: I may be wrong as to that. If I am, I withdraw that statement; but there is no doubt as to who he was.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: Where is it stated? Where does the hon. Gentleman find it stated that P. J. Sheridan was engaged in the commission of outrages?

*MR. FULTON: I do not know that there is such a statement in the Report; but in the voluminous pages of the evidence I believe it will be found to be so stated. I shall be glad if anyone will get up and deny that the P. J. Sheridan referred to in page 56 of the Report is not the person constantly referred to in Debates in this House in connection with the Kilmainham Treaty. Now with regard to the funds of the League, I see the Commissioners say—

"Of the item of £148,000 mentioned on the expenditure side, about £40,000 has been accounted for in the evidence before us; of the remaining £108,000, over £70,000 went to the Ladies Land League. No account has been given in evidence of the expenditure of the money handed over to the Ladies Land League, or of the residue of the £108,000. Thus we have over £100,000 of Land League funds received, but no details of the manner in which it was expended."

During the progress of the inquiry, Mr. Justin McCarthy stated that he had obtained a list of the books relating to this League which he was willing to produce, the Commissioners adding—

"During the progress of the case, the production of these cash-books and ledgers for the years 1881 to 1883 proved to be of importance. When called for Mr. Justin MacCarthy was unable to explain the reason for their non-production. Mr. G. Lewis, the solicitor for the respondents, stated that a mistake had been made in the affidavit. Mr. Brady was in Court, but was not called; and how and in what way the suggested mistake arose, if any did arise, has never been explained, nor have the books for 1881-83 been produced."

The finding of the Commissioners generally with regard to the non-production of the Land League books is given on page 97 of the Report, and is as follows:—

"In the course of the inquiry into the accounts of the League it appeared that after February, 1881, Egan kept an account in Paris at the bank of Messrs. Monro and Co. We appointed a Commission to examine the books in Paris; but Messrs. Monro declined to allow them to be seen, and as they were not subject to our jurisdiction the Commission was without result. We therefore requested Mr. Parnell to give authority to Messrs. Monro to produce the accounts relating to the Land League. This he refused to do. We have therefore been deprived of evidence upon the question how the monies of the Land League were expended in the years 1881 and 1882. On this subject we may say generally that we have not received from Mr. Parnell and the officers of the Land League the assistance we were entitled to expect in the investigation of the Land League accounts in order that it might be seen how its funds were expended."

It is in regard to these findings of the Commission, anent the non-production of the Land League books, that I say we must attach particular importance to particular words in regard to the fifth charge, where the Commissioners find it was not "proved" that these respondents found money for the commission of crime. Therefore, it is practically found that these persons who had in their possession these books deliberately refused and declined to produce the books. Now I come to the ninth and tenth charges—the last I shall have to trouble the House with—but they are not unimportant, although they were lightly passed over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The ninth charge is as to the respondents having invited and obtained the assistance of the Physical Force Party in America; and the Commissioners have come to a conclusion not altogether favourable to the hon. Member for Cork as to that portion of the evidence, which sets out the remarkable interview between the hon. Member and Le Caron and the hon. Member for Roscommon. In the summer of 1881 Le Caron visited the House of Commons, and this is the account of the interview given in the Report—

"Le Caron asserts that Mr. O'Kelly on that occasion suggested to him that on his return he should use his influence with his friends on the other side to bring the Organisation into line on that side of the water. That they were all working for one common object, and therefore there should and need be no misunderstanding.

"Le Caron states that after Mr. O'Kelly left Mr. Parnell, who was present, continued the same line of conversation that Mr. O'Kelly had introduced, and said, 'You furnish the sinews of war; you have them in your power; if they do not do as you tell them, stop the supplies: the whole matter rests in your hands.' That he (Mr. Parnell) wished him as soon as he returned to New York to see John Devoy, to say to him from Mr. Parnell that he believed John Devoy could do more than any

other one man in the Organisation to bring about an understanding such as was desired, and he wished to secure his presence as soon as possible on this side of the water, and would meet him in Paris on his arriving there, and that so far as his (Devoy's) expenses were concerned he (Mr. Parnell) would guarantee that he would defray them.

"Mr. Parnell states that he never sent any message either to the Clan-na-Gael or to any of the persons mentioned by Le Caron, and that he neither directly nor indirectly communicated with any of these persons for the purpose that is suggested by Le Caron.

"We think," say the Commissioners, "that these passages tend strongly to confirm Le Caron's testimony; and we come to the conclusion that Le Caron has given a correct account of the message he was requested by Mr. Parnell to convey to Devoy."

Is the House prepared to accept this finding of the Commission? We ask that the whole Report of the Commissioners should be adopted by the House, in order that it may be a matter of reference hereafter. Then, as to whether the hon. Member for Cork had no intimate or close connection with what is called the Irish-American Party, I will read the telegram which was sent by Mr. Parnell to Patrick Ford, and which was published in the *Irish World* on October 1, 1881—

"I heartily thank the Land Leaguers throughout the United States for their glorious work.

"I thank you for the invitation to visit America; but the movement will probably claim my constant attention and presence in Ireland this winter, rendering a visit to the States improbable.

"Mr. T. P. O'Connor will start for America early in October, and will represent my views and those of the Irish Organisation.—CHARLES STEWART PARNELL."

I find that modest patriot the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did go to America, and arrived there in October, 1881, and during his visit he appears to have been on terms of the greatest intimacy with those whom I do not for a moment hesitate to describe as some of the greatest scoundrels in the United States—Patrick Ford, Finnerty, and Alexander Sullivan. If any proof were wanted as to the real ends and objects of these scoundrels we find it on pages 116 and 117 of the Report. One of the precious circulars sent by the Clan-na-Gael to its camps, dated as late as 18th December, 1885, shows how far they regarded this Constitutional movement as of any use.

MR. SEXTON: Will the hon. Gentleman state what ground he has for the inference he is now drawing?

*MR. FULTON: I have it in every single one of the pages of the Report, which deal with the ninth charge of the *Times*, and which show that day by day, week by week, and month by month, during the visit of the hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), he appears to have been in daily communication and intercourse with Patrick Ford, Finnerty, and Alexander Sullivan. That is the ground I have for the inference I have drawn. The hon. Gentleman may draw what inference he pleases. I am now dealing with pages 116 and 117 of the Report, which shows what importance the Americans attached to what is called the "Constitutional Movement." This circular of the Clan-na-Gael says:—

"The achievement of a National Parliament gives us a footing upon Irish soil; it gives us the agencies and instrumentalities of a Government *de facto* at the very commencement of the Irish struggle. It places the Government of the land in the hands of our friends and brothers"

—hon. Members opposite—

"It removes the Castle's rings and gives us what we may well express as the plant of an armed revolution. From this standpoint the restoration of Parliament is part of our programme."

I have always been of the opinion that establishment of a Parliament in Dublin was only a step in the direction indicated in this passage of the Report. The circular proceeds—

"When that is attained, if agitation will not go further, we will still go on with our forces unimpaired and strengthened. We therefore deem it advisable that you secure the election of as many delegates as is practicable or possible to the Convention of the Irish National League to be held in Chicago."

I would remind the House that the accusation has been made against hon. Members and followers of the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that they were maintained and supported by money coming from a tainted source. Let me refer them to page 118 of the Report, where the Commissioners say—

"We are of opinion that the evidence proves that the Irish American League of America has been, since the Philadelphia Convention, 25th April 1883, directed by the Clan-na-Gael, a body actively engaged in promoting the use of dynamite for the destruction of life and property in England. It has been further

proved that while the Clan-na-Gael controlled and directed the Irish National League of America, the two organisations concurrently collected sums amounting to more than £60,000 for a fund called the Parliamentary Fund, out of which payments have been made to Irish Members of Parliament, amounting in the year 1886 to £7,556, and in 1887 to £10,500."

Well, now, I want to know what hon. Members opposite are going to do with this money. I have no doubt it is still in existence. I cannot for a moment believe that they have expended it, and if they have not expended it, now that they know by the finding in this Report that the Clan-na-Gael directed the movements of the Irish National League, are they prepared to repudiate that League in this House or in the country? Are they prepared to repudiate it, or will they say "We cannot return this money because we have spent it, but we will never receive another farthing from the same source." Will they do that, or will they continue to receive money from this tainted source? The source of the Irish-American League, controlled by the Clan-na-Gael, which, I think, everyone will agree was and is a murder society, is a tainted source. Will they go on receiving money, week by week and month by month, for the purpose of supporting this agitation? At page 119 of the Report comes this passage—

"It has been proved that they invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the physical force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and in order to obtain that assistance abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party."

It has also been proved

"That the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation and accepted subscriptions from Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite."

I think I have shown that this man Ford was in close connection with the hon. Member for Cork ever since 1879, when Mr. Davitt was released from prison. Unless it be said that hon. Members can be accused of want of intellegence, and I for one should not accuse them of that; it must have been manifest to them throughout the years 1881 and 1882, and afterwards, what was the character of the movement advocated by the Irish American Party. Yet they deliberately allied themselves to this Party and received money from it, and in no single instance did they condemn the action of those advocating outrages or abominable crimes. I think I have established, by these observations I have addressed to the House, these propositions. I think I have established from the Report that as to certain persons who were Members of this House that they were engaged in a treasonable conspiracy. I agree that I am at issue with at least one Member of this House as to whether that conspiracy continued after 1879. I say it continued in 1881, 1882, and probably longer, and that it continued after these persons had taken the oath of allegiance at the Table of the House of Commons. I agree that they have been acquitted of directly inciting to murder. No one supposed it possible that by the Commission hon. Members could be proved to have directly incited to murder in 1881. [Sir W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear.!] I should imagine that even under the emasculated rule of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) if they had incited to murder some attempt would have been made to bring them to justice. Although they knew that their policy did lead to crime and outrage they persisted in it, and dissemmated this abominable newspaper the, *Irishman*, throughout Ireland. Further it is proved that at this time they were in, more or less, constant communication with the physical force party; and though it is not expressly found that they provided money in 1881 and 1882 for the purposes of outrage it is found that they did not produce the evidence in their possession, which would have been able in the most conclusive way to disprove the charge. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Why did you not produce the books. Or at any rate if you did not produce them why did you not give some reason for not producing them?

MR. SEXTON: The Report does not say that we had the books.

*MR. FULTON: No; but a Member of this House made an affidavit setting out certain books which he said could be produced, and which the Commissioners find no satisfac-

tory answer or explanation was given for not being produced. Each and every one of these circumstances establishes against hon. Members opposite a very strong case—a case which is very well worthy the consideration of the House and of the country. All the findings of this Report ought to be entered upon the Journals of this House, for these reasons. Firstly, they closely and intimately affect the honour of hon. Members opposite; and secondly for the much more important reason that they are closely connected and associated with the great movement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone)for the establishment of a separate Parliament in Ireland. I know not what possible shape that measure may take if it ever comes into existence again, but this much must always remain—that the Executive must be controlled by the hon. Member for Cork and his associates, who have been the mainstay of this movement, and therefore it is important to see how and in what way this Constitutional agitation has been carried on. It is for that reason I am of opinion this Motion has been rightly brought before the House, and that we ought to enter upon the Journals of the House, not merely the findings of the Commission, but each and every word of the Commission Report, which throws a flood of light upon the real character of this movement, and a flood of light upon the motives which have actuated hon. Members opposite from the time they first commenced this agitation.

*(10.20.) Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): If I had consulted my own inclination I should not have taken part in this debate, but inasmuch as the Report is very voluminous, and the evidence is not accessible to hon. Members, and as the Attorney General is perfectly certain to take part in the debate, I will endeavour to address the House as temperately as I can. I do not think it necessary to say much about the speech of the hon. and learned gentleman who has just sat down. It consisted in so far as I could observe of the reading of a variety of extracts, selected indiscriminately from the Report, without much regard to the context, and certainly I thought the hon. and learned Gentleman would conclude by proposing the expulsion of the Irish Members. I cannot understand how the hon. and learned Gentleman can continue to sit so comfortably, or that he can observe us sitting easy, in close proximity with person, of so abandoned and profligate a character. The speeches delivered from the Government side of the House show the necessity for a right understanding of what the Report does and does not contain. Charges were made by the *Times* of writing the forged letters, of taking part in the Phœnix Park murders, of assassination carefully calculated and coolly completed, of the personal hiring of bravos for £20 or £30 to commit outrage, on the ground that my hon. Friends had not time to commit it themselves, of arson, and of the mutilation of men and cattle. Except upon the matter of the forged letters there was not the least evidence produced in support of any of these charges. Mr. T. Harrington was indeed charged with paying £7 for a midnight outrage; but the only witness called broke hopelessly to pieces in cross-examination, and finally made an affidavit in which he confessed that he had committed perjury. The Attorney General, I think somewhat hastily, went to Oxford recently. There he said he rejoiced that these personal charges had not been proved. I am not quite sure that is an appropriate attitude for the Attorney General; but I am inclined to think that an ounce of apology would have been worth more than a ton of thankfulness. It is much to be regretted that in the Report there is not one poor word of apology for all these frightful charges. I do not doubt that is because the Commissioners had been by the terms of the Act of Parliament, which was carefully framed—I do not know whether I may say contrived—prevented from inquiring into the conduct of the *Times*. The advisers of the *Times* knew from the first that all these charges could not succeed, and therefore they brought forward others involving the whole of the Land League. And if the latter charges were true of the Members of Parliament, they were also true of two-thirds of the Irish nation—Archbishops, Bishops, parish priests, and

I suppose Catholic curates, together with a vast number of respectable persons, who were all members of the Land League. The only point in these charges in which I feel concern is the personal complicity of hon. Members with crime. I never supposed that a great social revolution, extending over a period of 10 years, could be carried on without a good deal of crime, trouble, and agitation, or that hon. Members were always going to be wise in action or temperate in language, or that they never would be betrayed by agents or misunderstood by followers. But I am concerned to know whether there has been proved against hon. Members any moral obliquity or complicity with crime. Therefore I will deal with those charges which may be said to have been found adversely to the Irish Members. The first is the finding that many of the respondents established and joined in the Land League, intending by its means to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland. For my own part, though I should resist separation to the last, I do not think that there is any moral stain upon a man involved by him wishing to see his country independent of another country, unless he desires to effect it by criminal means. But, as it is, the finding relates to a period 11 years ago, and amounts to this: that 11 years ago seven out of the 85 Irish Members are believed by the Judges to have intended separation at the time they joined the Land League. The next finding is that the respondents defended persons charged with agrarian crime, and supported their families. Some of the Irish Party confess to having done that, and their reasons were, that there were indiscriminate arrests in Ireland, and that there was no confidence in the administration of justice, and that jury-packing in Ireland was habitual, inveterate, and deeply resented by the people. Was there, in such circumstances, any moral wrong in procuring counsel and solicitor to defend prisoners, provided that nothing dishonourable was done? It was found that nothing dishonourable was done. There does not appear to be a single case of spiriting away a witness, or of procuring perjury; and yet we find so high an authority as Lord Selborne considers it a grave matter that gentlemen should provide solicitor and counsel to defend prisoners in a country where justice is believed to be habitually prostituted, and in a country where the packing of juries, which I consider the poisoning of the fountain of justice, is habitual and constant. That is all I have to say in regard to the charge of defending prisoners. The third finding is that the respondents made payments to compensate persons who had been injured in the commission of crime. I regard this as a very serious matter. But what is the evidence, for the Judges very particularly drew attention to it? In my view it means that the Land League did on one occasion give money, said to be for medical relief, to three men injured in the commission of crime. According to the doctrine of constructive responsibility, all members of the Land League were, therefore, responsible for this act. But there is not a fragment of evidence to show that any one of the respondents personally did this thing, or knew of its being done. Hon. Gentlemen will find the evidence set out, and it consists of this: There was a letter written in 1881 by a person named Timothy Horan, secretary of the Castleisland branch of the Land League, referring to the fact that three men had been injured, and asking for a grant for them. The letter was addressed to the Central Executive of the Land League, and was initialed by Mr. John Ferguson, of Glasgow, upon whose order, dated October 12, 1881, a sum of £6 was paid for compensation. It was not proved, however, that any one of the respondents was present at the executive meeting, or had any knowledge of the incident. It was true that Mr. Ferguson was reported to have said that on two or three occasions similar grants were made, but he challenged that statement; and if hon. Members would look at the evidence they would find that that was not a true construction of what was said. In addition to that, there is the absence of means to which the Commissioners refer. But it is found by the Judges that 65 of the respondents did pay money to compensate persons injured in the commission of crime. They must have arrived at this conclusion with difficulty, as only one such payment was made by the League, and there is not a fragment of evidence to show that the respondents, personally, knew anything about it. I do not wish the House to

do any injustice to the Judges in regard to this matter, and I would, therefore, infer that what they meant was constructive responsibility. The Land League made only three payments of £2 each, which amounted to this one payment of £6; and inasmuch as those gentlemen are prominent members of the League, I suppose the Judges thought they must be held responsible. I will now say a few words about the League books. There seems to be a general impression principally pervading Cabinet Ministers and gentlemen of their way of thinking who prowl about the country making wild statements as to the conduct of this agitation, and it seems to be their impression that those books are all missing, and that there has been a general conflagration of the books and papers of the Land League. There never was a greater mistake. The conspiracy, as it is called—and I do not care whether it is a conspiracy or not—started with the foundation of the Land League in October, 1879. It was followed by the Ladies League and the National League, and has been in existence down to the present day. Ever since October, 1882, this organisation has been carried on by a system of books; as accurate, as complete, and as full as the books kept in the Bank of England. Moreover, these books were in all their completeness from October, 1882, down to the date of the Commission. They were submitted to the examination of a skilled chartered accountant, who, on being asked by me, stated that all the books were kept which he would expect to be kept, and were all in perfect order, and further that he got every book and document he thought fit to ask for. These books of the National League were not adverted to in the Judges' Report. They say nothing about the books which were produced, but a good deal about those which were not. It was some books of the Land League which were not produced. The cash books of the Land League, during 19 out of the 24 months of its existence, were produced; but other books and correspondence were not produced. And I will state why they were not. What was the evidence on that subject? The House must not suppose that the Land League was a regular and orderly body like the National League. On the contrary, I say it with a keen memory, not untinged with regret, the Liberals so hunted, chevied and bullied the Land League during a portion of its existence, that it can hardly be said to have had any sort of settled habitation. In the month of October, 1881, a raid was made on the offices of the Land League, and in the expectation of the raid a large number of books were sent over to England, only a few being left in Dublin. Those which were left in Dublin were sent to the Commissioners, but those sent over to England were dissipated, though I do not know where. Gentlemen who were examined before the Commissioners said they did know where. They may not have told the truth; but, at any rate, the Commissioners did not make that finding. It may be that those books were dissipated in a sort of whirlwind, consequent on the raid from Dublin Castle. At any rate, a great number of the books were produced, although it so happens that the ledgers and cash books of from 1881 to 1883 could not be examined. As to the books of the British National League, it was stated by Mr. Justin M'Carthy, who, I am sure, the House will not think likely to have indulged in gratuitous misrepresentations, that he had those books during two years. When he was called, however, he said he knew nothing about them; and although he had made affidavit, as a good many persons do, without looking very particularly at the schedules, he found when in the witness-box that what he had so deposed was a mistake. And Mr. George Lewis said there had been a mistake in his office which had led to this error. The only other books which were left in Paris in the hands of Messrs. Monro and Company, Mr. Parnell point-blank refused to allow to be inspected, and there were intelligible grounds for this refusal. He stated that those books contained an account of the investments and resources of the League, and that he was not prepared to disclose, either to friends or foes, the financial resources of the Organisation of which he was President. This, again, is not referred to by the Commissioners, and I do not think the House will attach much importance to that part of the subject. I pass now to another finding of the Commissioners

and that is, that those respondents advanced newspapers tending to incite to crime. I hope I may be allowed to put this matter somewhat in detail, as the finding is rather an important one. To my mind, if it be shown that individuals circulating newspapers containing matter intending to incite to crime, that was a very cowardly aud villainous proceeding, and those persons should have less sympathy than the men who were thereby led to the commission of crime. It is for this reason that I wish to draw particular attention to this subject. The Judges referred to three newspapers. First of those is the *Irish World*, published in New York, the tone of which was very hostile to Great Britain. The Judges set forth articles appearing in the years 1880, 1881, and1882. They consist of letters, reports of meetings, and one leading article. Of these, three or four recommend the provision of arms for the purpose of fighting against Great Britain. Seven or eight speak in tones of hatred of this country, and one expresses an opinion that an appeal to dynamite is justifiable. The question here is, what is the responsibility of those gentlemen who were connected with the Land League? As the *Irish World* is published in New York it can hardly be pretended that any of those gentlemen can have exercised the slightest control over it. It is stated that it was distributed by the Land League, and that is perfectly true; but why, and how was it distributed? It was in this way—it had a fund of its own called "The Spread of Light Fund," a fund which was for free distribution; and it so happened that consignments were sent from America to the Land League in Dublin, because the secretary of the Land League happened also to be the correspondent of the *Irish World*. There were 11 articles in the years 1881-82-83 which may be said to be of a reprehensible character, and which are set forth in the Report; it amounts to this—that, assuming the paper was published once a week, there are, roughly speaking, in about 150 sheets only 11 articles alleged to be objectionable, seven or eight of them being somewhat objectionable, and those even are not placed in a prominent position. If you wish to deal fairly with our brother Members in this matter, the point you would look to in connection with the *Irish World* is this, Was it shown during the inquiry that in those three years the respondents knew of the publication of those articles? It is not shown or proved that any single one of the respondents had brought home to him a knowledge of these objectionable paragraphs. In the year 1882 the *Irish World* ceased to support the Land League; it adopted a dynamite policy during 1883, 1884 and 1885; and in those years it was not even pretended in evidence that any one of the respondents had any knowledge of the contents of the paper, or that any copies of it were distributed in Ireland. The next paper I have to refer to is *United Ireland*, which was owned by Mr. Parnell and three or four of the other respondents as trustees of the Land League, and was edited by Mr. W. O'Brien. A good many extracts are set out by the Judges from this paper as objectionable, for a period extending over 10 years—indeed, practically speaking, all the extracts which could in any way be regarded as objectionable were set out. The first complaint made in regard to them was that they appeared under a column headed "The Campaign," or "Incidents of the Campaign," or a similar phrase—"the Land War," and so forth; and the Judges thought that outrages by being so recorded were treated as incidental to the agitation. I think it rather far-fetched to come to that conclusion, for there was nothing except in one sentence in the whole column that was at all reprehensible; and the facts published simply record occurrences that have taken place. The objection was in the heading, and the House will find in the Report that Mr. Parnell took the same view. He objected to it, and although it began in 1881, it was stopped in February, 1882, having appeared for about six months only. After all it is a matter eight years old, and it should be remembered also that at the time Mr. Parnell and Mr. O'Brien were in prison, and it was only by sending a message in some subterranean manner that they were able to indicate their desire that this form of paragraph should cease. There are only nine other articles set out for the whole 10 years in the Report. Three of them are disrespectful to the Queen, or hostile to England, having nothing to do with

dynamite or outrages; one is an attack on Lord Spencer, and I must admit a most violent and unjust attack, but not nearly so violent or unjust as the attacks which habitually appeared in the *Times* and the *Scotsman* on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Two others consists of letters from cor respondents about the Phœnix Park murders, and those letters speak in sympathy with the criminals, but in detestation of crime itself. But if those letters are to be brought forward as evidence of bad spirit on the part of the editor and on the part of the other respondents it must be on the suggestion that they had sympathy with the Phœnix Park murderers. The Judges, however, have expressly found that they sincerely condemned and denounced the Phœnix Park murders, and therefore they were entirely acquitted of all insincerity in their copious denunciations of that crime. Another of those articles is one that has been referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman, in which it is stated that O'Donnell, for the murder of Carey, would, in most civilised countries, have been esteemed a public benefactor. I, of course, think that a most improper observation, and I will leave it without further comment. The last of the number is a leading article in September, 1885, violently hostile to England, but in terms condemning outrages and dynamite as being mad and sanguinary conspiracies. There, then, is an end of all the objectionable articles which are set forth in the report from *United Ireland* for over a period of 10 years, and it has been practically found that there are nine objectionable articles, only one of which can be said to be really objectionable during the whole of the nine or 10 years. It is sufficient for me to add that during the same time the paper abounded with denunciations of crime and exhortations to the people to live peaceably. The other paper was the *Irishman*, which lasted four years—from August, 1881, to August, 1885—and I confess that, in my opinion, the articles in it were most reprehensible. But the question is—how far were the respondents responsible for them? The paper was bought by Mr. Parnell and published—not edited, as the Judges stated—nominally by Mr. O'Brien. But the point before the Commission, and the point for the House to bear in mind, was that no one ever said that these articles were defensible; but it was said by Mr. Parnell that he never knew of these articles, that he never saw the paper, which, in fact, was a very obscure rag, and had, indeed, escaped the notice of the Government of Lord Spencer. Mr, O'Brien also said that the paper was edited by a man named O'Connor, not a member of this House; and that he (Mr. O'Brien) was not aware either of the contents or the character of that paper, having enough to do to attend to his other duties. Now, Sir, there are 14 articles from this paper set out by the Judges, and I put it again to the House whether there is anything in the Report intimating that any one of the respondents was cognisant of the publication of the articles. It was not even suggested in respect to 63 of the 65 Members of this House, and the two others swore that they had no knowledge of the issue of those articles. This, then, is the general result of the charges in respect to the three newspapers—that 63 out of the 65 members were not responsible in any way for the *Irishman;* and certainly as regards the 65 they were not in any way responsible for the *Irish World;* but as regards all of them I think that, to a great extent, they were morally responsible in regard to *United Ireland*, and as regards two of them, one was owner and the other editor of *United Ireland*, and one was owner and the other publisher of the *Irishman.* I believe that if hon. Members will consider the articles referred to in *United Ireland* they will come to the conclusion that, though strongly worded, they did not incite to crime. As regards the other two papers, there was no such responsibility. Therefore, it is a case of constructive responsibility as regards 63 at least out of 65 of these respondents. The next finding of the Judges to which I wish to allude is that the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation of, and accepted subscriptions of money from ,Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite. This relates to the receipt of money collected through the means of the *Irish World.* In 1881, and down to October, 1882, Patrick Ford and the *Irish World* supported the Land League, and the Irish-

Americans who subscribed chose Ford as the medium through whom they sent their money to Ireland. No part of this money, however, went to any of the respondents, unless it was about £2,000 spent in 1880 in election expenses; all of it was spent in the relief of distress and for the general purposes of the Land League. During this time, as I have already pointed out, the *Irish World* had occasional articles, in perhaps 15 or 20 numbers, of a reprehensible character, although it was not found that any of the respondents saw those articles, and when asked if they had seen them, they denied it. I am aware that opinions may differ as to the propriety of receiving money for charitable or even political purposes through the hands of persons who are themselves of notoriously bad character, but if the persons who subscribed the money are respectable, and the objects such as you honestly approve, I think moralists would fairly hold that, at all events, in a great emergency, it would be justifiable to accept money under those circumstances. Now, the actual subscribers in this case were millions of the Irish-Americans — persons of excellent character, though it is really almost presumptuous to speak of the moral characters of millions, which will include, of course, the righteous and the unrighteous. The objects for which the money has been received are, in their view, objects of transcendent importance, the emergency being one of the greatest in their history; and it was received for innocent purposes from innocent people. In October, 1882, and down to the end of 1885, the *Irish World* had preached dynamite consistently. It had received in that time no support from the Irish Party, and no money was during that time received by them from it. But at the end of 1885, and in 1886 and 1887, and since then, the *Irish World* absolutely ceased to advocate dynamite, and adopted a policy more in sympathy with that of the Irish Party, and no objectionable articles have appeared in it since then; while, since then, the League has received money from America. It was found by the Judges that the Irish Party had received money from it at that time, but, in point of fact, they had not, the real reason of the mistake being a very curious one. There had been an entry in the *Irish World* of money sent to the Land League in England, but, in point of fact, that had been an entry copied from other papers, and money had not been received and transmitted as in the previous times of 1881 and 1882. The next point is that the respondents—

> "invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the physical force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and in order to obtain that assistance abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party."

Now, I must point out that the physical force party in America and the Clan-na-Gael are here treated as being different, one from the other. I mention this in order to prevent confusion, because in some parts of the Report the two are mentioned as being convertible terms. The physical force party, which means the Fenian Party, have existed since 1867 in America. Undoubtedly it has always advocated insurrection, and has been in favour of a fair fight whenever an opportunity might arise, but until the middle of 1881 it has not been suggested that they have made themselves a party to dynamite or outrage. With the physical force party before 1881—before it had taken any part in dynamite—the respondents had undoubtedly had dealings. What their policy has been is plain from the following sentence in Mr. Parnell's evidence:—

> "With regard to the question whether I ought to have forbidden these men to enter our movement, I have always thought that in the history of Ireland there has been much justification for the views that they have taken up from time to time, and particularly their view as regards the inutility of Parliamentary action, and I should have considered it an unreasonable course on my part to pursue at the threshold of our movement, when we were yet untried, when our movement was yet untried, to ask these men to abandon their views, and to accept unhesitatingly mine, and to shut the door of the Constitutional movement in their face at the very commencement of this movement, unless they agree to forego definitely, and to make public declarations definitely against any contingent recourse to physical force hereafter."

It is undoubtedly the case—and the

Irish Party have never denied it—that they are anxious, if they can, to disarm the hostility of the physical force party in America as well as in England, and to bring them into a common alliance, working for what they believe to be a Constitutional policy, without requiring any open or formal renunciation of their former views. But it is suggested by my hon. and learned Friend that it was found that the respondents had associated with the Clan-na-Gael, and that the Clan-na-Gael were undoubtedly a dynamite faction. That has been found, but in point of fact, for my own part, I do not say that it was so. But it is suggested that the Irish Party had, knowing this, associated with them and sought their co-operation. That would be a very different matter, but it is not the case. The Report said—

"It has not been proved that the respondents or any of them, knew that the Clan-na-Gael controlled the League or was collecting money for the Parliamentary Fund."

Nor did the Report find that in associating with them the respondents knew the operations of the Clan-na-Gael; indeed, it found that the operations of the Clan-na-Gael were secret. The ninth finding does not apply to the dynamite party at all, and I entreat hon. Members before they go about the country condemning these gentlemen for associating with dynamiters to realise that it has been found that they did not associate with any notorious criminals. The evidence did not refer to any association with criminals or dynamiters. The last finding to which I have to refer is that which finds that the respondents incited to intimidation. That finding crops up in various parts of the Report. Now, the facts are these: The respondents have admitted boycotting before the Commissioners, as they always have done. Now, of course, boycotting, as every one must feel, is a very severe weapon, but in rural England there is plenty of boycotting. What I cannot endure is the cant and hypocrisy on this subject of well-fed and well-dressed men who practise boycotting through the Primrose League.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, East): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. Member has stated that the Primrose League has been guilty of boycotting, but he has not mentioned any instance.

*MR. R. T. REID: I beg to say that more than once complaints have been made to me by people, who said that they had been pratically boycotted by the Primrose League. Of course, I am not going to give names. I did not mean to get into a conflict with hon. Gentlemen opposite, though I stand by every syllable I have said. Now I hope I may be allowed to proceed with my observations. I do not defend boycotting. I mean that I think boycotting is one of those things that ought not to be resorted to except under the gravest necessity. Whether such a necessity existed in Ireland in 1879, 1880, and 1881 was a thing the Judges were not, in their opinion, commissioned to inquire into. The result is, that we have in the Report a picture of boycotting, but no picture of the miseries which led to that boycotting. A few references to the evidence will explain the state of things out of which boycotting has arisen. On page 4869 will be found the evidence of the parish priest of Bantry, of whom, I am sure no one who took part in the proceedings before the Commission will speak in terms other than respect for an honourable and upright man. He tells how a parishioner named Macartney, of Ballycorey, was evicted with his family. Five of his children were ill at the time of measles or scarlet fever. They were put out in that condition, and one of the children died soon afterwards. Then, to take another case out of four

within this priest's parish, in 1884 Charles Davis was evicted and lived for some weeks beside a ditch near by; and under these circumstances his wife gave birth to a child, she having crawled into an outhouse unprotected by a door, and there she was delivered. Near by a brother, Eugene Davis, had a holding from which he was evicted, with the result that he became insane, and is now a raging lunatic.

"However," says the witness, "I must observe he was insane some time before, but at the time of the eviction he appeared quite sane."

In another case Daniel Sullivan was evicted about 1882 or 1883. He lived on the border of the parish adjoining Bantry. He was evicted at a time when his child was on the verge of death, and the child died on the following day. His wife from that day became insane, though up to then quite sane, and is now in a lunatic asylum. The references to these four cases in the Parish of Bantry will be found on pages 4868-9. No attempt was made to contract these facts sworn to by the reverend gentleman, and I ask any hon. Member, if he were one of the persons treated in this way, would he condemn boycotting with as much energy? It will be found on reading the Report that the Judges treat boycotting and intimidation as convertible terms, and, reading the Report in that light, it will appear that what the respondents are found guilty of is boycotting, and boycotting alone. None of the respondents are found to have taken part in any other act of intimidation. There is a case reported of Mr. Condon on page 48, but the Judges do not say whether he did or did not commit the act. There is no case reported of any branch of the Land League taking part in any act of outrage, except the case of the Killoo branch at Longford (p. 80), and it is there stated that the order to commit the assault, which ended fatally, was given at a meeting not of the Land League, but at a meeting of members of the Land League. The Judges do not report that the respondents, as members of the Land League, had any participation in the murder; they find that the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation. There is no case reported of any of the respondents committing any crime other than incitement to intimidation, which, as I have said, is treated as equivalent to boycotting. They also find that some of the respondents did express *bonâ fide* disapproval of crime and outrage. Only some of them made speeches at all, but none of them are reported to have been insincere. Again, it is said, they did not denounce intimidation, which is equivalent to boycotting. Turn it which way you will, if boycotting and intimidation are convertible terms, you find that the Report holds them responsible for boycotting alone. If boycotting means intimidation, they are responsible for intimidation, otherwise they are not. I will not examine for a moment the statistical and other arguments by which the Judges come to the conclusion that boycotting led to crime. It is well-known that the respondents have maintained (I do not enter into that controversy for the moment) that boycotting, far from contributing to crime, tended to diminish it. I do not enter into that, but I wish to point out that the finding of the Judges is founded on a variety of statistical and other arguments which show that the question in hand was never contemplated to be submitted to the Commission at all. For my own part, I must say if I were put to choose between the opinion of the people of Ireland and that of the Judges as to whether boycotting was warrantable or tended to increase crime, I should prefer the opinion of the people who live around these scenes, and amongst whom Irish

Members come and go. It was proved by witnesses on both sides that most of the respectable people in three-fourths of Ireland belonged to the League, and that parish priests, curates, and Catholic Bishops supported it or sympathised with it. To say that the operations of the League increased crime is to condemn three-fifths of the manhood of Ireland. It is a direct condemnation if the League consists—as by all testimony it does—of the most respectable persons in Ireland, and is supported by the great Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. I must say myself when I find that all these classes support this Association, I find it very difficult to believe that the League is the author of the crimes and intimidation the Judges seem to think. I might further add, the composition of the Irish Parliamentary majority is inconsistent with the view that the League is exercising intimidation. I have gone through every one of the separate findings of the Judges, and the result comes to this: As to the charge that seven Members of Parliament have favoured Separation, that was several years ago. As to defending prisoners, I say that was nothing but honourable employment of solicitor and counsel. In regard to the finding that payment has been made for compensation for those who have suffered for commission of crime, there is only one case in which it is proved that compensation was paid by the League to those who had suffered injury, and in no case is it shown that Members of Parliament had any personal knowledge of what was done. In regard to newspapers, there was undoubtedly a want of supervision in some cases, but it is not proved there was any knowledge of the objectionable articles on the part of the respondents. I have said all I have to say, and I need not advert to these things again, as to the obtaining money from Patrick Ford, of the *Irish World*, from the physical force party, and in regard to boycotting, which is equivalent to intimidation. I do not say I have gone through every line, but I have gone through the substance of the Report, and I have few words to add. The House is is entitled to expect from the Government a somewhat different attitude in this matter. The charges were made by the *Times*, but, in fact, the *Times* had the Government at its back from beginning to end. Whether any political persons were mixed up with the finding of money for the forged letters I cannot say. If there were any, I do not say they had any idea they were conniving at forgery. One thing, however, is quite certain, and that is that the Bill was so framed that the accusation against the *Times* could not be entered upon. Further, the Government offices were ransacked for the benefit of the *Times*, and all accessible information was placed at its disposal. I would take me some time to establish that, and I am not going to attempt it now. The Home Secretary must know something about it. Take an incidental illustration. It could not be without the sanction of the Home Secretary that records of searches for arms and of searches for letters by the police were placed at the disposal of any litigant. Does the right hon. Gentleman not know that the records of many searches for arms—15 or 20, probably more—searches for arms and letters by the police in England in our great cities were put at the disposal of the *Times?* It will be an interesting subject when it comes up for discussion. I do not wish to enlarge upon it now, for time forbids. I say we are entitled to have from the Government something different from their present attitude. Every private Member has the right to say to the Government: "Do you believe that Members of this House are guilty of moral complicity with crime, or do you not?" If you do believe it, it is your duty to move that they be expelled from the House. If you do not believe it, then, inasmuch as you were the authors of this ill-starred Commission, it is your duty to say so in plain and unmistakable terms. You are not entitled to do as certain Cabinet Ministers have done—to go about the country reading passages from the Report without explanation and context, and so to defame colleagues outside the House, when you have not the courage to make good your words in the face of your political adversaries. This is what you are doing—you are taking a pride, a foolish pride, in the humiliation of Members, in degrading the character of the House, and in lowering the standard of political life.

(11.30.) MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburgh): I think every man in the House must have recognised that the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken, though he has ceased his labours before the Commission, yet has not altogether divested himself of wig and gown. Though he has given us an able argument upon the evidence given before the Judges, an argument that might have been, and probably was, delivered to the Judges, yet we in this House of Commons, however distinguished and honourable the counsel may be, prefer to take the Judgment of the Judges rather than the judgment of the counsel engaged. Some of the arguments, I am bound to say it does not surprise me to find, had little weight with the Judges. To go shortly into matters touched upon, I will take, for instance, the incident of the books. The hon. and learned Gentleman says these were not forthcoming. But what say the Judges? They say they were entitled to expect greater assistance from the hon. Member for Cork and his friends than was given them in this matter. How do the words of the counsel in the case weigh in the balance against this? My hon. and learned Friend said he did not care whether or not the hon. Member for Cork and his friends were actuated by the desire to obtain the absolute separation of Ireland from this country. The hon. and learned Member may not care, but the people of this country do care; and whether or not this is a crime, it is most material in the great controversy in which we have been engaged for the last four or five years, and in which we shall probably be engaged for years to come. It is of importance that the British public should understand the motives which actuated those who founded and supported the Land League and the National League of Ireland. Of the moral character of the hon. Member for Cork and his Colleagues we have, I think, heard too much to-day; for the Report of this Commission contains findings against them, as a body of politicians, such as have no parallel or precedent in the history of this country. A more serious indictment has never before been made against Members of Parliament, though in the course of the debate we may perhaps have some precedents a little more recent and a little more apt than those cited by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who has gone back to the time immediately preceding the Civil War and the fall of the Monarchy before he could find an instance which was at all parallel to anything which has recently occurred. In those trying times 200 years ago, unfortunately, many things were done which no hon. Member could do now. The name of Algernon Sidney is respected by the Whig Party, and history makes it clear that he was free from any connection with crime. But what happened in those days cannot be made an excuse for hon. Members in respect of those matters as to which they have been held guilty. We have to deal with our own time and with the circumstances of this case. I am bound to say that when I heard the address of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian I felt something like a pang of regret that he should use the rhetorical force of his magnificent eloquence for the purpose of whitewashing these persons and minimising those offences which a few years ago, when sitting on the opposite side of the House, he was the loudest and most strenuous in condemning. Let us see what has been established by the findings of the Judges. It has been established by the evidence of the most strenuous of its supporters that the Land League was intended, by means of agitation against the landlords, to bring about the absolute separation of Ireland from the United Kingdom. That

deliberate fraud, though it may have been guilty of reckless conduct. I should, indeed, be surprised to hear any hon. Member say that Mr. Walter of the *Times* knew the letters were forgeries. But whatever its recklessness or folly in trusting Pigott, it was only guilty of involuntary mistake, and its conduct was not comparable in point of criminality with that which has been brought home to those who are fellow-workers of the hon. Members below the Gangway.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

BARRACK (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Resolution [27th February] reported,

"That it is expedient to provide for the building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom, and in certain colonies, and for that purpose to authorise the charge upon and the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of a sum or sums not exceeding £4,100,000, to empower the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to borrow moneys for the re-payment of part of the sum so issued; and to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament of the principal and interest of such borrowed moneys."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*(11.53.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I hope the Government will not ask us to proceed with this debate. The Resolution was agreed to after a short debate, and I do not think that either the House or the country understand the real nature of the principle to be applied to this question. It is proposed, I believe, to spend about four millions. A dangerous and un-Constitutional principle was applied to the Navy expenditure last year, and it is now proposed to repeat the experiment, and to declare that the House of Commons is incapable of dealing annually with the expenditure of the country. It is now proposed that in 1890 we shall control the expenditure of 1891-2-3-4.

Mr. A. Elliott

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

MOTIONS.

STRIKES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. De Cobain, Bill for dealing with Strikes among Workmen, and remedying some of the evils of the Sweating System, ordered to be brought in by Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Cuninghame Graham, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 174.]

LIMITED OWNERS OF LAND (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Asquith, Bill to enlarge the powers of Limited Owners of Land in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Donald Crawford, and Mr. M'Lagan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 175.]

STATUTE OF 34 EDWARD III., c. 1.

Address for—

"Copy of the Revised Edition of the Statute of 34 Edward III., c. 1, year 1860-61, for the appointment of the Justices of the Peace, and defining their powers and jurisdiction."—(*Mr. William Corbet.*)

PASSENGERS TRAINS (CORRESPONDENCE.)

Return presented—

"Of Correspondence between the Board of Trade and certain Railway Companies with reference to the Return relating to the running of Passenger Trains."

[Ordered 3rd March; (*Sir Michael Hicks Beach*)]; to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.
by Contract with H.M.'s Government.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 4th March, 1890.

ECCLESIASTICAL BUSINESS FEES.

Ordered, That the Returns respecting (ordered 12th August, 1889) and laid before the House on the 13th of February last be withdrawn, the same having been found incomplete: The order for printing dischargd.

COLONIAL COURTS OF ADMIRALTY BILL.—(No. 29.)

SECOND READING.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Lord KNUTSFORD): My Lords, the main object of the Bill to which I have to ask you to give a Second Reading is to make a more satisfactory arrangement as regards the constitution of Vice Admiralty Courts in the colonies, and to confer upon the chief Courts of the colonies the Admiralty jurisdiction which is now possessed and exercised by the High Court of Justice in England. The existing state of things is shortly as follows: By the Act of the 30 and 31 Vict. cap. 45 a Vice Admiralty Court may be established in any colony, whether it be a Crown Colony or a colony possessing a representative and independent Legislature, but the Court is Imperial and not Colonial. The appeal from it, speaking generally, is direct to the Queen in Council. The Admiralty have the power of appointing the Judges and officers to that Court; but, as a rule, they very rarely exercise that power. In the absence of any appointment by the Admiralty, the Chief Justice or the highest Judicial officer in the colony is the Judge of the Court *ex officio*; and it rests with him also, in the absence of any appointment by the Admiralty, to appoint officers and registrars to the Court. The Chief Justice may also appoint one of the puisne Judges to act as Deputy Judge; but, of course, that Judge acts as Judge of an Imperial Court, although he is also a Judge of the Colonial Civil Court, and no appeal lies from any judgment or decision of his given in Admiralty matters to the full Court of the colony, but only direct to the Queen in Council. This state of things is not satisfactory. We have thus in a colony two Courts side by side—the Civil Colonial Court and the Imperial Vice Admiralty Court, with separate Rules of Procedure, and separate Judges and officers, and although the same persons are acting as Judges and officers of the two Courts, yet it is clear from what I have brought to your Lordships' attention, that they are acting under separate jurisdictions and authorities. This matter is somewhat more complicated from the fact that the Colonial Civil Court and the Vice Admiralty Court in the colony have very often concurrent jurisdiction, as, for instance, in cases arising under the Customs Acts. In 1883 a proposal was sent out to the colonies for consolidating, and in some measure extending, the jurisdiction of the Vice Admiralty Courts in the colonies, but not altering the constitution of those Courts, or taking away their Imperial character. When the replies were received to that Circular Despatch, the question arose whether it would not be better to altogether abolish Vice Admiralty Courts in the colonies, and to transfer all their jurisdiction to the Chief Courts in the colonies. The replies showed, in fact, that the Vice Admiralty Court was more and more regarded as a Colonial Court—a Court of the colony—and that the Colonial Courts required more and more Admiralty jurisdiction to be vested in them. Her Majesty's then Government decided in favour of this scheme; and a Bill was drafted and sent out to the colonies by the noble Lord the Earl of Derby with a Despatch in March, 1885. That Bill was, in substance, the same as is now under the consideration of your Lordships. It was accepted by all the colonies but four—Victoria, New South Wales, British Honduras, and St. Helena. The first two of those colonies are, of course, colonies of great importance, and their fear seemed to be lest Imperial control was to be exercised over the Colonial Courts; a fear which, I think, arises from a misapprehension of the provisions of the Bill. However, I need not trouble your Lordships further with any objections that were raised, because those four colonies have been placed in Schedule 1 of this Bill; and the Act will not apply to them unless they subsequently desire to be admitted under*

it. Broadly speaking, then, the object of this Bill is to do away with the Imperial Vice Admiralty Courts in the colonies, and to transfer the Admiralty jurisdiction of the High Court of Justice in England to the Colonial Courts, and also to allow inferior Courts in the colonies, if the colonies so desire it, to exercise the partial and limited Admiralty jurisdiction which the County Courts in England exercise. It is provided, therefore, by the 3rd section of this Bill that the Colonial Legislatures may declare what Courts of unlimited jurisdiction shall act as Colonial Courts of Admiralty, and also what inferior Courts shall have that partial and limited jurisdiction to which I have referred. By Clause 4 the laws upon this point are to be reserved for Her Majesty's pleasure, or else there is to be a suspending clause which will prevent their coming into operation until Her Majesty's assent has been signified. By Section 5 an appeal is given to the local Court from decisions of the Admiralty Court, thus avoiding the necessity of a direct appeal to the Queen in Council; but in case there is no local appeal, or in case there is no further local appeal, the right to appeal to the Queen in Council is preserved. I think I need hardly trouble your Lordships with any further details upon the sections of this Bill. But perhaps I might bring one point under the notice of your Lordships: As the Admiralty jurisdiction is one of an Imperial character, and as it deals with acts committed on the high seas all over the world, and as, therefore, it may affect our relations with foreign nations, and thereby place some responsibility upon the Imperial Government, it is thought right that some control should be reserved over these Colonial Courts of Admiralty. Such control is clearly important for the purpose of securing uniformity of practice through the Empire, and of laying down the lines by which the Courts would be guided in the exercise of their jurisdiction when dealing with questions of International Law. That control is secured partly by a provision which requires that all Rules of Procedure, except Rules of mere detail of Procedure, shall, in the first instance, be submitted to the Queen in Council, and partly by providing that the Crown shall have the right, as heretofore, of creating a Vice Admiralty Court in any colony.

Lord Knutsford

It is manifest that with regard to some small colonies—as, for instance, in Heligoland, where the Governor is Chief Justice, as he is also in the Falkland Islands and St. Helena—it would be important to make provision, if the necessity should arise, for constituting a Vice Admiralty Court for the time, and to appoint thereto a man having a legal training. My Lords, the Bill is one of considerable importance; but I refrain from going now further into the details of the question because, if your Lordships will grant the Second Reading of the Bill, I propose to refer it to the Committee on Law.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL.

(No. 14.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

(No. 5.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; and to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*Earl BEAUCHAMP: It is not my fault that this question was not put to Her Majesty's Government some days ago; but it has been postponed for the return of the noble Marquess the Prime Minister, whom we are all, I am sure, glad to see among us again with renewed health and vigour. The question is a very simple one. It is to ask Her Majesty's Government what course they propose to take in this House in reference to the Report of the Special Commissioners appointed under the Special Commission Act 1888. I am not going to refer in any way to the circumstances which called forth that Act, but your Lordships will remember that under it three eminent Judges were appointed to decide the matters referred to them. Those eminent Judges have applied themselves during the greater part of two years with the utmost public spirit, ability, and energy to the discharge of the duties which were entrusted to them, as mani-

fested by their Report. That Report has been presented to the House of Commons, and it has been presented to your Lordships. I understend that in another place (as I learn from perusing the Parliamentary Notices) that a most wise and temperate Motion has been moved by the First Lord of the Treasury; and it appears to me that if it is right and proper that the House of Commons should take notice of that Report, it would be an abdication of your Lordships' functions if you did not also pronounce an opinion upon the subject. It seems to me that the Report, being as it is a Report to both Houses of Parliament, challenges an expression of opinion from both Houses. I might even say that I think the labour and pains which the three Judges have bestowed upon the matter deserve an expression of thanks from this House in the most formal manner, and I do not know any reason which can be alleged why your Lordships should not take action in the matter. If, indeed, the three Judges had been appointed under a Resolution of the House of Commons, it would then have been a matter entirely under the cognisance of the House of Commons, or if the matters referred to the Judges had concerned only the conduct of Members of the House of Commons, then, perhaps, a reason would have existed for your Lordships not interfering in the matter. But your Lordships must remember that the matters referred to the Judges were not merely limited to the conduct of certain Members of the House of Commons, but other persons, too, were implicated, and their conduct also was referred to the Judges for investigation. It appears to me, therefore ,that your Lordships would be failing in part of your duty if you did not take some action in the matter. It is therefore that I ask Her Majesty's Government, to whom we naturally look for guidance in these matters, what course they intend to pursue with respect to the Report of the Special Commissioners appointed under the Act of 1888?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I concur with my noble Friend in saying that the Report prepared in obedience to the prescription of both Houses of Parliament, the result of so much labour and energy, ought not to be passed by on the part of the House of Lords without notice. But the position of the two Houses is not exactly the same in respect to this Report. It deals very largely with imputations made against Members of the other House of Parliament. I do not know that there is any Member of your Lordships' House in that position, and, therefore, it is natural that the House of Commons should first deal with that Report, and I think, as a mere matter of courtesy, it is well that we should allow the House of Commons to take what action it thinks best before we move in the matter. I suppose the House of Commons will come to some decision in the matter, and I see no reason why, as far as I know, the action of this House should differ materially from the action of the House of Commons.

EARL GRANVILLE: Do I understand the noble Marquess rightly that it is proposed by Her Majesty's Government to recommend this House to do not what is now proposed to be done in the House of Commons, but anything which may be settled by the House of Commons which takes the same line?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That, perhaps, would be a bold promise. It might be a safe one, but I do not think I have ventured so far as that. The only thing is, we shall not resolve upon the Motion which we shall ask your Lordships to accept until we have seen what the action of the House of Commons is.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 4th March, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

CYPRUS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Post-

master General whether, in view of the Report of the High Commissioner of Cyprus (p. 41, Rep. 1887—8, published 1889), that,

"A marked feature in the import trade has been the decline in the value of imports from Great Britain since the discontinuance of the weekly mail service from Alexandria,"

he will take into his favourable consideration the expediency of re-establishing direct postal communication between Great Britain and Cyprus in British Ships?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): I can assure my hon. Friend that proposals to re-establish a British Packet Service between this country and Cyprus have more than once occupied my attention, and I recognise the importance of the consideration to which he refers as bearing upon the question. But the matter is one in which my Department is not free to act alone, and has to be decided by Her Majesty's Government as a whole.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the total amount of money transmitted from Cyprus to England under the head of "Tribute to the Porte" from the year 1879-80 to the present time; the amount transmitted by the British Treasurer to France during the same period; and the amount reserved for a sinking fund on the Turkish Loan guaranteed by Great Britain and France?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The total amount transmitted from Cyprus to England during the 11 years in question as "tribute to the Porte" is £959,361 14s. 9d. The amount transmitted to France in repayment of interest on the Imperial Ottoman Guaranteed loan is £30,501 1s. 3d. The amount at present standing to the credit of the Cyprus tribute account is £55,828 4s. 7d.

MR. S. LEIGHTON: Do I understand my right hon. Friend to say that the sum of only £30,500 has been transmitted to France?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am sorry to astonish my hon. Friend; but so it is.

RIOTING IN THE PUNJAB.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table the Papers relating to certain disturbances and rioting in Rohtak, in the Punjab, in August and September last, and the Reports of the trial of certain persons accused in connection therewith, and of the appeal and judgment thereon?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State has no Papers relating to the riot at Rohtak. The persons implicated were dealt with by the ordinary tribunals, and no Report of the trials or judgments would, in ordinary course, be sent to the India Office.

EXCISE ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he has yet received the reply of the Indian Government to the Despatch of the Secretary of State for India, "Revenue No. 52, Excise Administration. Resolution of the House of Commons," dated 16th May, 1889; when it will be laid upon the Table of the House; and will it be circulated to Members?

SIR J. GORST: The Despatch has just been received, and if the hon. Member will move for it, it will be laid on the Table.

THE VOLUNTEER FORCE OF INDIA.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State for India is aware that, while admission to the Volunteer Force of India is refused to the inhabitants of that country as such, Indian Christians are permitted to become members of these organisations; and whether, if he finds the facts are as stated above, the Secretary of State will give instructions to the Government of India to remove a disqualification which depends solely upon the profession of a particular religion, and make it possible for any Indians who may desire to do so to join the Volunteer Forces of the country?

SIR J. GORST: No, Mr. Speaker. There is no such exceptions in favour of Christians. All natives of India are alike eligible for admission to Volunteer Corps.

SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. C. ACLAND (Cornwall, Launceston): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith (Mr. J. W. Lowther) whether the Charity Commissioners will be prepared to send to the Clerks of the Councils of the Counties of Devon and Cornwall a copy of every draft scheme to be published by the direction of the Commissioners, for the regulation of a charity administered for the benefit of any parish or place within the said counties?

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners will comply with the request of any County Council which passes a resolution requesting to be supplied with a copy of every Draft Scheme in that county, published after the date of such resolution.

THE CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Civil Service Estimates will be in the hands of Members?

*The SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. Jackson, Leeds, N.): Class I. will be circulated on Monday next, and the remaining Classes within a few days.

THE DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY.

Mr. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is a fact that the Delagoa Bay Railway Concession is about to be offered at auction by the Portuguese Government, and that a group of capitalists is being formed to purchase it; whether, if this is the case, the purchase-money will be paid to the Portuguese Government unconditionally or otherwise; and how it is proposed to protect the interests of the present shareholders?

*The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): We are not informed as to the railway being sold by auction, or as to the terms on which it will be paid for. On page 59 of the Papers will be found a Royal Decree approving a contract for the completion of the line by a Dutch Company. I stated rather fully yesterday the actual condition of the affairs. If my hon. Friend, after reference to that statement, desires further information, I shall be glad to afford it, if possible.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. RICHARD POWER (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as regards the proposals of the Ridley Commission, as set forth in their Second Report, presented in August 1888, in connection with the Higher Division of the Civil Service; and when the Superannuation Bill will be laid upon the Table, the interests of the Service having suffered by the prolonged anxiety occasioned in the various Public Departments owing to the uncertainty as to the steps that may be taken to give effect to the proposals referred to?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I am afraid it is impossible, within the limits of an answer to a question, to state in more deatil than was done in the Treasury Minute of August 10 last what our intentions are with reference to the recommendations of the Royal Commission in connection with the Higher Division of the Civil Service. I am, however, engaged upon a Treasury Minute on the subject, which can be framed with comparative facility as regards future entrants, but presents many difficulties as regards existing Civil Servants. The Royal Commission recommended that the hours of attendance should in future be seven, and stated that—

"In the case of the Higher Division, we do not think that it necessarily follows that a requirement of seven hours' attendance should involve increased pay."

The Treasury Minute of August prescribed compensation on a certain scale and within certain limits for the extra hour. The Higher Division clerks plead that the compensation is not sufficient, and that the limits should be extended. The Royal Commission recommended a scale of salary rising from £200 to £1,000; the Treasury accepted this scale as a maximum, but decided in their Minute to retain the various existing scales within this maximum, in accordance, I believe, with the views of the Royal Commission. The Higher Division clerks urge that the scale proposed by the Commission should be generally adopted

The Commission strongly recommended a reduction of the numbers of the Higher Division. The clerks urge that this reduction should be carried out with due regard to the reasonable prospects of promotion of existing Civil servants. It is obvious that the demands of the Higher Division, if generally conceded, would result in a considerable augmentation of expenditure in direct contradiction to the economical intentions of the Royal Commission. The Treasury is endeavouring, however, in correspondence with the other Departments, to carry out the reduction of the Higher Division in the spirit of the Royal Commission Report, but without undue harshness being inflicted on existing clerks. The hon. Member will see that it is no easy matter to find an equitable solution of these difficulties; and that the fixing of the future establishment of the Higher Division, involving as it does minute inquiries into the constitution of the several Departments and frequent conferences and consultations with the permanent heads, requires much time. As regards the second question, I am unable to state the precise time when the Superannuation Bill will be introduced; but, speaking broadly, it will proceed upon the lines of the Bill introduced last year.

THE OATHS ACT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on 25th February, John Laidler, at Newcastle-on-Tyne Assizes, before Mr. Justice Day, claimed to affirm as a juror as being a person without religious belief, under the Oaths Act, 1888, but that the Clerk of the Court was unable to find the proper form of affirmation, and ultimately partially read an incorrect form of affirmation; whether it is correctly reported in the *Newcastle Chronicle* of 26th February that thereupon the Court became convulsed with laughter; and whether directions can be given to the officers charged with the administration of oaths in Courts of Justice which will prevent the repetition of such a scene?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have made inquiry into this case, and am informed by the Clerk of Assize that some slight delay was occasioned in consequence of the form of affirmation which should have been used under the Oaths Act, 1888, not being forthcoming, and the Associate having repeated from memory the form applicable in the case of those persons who object to be sworn on the ground of religious belief. The Clerk of Assize, however, informs me that it is a gross exaggeration to say that the Court was convulsed with laughter. The fact is that the case, being the last but one at the Assizes, and it being late in the day, Mr. Laidler was informed by Mr. Justice Day that he might be discharged from the Court, and he then left the jury box. I have suggested to the Associate that cards with proper forms should be kept, as is the practice at the Royal Courts of Justice.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Do I understand the Attorney General to suggest that there were two forms of affirmation—one for persons without religious belief, and another for persons who desire to affirm rather than take an oath?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: No; I suggested nothing of the kind. I merely said that the Associate repeated from memory the form previously in use for persons who object to be sworn on the ground of religious belief. I know that there are not two forms of affirmation.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Was the form in which the affirmation was proposed to be administered the form which was repealed by the Act of 1888? Is the hon. and learned Gentleman aware of that fact?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I am perfectly aware of it; but the Associate was not the officer who ordinarily performs the duty, and he repeated from memory the form to which he was accustomed. He did his best under the circumstances.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether his attention has been called to the fact that F. W. Smith, summoned as a juror at an inquest at the Khedive Hotel, William Street, Wakefield, claimed to affirm under "The Oaths Act, 1888," as a person without religious belief; but that the coroner, Mr. Taylor, refused to allow Mr. Smith to affirm, declaring that there was no Act authorising such affirmation; and whether any steps can be taken to make the coroner give effect to the law?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The following is the information which has been given to me by Mr. Taylor, the coroner of Wakefield:—

"At the holding of the inquest in question a person, whose name he did not know, and whose name was not mentioned, said, 'Mr. Coroner, I am summoned on this inquest; I object to take an oath; I am an atheist.' The Coroner then replied that there was no necessity to make any such statement; that Acts had been passed to enable Quakers and others to affirm, but that there was no Act enabling an atheist specially to do so; and that if the person wished he could make an affirmation under the provisions of the recent Act. The person in question did not claim to affirm or mention any Act of Parliament to the coroner. As there were 12 jurymen without him, the coroner told him that his services would not be required. The name of F. W. Smith did not appear in the list of persons summoned as jurors upon the inquest."

THE BERLIN LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, at the Berlin Conference, the British Delegate will be empowered to discuss the question of the international limitation of the hours of labour in mines, inasmuch as the subject is specially mentioned in the German Emperor's Rescript?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The reply of Her Majesty's Government to the invitation to a Conference accompanying the programme placed before them by the German Government will be laid before Parliament as soon as it has been received by the German Government. Until then it would not be usual to state what the purport of that reply will be, or what instructions will be given to the British Delegates.

THE COLONISATION COMMITTEE.

MR. SETON-KARR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how soon he proposes to re-appoint the Colonisation Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope that the Committee will be re-appointed in the course of a few days.

LICENSING LAWS—THE DEATH OF WILLIAM JENNINGS.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the circumstances disclosed at the inquest held at Castleford on the 15th of February, relative to the death of William Jennings, whose head was battered into a shapeless mass by the revolutions of the wheel of the conveyance in which he was being driven by a relative from the Junction Inn, Methley, where they had been drinking for a considerable time, and which they left in a state of intoxication; whether the keeper of the Junction Inn or any of his servants were called as witnesses at the inquest; whether any proceedings have been taken against the landlord, who appears to have supplied both men with drink until they were in a condition which led to the death of one of them; and whether any such steps will be taken?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Chief Constable on the subject, from which I learn that the two men called at the Junction Inn on their way home in the evening, and remained there for three-quarters of an hour. The landlord denies that he supplied them with any intoxicating drink, and this is corroborated by a miner who was in the house a part of the time. The deceased man was the worse for drink when he arrived. The police, who made the fullest inquiries, were not able to obtain any evidence to show that the landlord supplied the deceased or his companion with intoxicating drink. Neither he nor his servants were called at the inquest, and there was no ground to justify proceedings against him. The police believe that the men got most of their drink at the houses of private friends whom they visited in the course of the day.

POST OFFICE WORKING EXPENSES.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether it is the custom for the Post Office to give bonuses to Inspectors or other officials for cutting down working expenses; and whether continual complaints are being made of the arbitrary stoppage of payment for overtime?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to both of the questions of the hon. Member the answer is in the negative.

IRELAND—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION AT FALCARRAGH.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he has seen a report of the Falcarragh Petty Sessions, held on Tuesday, 25th February, before Messrs. Burke and Beresford, Resident Magistrates, and at which Edward M'Ginley, an evicted tenant, was charged with intimidating one Charles Gallagher by interfering with the sale of the latter's pig at a fair; if it is true, as reported in the newspapers, that the only overt act of intimidation deposed to consisted in the defendant's "winking at the pig;" and the magistrates held there was no proof that the pig buyers were intimidated, and dismissed the summons, but yet bound the defendant in sureties to keep the peace, or in default to be imprisoned for three months; and was the prosecution brought under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, if not, under what Statute?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): I am unable to answer the question, as I have not yet received a Report.

LAND COMMISSION—SITTINGS AT CAVAN.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he will name a day upon which the Commissioners will sit in the town of Cavan to fix fair rents; whether it is a fact that many of the tenants have served notices for fixing fair rents so long ago as October, 1887, which have not yet been considered; whether many of the landlords are insisting upon the payment of the old rack rents; and whether the Government will allow this injustice to go on; and, if so, how long?

MR. MADDEN: I have not yet received a Report, and must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the question.

CHARGE AGAINST AN EMERGENCY MAN, M'KEEVER.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a case heard at Woodford Petty Sessions on the 24th inst., before Messrs. Hickson, R.N., and Burke, J.P., in which an emergency man named M'Keever was summoned by Constable Sheehan on a charge of being "drunk in the streets of Woodford on the 14th inst., and having a loaded revolver in his possession;" if it is true that a few hours after his arrest he was brought before Mr. Burke, J.P., by whom he was discharged, and who added that no further action should be taken; has his attention been called to the report of the trial, from which it appears that it was proved by Constable Sheehan that M'Keever, on being arrested, threatened to shoot him; that Mr. Burke, notwithstanding the protest of the presiding magistrate, persisted in cross-examining the policeman, and finally called him a "blackguard;" and that after M'Keever had been fined £2 and costs, and had paid that sum, Mr. Burke stood up in Court, advised M'Keever to appeal, and ordered the money to be handed back; and if the above facts are correctly stated, whether the Lord Chancellor will make inquiry into the action of this magistrate?

MR. MADDEN: The facts are as stated in the first two paragraphs of the question. As regards the third paragraph it appears that M'Keever did not threaten to shoot the constable, nor did Mr. Burke direct the amount of the fine to be handed back. The report, however, of what actually occurred at the trial disclosed matters of a serious nature which shall be brought under the attention of the Lord Chancellor.

In reply to a further question by Mr. FLYNN,

MR. MADDEN said: If the hon. Gentleman requires further information he had better put a question upon the Paper.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether the evidence given before the Special Commission has been yet presented to Parliament; and whether it is to be accessible to the public in the usual way on payment; and, if not, by what authority are the volumes now being distributed to Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The evidence given before the Special Commission has not been made a Parliamentary Paper,

but copies are obtainable by the Members of both Houses on application at the Library or the Public Bill Office. The number of copies printed will probably only be sufficient to meet the applications of Members of Parliament; and if there is any general desire on the part of the public to obtain copies by purchase it would be necessary to reprint the volumes, which would involve considerable delay and a large expenditure of public money. In redemption of a pledge given by me on the 20th ult., all the copies which are available have been placed at the disposal of Members on their application.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Arising out of that answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the type has been broken up; and, if so, why it was broken up?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I believe that, as a matter of fact, it has been broken up. It was broken up some time ago. Copies were printed at the request of the Special Commission; but it is not contemplated to print additional copies of the evidence.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: By whose authority were they distributed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: They were distributed to Members who applied for them in consequence of the pledge which was given to hon. Members in February.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Does not the right hon. Gentleman propose that the evidence on which the Report of the Commission is founded shall be laid on the Table of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No; I do not propose to lay it on the Table.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how many copies were distributed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No; I am not able to say.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS BILL.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: In the absence of the Chief Secretary, may I ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether, as the place for the Second Reading of the Irish National Teachers Bill has been unhappily lost, the Irish Government will give facilities for the Second Reading on a future day, or will do anything to ameliorate the condition of the teachers in redemption of the many promises which have been made to them by the present Chief Secretary and his predecessors?

*MR. MADDEN: The first part of the question ought to be addressed to the leader of the House; and in regard to the second part, if the hon. Member addresses a question to the Chief Secretary it will be answered by him.

MR. STACK (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that it is the intention of the Government to appropriate next Wednesday for the Debate on the Commission Report, he can promise that facilities will be given for the Second Reading of the Irish National Teachers Bill, fixed for Wednesday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am unable to promise facilities for the Second Reading of the Bill to which the hon. Member refers.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING COMMISSION.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state when the Report of the Welsh Sunday Closing Commission will be laid on the Table?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not able to give the hon. Baronet any definite date; but the Chairman of the Commission stated, a fortnight ago, that it would be produced very shortly.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Has the Commission concluded its labours in taking evidence?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

NEW WRIT.

For Stoke-upon-Trent, *v.* William Leatham Bright, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds. —(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

JOURNAL.

Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last Session to the end of the present Session, with an Index to the 145th Volume, be printed.

Ordered, That 750 Copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Reginald Francis Douce Palgrave, esquire, C.B., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such Person as shall

be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other Person do presume to print the same.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel, and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order 49:—Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Salt.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MOTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SPECIAL COMMISSION (1888) REPORT).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Special Commission (1888) Report have precedence, on every day for which it is set down, of all other Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

*(3.55.) MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The Irish Members had the good fortune to secure the second place for to-morrow for a Bill in reference to the salaries and pensions of National school teachers in Ireland. They had every hope that the Bill would be brought on, and that they would be able to discuss a question which has been hung up for very many years. The repeated promises which have been made to the teachers of Ireland have never been fulfilled, and the consequence is that these important public servants feel that they have been grievously ill-treated. We therefore feel that we are entitled on their behalf to press their claims this Session, and we shall undoubtedly be obliged to find an opportunity for ourselves, unless the right hon. Gentleman can find one for us. We are disposed to assent to the proposal he has now made; but, at the same time, we ask him to allow us a day for considering this important question, which, by a fortunate ballot, we had an opportunity of discussing.

*(3.57.) MR. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): My claim is, I think, even stronger than that of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). Great as is the grievance of the Irish National teachers, I think the political enfranchisement of women is a question of even greater importance. [*Alaugh.*] Some hon. Members may laugh; but it is to women a subject of the very highest importance. I had much rather that the Motion which stands first on the Paper to-night was not in my name, because I should have greater freedom in speaking upon the subject. I do not complain because it is my opportunity that is taken away, but because I feel the importance of the subject. I had intended to move an Amendment to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman to except the Motion in reference to the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women; but I have no wish to divide the House, and will not press it. But considering the increasing interest which is growing in the country upon this question, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to promise that if I or any other Member again obtain a day for this Motion he will not take it from us a second time.

(4.0.) MR. WOODALL (Hanley): I must commend my hon. Friend the Member for Crewe (Mr. M'Laren) for the discretion he has exercised in not pressing the Amendment; and I hope that his request for facilities for the discussion of the question on a future day will be conceded by the First Lord of the Treasury.

*(4.1.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I wish to utter a feeble protest against the taking away of private Members' rights. As we have been accused of following the right hon. Gentleman's lead like sheep, it is only reasonable that we should say a word upon the subject. The House has now been in Session for 15 days, and six-and-a-half of those days have been devoted to Irish business. The English Members have not had their fair share of the time of the House. And what are the private Members asked to sacrifice their rights for to-night? Simply to hear long speeches from Queen's Counsel who have already addressed the Commission. If the question before the House was whether those Members who have been found guilty of offences should be punished or expelled from the House, then I could understand that the discussion might be a lengthened one; but at present the whole thing appears to me to be a sham

fight, and I protest against the time of private Members being taken in order to carry it on.

*(4.5.) SIR R. TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): On this side of the House I wish to commend the appeal of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, namely, the hon. Members for Crewe and Hanley (Mr. M'Laren and Mr. Woodall) to the favourable consideration of the House.

*(4.6.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I admit that there is a hardship in the case of the Motion of the hon. Member for Crewe (Mr. M'Laren); but I am afraid that the circumstances under which the House is placed by the length of the speeches to which my hon. Friend has referred form a difficulty which it is not in the power of any leader of the House to remedy. The circumstances of the case are known to the House, and I believe that the House desires to continue this Debate until it is concluded, as is the usual practice in Debates of this character. Therefore I am obliged to pass by what are called the rights of private Members, in order that this Debate may be taken up and finished as speedily as is consistent with the gravity of the question. With regard to the request of the hon. Member for Crewe for an undertaking that if he is fortunate enough to secure another day it would not be taken away from him, I do not think that any Minister would be justified in making an absolute promise of that kind, because he could not tell what might be the circumstances of the case at the time. I can only say that I am most anxious that the hon. Member should have his opportunity, and I may add that I will not wilfully or mischievously, so to speak, deprive him of it. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), I can only express my regret that I cannot give a positive undertaking in the absence of the Chief Secretary; but I admit that the question put to me by the hon. Member is a reasonable one. The hon. Member will have his opportunity of calling attention to the question on the Estimates, and if that is not satisfactory the Government will consider the matter.

(4.10.) MR. SEXTON: By the indulgence of the House, perhaps I may be allowed to say that one of my hon. Friends did propose to move an Amendment exempting the Irish National Teachers Bill from the operation of the Resolution. But we are unwilling to put the House to the trouble of a Division if the right hon. Gentleman will give us any hope that he will be able to give a day for the discussion of the Bill without compelling us to take it upon the Estimates.

*(4.12.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid that I am not in a position to add anything to what I have already said. I hope, however, that it may be possible to afford the hon. Member the opportunity he desires.

Question put, and agreed to.

PRIVATE BILL COMMISSION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Elliot, Bill for establishing a Commission to examine and report on Private Bills in Parliament, and for other matters relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Elliot, Sir John Mowbray, Mr. John Morley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Howorth, Mr. Cameron Corbett, and Mr. Haldane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 176.]

ORCHARDS RATING EXEMPTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hobhouse, Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Rating of Orchards for sanitary purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Charles Acland, and Mr. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 177.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SPECIAL COMMISSION (1888) REPORT.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [3rd March] to Question,

"That, Parliament having constituted a Special Commission to inquire into the charges and allegations made against certain Members of Parliament, and other persons, and the Report of the Commissioners having been presented to Parliament, this House adopts the Report and thanks the Commissioners for their just and impartial conduct in the matters referred to them; and orders that the said Report be entered on the Journals of this House."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "House" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "deems it to be a duty to record its reprobation of the false charges of the gravest and most odious description, based on calumny and on forgery, which have been brought against Members of this House, and particularly against Mr. Parnell; and, while declaring its satisfaction at the exposure of these calumnies, this House expresses its regret for the

wrong inflicted and the suffering and loss endured through a protracted period, by reason of these acts of flagrant iniquity,"—(*Mr. W. E. Gladstone,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

(4.15.) MR. LOCKWOOD (York): Like my hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid), I certainly feel a considerable amount of diffidence in taking any part in this debate, and my position has not been made more comfortable by the remarks which have been made by my hon. Friend the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley), as I suppose he included me among the persons who are about to inflict long speeches upon this House, and among those whom he accused of having already inflicted long speeches on the Commission. For myself, I may say that I inflicted no speech upon the Commission, and I do not intend to inflict a long speech upon this House. At the same time I feel bound to say that I shall record my Vote in favour of the Amendment, because to my mind it is absolutely and literally the truth. I should be surprised indeed to hear that contention denied by hon. Gentlemen who sit on the opposite side of the House. We have had from the Attorney General and the Minister of Agriculture admissions which distinctly assert the truth of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). The Report had not been circulated for more than two days, when the Attorney General went down post-haste to Oxford to deliver himself with what he called an unfettered tongue. Having performed that somewhat delicate, and, I venture to think, somewhat dangerous, operation, my hon. and learned Friend proceeded to inform his audience that he personally was rejoiced that Mr. Parnell and those who were associated with him in this indictment had been able to clear themselves from the graver charges which for 12 months he had been trying to prove. There was also the speech of the Minister of Agriculture, which will be remembered from the fact that for two or three days after it was delivered it was impossible to take up a morning paper without finding that some portion of it had been withdrawn. When the expurgated edition of that speech comes to be published I apprehend that those who enthusiastically cheered it when they heard it delivered at Cambridge will hardly recognise it. He, too, expressed his personal satisfaction, and was able to tell his hearers that he rejoiced in the acquittal of Mr. Parnell and his Colleagues. But why all this personal satisfaction and all this rejoicing if there is nothing to rejoice about? I give the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen credit for all sincerity in their declaration. We heard the hon. Member for Roxburgh (Mr. A. Elliot) in the speech which he made last night accuse my hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries of quibbling because he had drawn a contrast between the original charges and those which the Commission declared to have been proved. All the grave and material charges have not been proved, and it is only the venial ones upon which a verdict of guilty has been pronounced. I want to maintain, if I can, that this Amendment is absolutely and literally true. It is true that there have been false charges made, that they are of the gravest and most discreditable character, and that they have been based on calumny and forgery. Let us go back to a very interesting occasion. It was on the 17th of September, 1888, that the *Times* newspaper in the history of this inquiry was first brought face to face with the men it had maligned and traduced. I call attention to the incident for the purpose of pointing out that the *Times*, when for the first time it found itself face to face with the men it had traduced and maligned, began to endeavour to shirk the responsibility of the charges it had made and to put them upon the shoulders not of men, but of an organisation. That incident shows not only what was the attitude of the *Times*, but what was the view taken by the President of the Commission. On the 17th of September, 1888, counsel applied to the Court to have particulars supplied to them as to the individuals who were charged, and the charges which were made against them, and this interesting and instructive dialogue took place between the learned counsel representing the *Times* and Sir James Hannen, the President of the Commission.

"The President: Do you propose to substantiate any charges?—Counsel: I don't know."

Then later on—

"The President: Who are implicated in the charges and allegations?—Counsel: We don't charge."

"The President: They have not made charges and allegations against you?—Counsel: Nor I. I have not made charges and allegations against them."

"The President: Who did make these charges and allegations which the Legislature has directed us to inquire into? Did nobody make them?—Counsel: Certain charges—"

and I beg the attention of the House to this—

"Certain charges and allegations have been made against the Irish organisation."

"The President: No, no. It is more than that; it is charges and allegations against particular persons."

Later on the President said—

"Did the Attorney General make no charges against individuals?—Counsel: Not here. He made charges against an organisation."

"The President: But not against individuals?—Counsel: The individuals, of course, were members of the organisation."

If the Attorney General accepts the view that he did not make charges against individuals, but against an organisation, then the House was induced to pass the Commission Bill on false pretences. If, on the other hand, the Attorney General accepts the view that he did make personal charges, then he has failed to establish a single case. The charges are not charges against personalities or against individuals, but, if established at all, they are charges against an organisation and against a policy. In his speech the Attorney General said—

"I am here to inquire into some very specific charges. Those charged shall have no reason to find fault with me for not making the allegations clear with regard to the details as to the part each person played. The word organisation is not used for the purpose of evading the responsibility cast on us of dealing with the charges and allegations against individuals."

[Sir R. WEBSTER: Hear, hear]. My hon. and learned Friend cheers that statement. Has that undertaking been carried out? I have had some acquaintance with the course of procedure before the Commission, and I protest against its being suggested that that was the spirit in which the inquiry was conducted. Hon. Members of this House came down to the Commission, and waited there day after day in the hope that names might be mentioned, in order that they might ascertain in some way what kind of personal accusation was being made against them. They waited in vain; that was not the line that was to be adopted. All that was done was to make general and sweeping charges against an organisation and against a policy with which the Government do not agree. Let me call attention to the kind of charges which were made, and which I take from three sources—*Parnellism and Crime*, the speech of the Attorney General in the case of O'Donnell against Walter, and the speech of the Attorney General at the opening of the Commission. I will read some extracts from each of these three sources, so that the House may realise the class of charges that were made, and may compare them with the charges which have in some degree been proved. In the article on *Parnellism and Crime*, which appeared in the *Times*, there is this passage—

"But treason is not our main charge against Mr. Parnell. Murder still startles the casuist and the *doctrinaire*, and we charge that the Land League chiefs based their movement upon a scheme of assassination carefully calculated and coolly applied. Be the ultimate goal of these men what it will they are content to march towards it in company with murderers. Murderers provide their funds; murderers share their inmost councils. Murderers have gone forth from the League offices to set their bloody work afoot, and will have presently returned to consult the Constitutional leaders upon the progress of the cause."

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Where is that?

MR. LOCKWOOD: Does my hon. and learned Friend deny that?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I merely asked for a reference—I did not deny anything.

MR. LOCKWOOD: I have been careful to verify the extract; not a tittle of evidence was offered in support of that charge, and the finding of the Commissioners is directly in favour of the gentlemen who were specified in the speech of the Attorney General in the case of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter" as having been guilty of it. Are we, on this side of the House, to be accused of quibbling because we protest against this charge not being recognised as a most disgraceful one, which ought to be apologised for, and the apology

recorded on the Journal of the House? Here is another extract from a leading article that appeared in the *Times* on March 7, 1887—

"There are plenty of authentic utterances fixing upon prominent Members of the Home Rule Party the guilt of direct incitement to outrage and murder."

That charge is absolutely negatived by the finding of the Commissioners. The same article, speaking of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, says—

"Merely to have his revenge upon his countrymen for rejecting his advice, and to prove his declaration that all other business shall be made impossible to be no idle threat, Mr. Gladstone and his party are deliberately allying themselves with the paid agents of an organisation whose ultimate aim is plunder and whose ultimate sanction is murder."

I hope I do not weary the House by reading these extracts, but I feel that it is necessary that the House should appreciate what was the real nature of the accusations hurled at the hon. Members below the Gangway. In "O'Donnell *v.* Walter," the Attorney General said, on the question of a particular organisation being diverted to improper purposes—

"Do not let it be supposed that I am going to deal with the small fry of the organisation."

Yet in the Commission case we were compelled to sit day after day whilst representatives of the *Times* put on record the utterances of the smallest of fry in the hope of implicating hon. Gentlemen by blackening the League, and, indirectly, of blackening those who belonged to it. On the second day of the Commission, a very grave accusation was made, on the authority of the Attorney General, of course on instruction, but not a tittle of evidence was brought forward to support it, and I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will take the opportunity during this debate of expressing his regret that he was led to make the charge against prominent Members of this House. In his speech the hon. and learned Member said—

"Though the leaders did not themselves go and personally plan the outrages. They could not do it because they had not time, and of course would not be connected with it directly, but there were the men doing it for them, and of that system they took charge."

Will the hon. and learned Member say now that he believes that it was simply because the leaders had not time to do this bloody work that they did not do it? That is the construction to put on these words. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite, some of whom, I am sure, are prepared to deal fairly with these men, if I am not using a right construction. I shall watch with anxiety the course which the hon. and learned Member will take with reference to this terrible and groundless accusation. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman said—

"I think it will appear that an emissary of the Land League used to get the money from the treasurer—either Mr. Biggar, or Mr. Brennan, or Mr. Egan, or any one of the officials who might be in charge—used to take down the money, £20 or £30—having received the money, of course, from Mr. Biggar or from any of the other officials who handled it—used to take down the £20 or £30 into the district, and then distribute it locally to the men who were to carry out the outrages."

Sir, Mr. Biggar has died since that accusation was made. He is not here to defend himself, but I entreat the hon. and learned Member, by a frank disavowal of that statement, to clear this man's memory from the gross aspersions which he was instructed to cast upon his character. Not wishing to weary the House, I will only refer very briefly to one other utterly groundless charge, namely, that the Invincibles were one with the Land League. The Attorney General having said that Mr. Parnell had declared that the Invincibles belonged to some other organisation, went on—

"I think you will have no doubt as to the organisation from which the Phœnix Park murders proceeded."

Do I misinterpret the words of the hon. and learned Gentleman when I say he meant the Land League? What has the hon. and learned Member to say in reply? He does not answer.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: It is impossible that I should interrupt to answer all the questions that are put to me. As far as I recollect, in the passage to which the hon. and learned Member refers, there certainly was no reference to the Land League. My recollection is that the passage refers to some organisation of Fenians, worse than the Fenians themselves.

Mr. LOCKWOOD: Of course, I am anxious that I should in no way come in conflict with the hon. and learned Gentleman, but I must say I

wish he could have assured me in more definite language as to what his meaning was. I understand him to say that, so far as his recollection goes, he said——

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Those are not my words.

MR. LOCKWOOD: Yes, indeed—in the case of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter," page 101 of the Blue Book. In a sense these are not the hon. Gentleman's words, because they were the words he was instructed to speak. I have been very careful to point out all through that the hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking according to his instructions. So much, then, for these charges. I hope that by this time, I have proved that the Amendment in its terms is absolutely and entirely true from beginning to end. It has been admitted in speeches made by supporters of the Government. Then, has not the time arrived at last, when, upon the Journals of this House, there should be recorded an ample withdrawal of the terrible charges which have been made against Members of this House? It has been suggested in the course of the debate that, upon various occasions, statements have been made which ought to satisfy the House. From that suggestion I entirely dissent. There have been occasions, no doubt, when the Attorney General and others have made use of expressions, which by some might be considered sufficient and satisfactory. I, on the other hand, hold that there never has been adequate and ample recompense offered to these men for the terrible slur that has been cast upon them. I recollect what occurred in the Commission Court on February 27, 1889. We had met on the previous day, when the Court was crowded in every part. No; there was one vacant place, the witness-box. The *Times'* witness had gone, and the Attorney General, feeling, no doubt, that it would be very difficult to continue the play—I was about to say the play of *Hamlet* with the "Prince of Denmark" left out, but it would be more appropriate to say the play of *Faust* without "Mephistopheles"—the Attorney General asked for an adjournment. Next day he returned, instructed to withdraw a portion of the case and to express regret. Now, when a man has committed a wrong, and is anxious to set matters right, he does not find it difficult to make a straightforward apology, but the position is one of considerable difficulty when the person who has done wrong wants to give an indication of an apology without the substance of an apology. The Attorney General came into Court with his instructions written out this time. Can it be suggested that the words read by the hon. and learned Member contained that ample and adequate retraction which can alone be satisfactory to the maligned Members? What the Attorney General read was this—

"My Lords, under these circumstances it seems to us that the course which we ought to take is clearly defined, and, believing that we are merely doing our duty, I now, on behalf of those whom we represent, ask permission to withdraw from your consideration the question of the genuineness of the letters which have been submitted to you, the authenticity of which is denied, with the full acknowledgement that, after the evidence which has been given, we are not entitled to say that they are genuine. My Lords, although it is possible that any expression of regret used by me in making this statement may be misrepresented, those whom I represent request me to express their sincere regret that the letters were published. That feeling, which most truly exists, will, at the proper time, be more fully expressed by themselves."

I have no doubt that is perfectly true; they do regret it. They regret exceedingly that the character of the *Times* as a respectable journal is shattered for ever. Then the Attorney General went on to say that, when the proper time came, a more full and ample expression of regret might be expected. Well, that time has not come yet, and so far as I can gather from that newspaper they sail as near the wind as they dare every day it is published. But they know now something about the law of libel—they have been taught by hon. Members below the Gangway, and they are careful not again to offend those laws. I appeal again to Gentlemen sitting opposite whether they can say that the *Times* has recognised that the occasion has come to do fuller and more ample justice to hon. Members below the Gangway. If they agree with me, do not hon. Members opposite think that the opportunity has arrived on the consideration of this Amendment? My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Roxburgh (Mr. Elliott) has referred to the damages accorded to the hon. Member for Cork as an adequate reparation to

that hon. Member on his own showing. But that is not on the Journals of the House. In the future when the Journals of the House come to be consulted, no record will be found on them of that action. I do not think the Attorney General represented the *Times* on this occasion. But it is the fact that although the *Times* dare not assert that the letters are genuine, yet they bind up with the record numbers of charges against the Member for Cork, and endeavour, if they can, to blacken his character with aspersions which are equally base and false, and equally disgraceful to that newspaper. I think it will be agreed that there was no reparation such as the hon. Member had a right to expect made on the occasion of the action to which I have referred. I ought, however, to acknowledge that, after the speech of the hon. Member for Cork in the Privilege debate, the leader of the House said a few words in answer to the appeal which was made to him which were, if I may respectfully say so, worthy of the right hon. Gentleman, and of a straightforward English Gentleman. Let my hon. and learned Friend's clients take pattern from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. But that, again, was no formal record. There has been up to now nothing to which hon. Members below the Gangway can point as showing that these charges have been made and disproved. I now want to say a word or two in regard to another matter which, no doubt, is a proper matter for our consideration. It may be said that although the charges made against hon. Members below the Gangway have been disproved, and although no reparation has been offered to them, yet in some way they are estopped from the relief they seek on account of the other charges that have been held to be established against them in this Report. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid), with a skill which I admired, dealt yesterday with all these charges, and I do not propose to go again over the ground which he so ably covered. It has been suggested that the Irish Members are debarred from the relief which is claimed for them by the charges which have been established against them. But the learned Judges themselves said that with respect to the amount of guilt which attached to these gentlemen they could offer no opinion to this House. The Judges also felt constrained to leave out of consideration matters which will be admitted to be of the first importance. I contend, therefore, that the finding on that head, which loses sight of all considerations in favour of these gentlemen, is a finding which reflects no dishonour on them, and does not disentitle them to the relief claimed by the Amendment. No reparation has been made, and I would ask hon. Members opposite to take these matters into their serious consideration, and to consider whether the time has not come for justice to be done to gentlemen who are their colleagues in the House.

*(4.55.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): It is no doubt interesting to the House to hear the learned Gentlemen who were concerned in this inquiry renew in our presence the arguments which were fully ventilated before the Commission. The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down has thought fit to make a personal attack on my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir R. Webster). My hon. and learned Friend is perfectly able to take care of himself, and I shall leave it to him, when he takes his turn in the Debate, to answer these personal observations with regard to his conduct. I would rather confine myself a little more strictly to the subject which is really before this House, namely, the Resolution and the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The hon. and learned Gentleman has said that the Amendment is absolutely true. Well, I am not concerned to contest that proposition. But I will add this, that it is only part of the truth. It is part of the truth, tainted with passionate and inflammatory adjectives. The Motion of my right hon. Friend is that we should adopt and record the whole of the findings of the Commissioners and show no favour to either side; and we should record both those findings which tell for the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway and those which tell against them. We desire to record the finding that the letters attributed to the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) are forged, the findings which acquit that hon. Member and his colleagues from anything like

complicity with the Phœnix Park murders——

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Oh, thanks.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have not searched these charges and allegations, as the hon. and learned Gentleman has; but I understood him to allege that that would be found in the record. Well, all the exonerating findings will be recorded by adopting my right hon. Friend's Motion. What we decline to do is to adopt a one-sided treatment of the Report of the Commission. We decline to adopt a course which gives the go-by to all the findings to which hon. Members opposite object, which gives them no record at all in our memory or upon the Journals of the House, in order simply to express the condemnation in which we hold the falsity and vile origin of certain other charges which were disproved. Now, what is there to justify this mode of treatment of the findings of a tribunal appointed by this House? Certainly no reason has been assigned for reflecting upon the character of the tribunal. I have listened with great interest to all the speeches which have been made, particularly to that of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). It is admitted that the tribunal showed zeal, industry, honour, and good faith. There is, therefore, nothing in the character of the tribunal to induce this House to disregard their findings. Is there, then, anything in the nature of the findings which disentitles them to the notice of the House? I cannot forget, Mr. Speaker, the origin of this inquiry. I cannot forget—I have here before me the record of the debate in this House—I cannot forget that it was at the instance of Members below the Gangway that we were invited to try these questions by another tribunal, to inquire into every charge which could be extracted from *Parnellism and Crime*. That was the contention of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) desired that the whole matter from beginning to end should be inquired into. The right hon. Member for Newcastle desired that the whole body of charges made by the *Times* against the Irish Members should be inquired into. What was it which interested the bulk of hon. Members of this House? It was the question whether the allegations in these articles, that the purpose and *modus operandi* of this organisation, which have become so familiar to us all, were or were not criminal. What was alleged in these articles was that the purpose of the organisation, both of the Land League and of the National League, was of a treasonable character. What was alleged was that the means were illegal, aye, and even criminal; that the methods employed were not constitutional, legal, regular, or justifiable, but constituted a system in itself naturally leading to and producing outrage and crime. That was the question raised by these articles, and it was further desired to ascertain what complicity there was in each and all of the persons incriminated in bringing about that state of things. The Commissioners find that the Land League was established and founded with the intention and for the purpose of bringing about the absolute independence of Ireland. The Commissioners say—

"In our judgment the object aimed at by Mr. Davitt and the other founders of the Land League, with regard to the Revolutionary Party, was not to put an end to or restrain its action by merging it in the new movement, but to point out to those holding Fenian opinions that the two Parties did not clash, and that they might be of material aid to one another."

And again—

"In our judgment the charge against the respondents collectively of having conspired to bring about total separation is not established. But we find that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League Organisation with the intention, by its means, to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation."

These are almost the very words I used, and which have been challenged. ["No!" *and laughter from the Opposition Benches.*] I said that the Commissioners have found that the Land League was established with the intention of bringing about the absolute independence of Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: Would the right hon. Gentleman read the ultimate conclusion of the Commissioners, or will he allow me to read it?—

"We find that the respondent Members of Parliament, collectively, were not members of a conspiracy having for its object to establish the absolute independence of Ireland."

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; but the Commissioners go on to say that Mr. Davitt, who was the founder of the Land League, had that intention and object, and I say that the findings of the Commissioners amount to this, that the organisation had for its object and purpose the absolute independence of Ireland. Further, I say that the National League is the Land League under another name, and that, therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) says that the idea of the absolute independence of Ireland is dead, he is in conflict on this point with the findings of the Commissioners. The right hon. Gentleman yesterday, in a passage of splendid rhetoric, inveighed against the means by which the Act of Union was brought about. It is only in recent times that the right hon. Gentleman has taken to giving us these lessons in history. I do not read history in the same way as the right hon. Gentleman, but this is a controversy wholly immaterial to this finding of the Commissioners. For the Commissioners find that the Land League had for its object, not the reform or alteration of the Act of Union and its replacement by some federal scheme or plan of delegation, but total separation between England and Ireland. The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid) and my learned Friend who has just addressed the House appear to be of opinion that when treason is 11 years old it becomes immaterial and unworthy of notice. That is not our view. Now, I should like to refer next to the means which were employed. According to the Commissioners there existed a criminal conspiracy to stop the rents and drive the landlords out of the country. How? By coercion, intimidation, and boycotting. The Commissioners find that the respondents did incite to intimidation, and that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited, and that they persisted in this incitement with knowledge of its effect. The Commissioners find that by speeches and the dissemination of certain newspapers they caused an excitable peasantry to carry out the orders of the Land League, even by assassination. These findings amounted to this, that the Land League used criminal methods to further its ends. We are told that all this is to go for nothing, because the personal complicity of A B or C has not been established. That is a proposition upon which it seems to me to be hardly safe to challenge the judgment of the House of Commons. What was the nature of the speeches which were proved before the Commissioners? Speeches in which land-grabbers were denounced as "man-eating tigers," as "enemies of God and man," as "a thousand times worse than murderers," speeches in which young men were recommended to arm and drill. Do not speeches such as these involve the speakers in personal responsibility? Is there no personal responsibility for such words as these, uttered by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. O'Brien)—

> "We have an organisation at our back which has proved sufficient to make land-grabbing in any shape a very disagreeable and risky profession."

And the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr Dillon) with the candour which marks his utterances and which I cannot help admiring, said—

> "There never was the slightest success until we hit upon the dodge of making it too hot for him who took his neighbour's land."

Do you mean to say that speeches like that made to an excited peasantry do not involve some kind of personal responsibility on those who utter them? Then as to the dissemination of newspapers. What were the newspapers? The House has been made sufficiently acquainted with the character of those newspapers. Archbishop Walsh called them abominable. The answer made is that the dissemination of these newspapers only amounts to constructive conspiracy. Thousands of copies of the *Irish World* scattered throughout Ireland is a matter for which no one is responsible, and so with regard to another paper owned by one of the respondents, who, it is represented, never knew its contents. I do not find that this method of criticism is applied to the editor of the *Times*, who is to be responsible for everything that appears in his paper. In my opinion neither law nor common sense will admit of such a plea as this. The doctrine, both of law and common sense, is that where a number of men are acting together for a joint purpose, when daily operations are carried out by each in furtherance of that joint purpose, all are

responsible for the acts of each, save for those acts which may be disowned. The theory of the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) appears to be that the only person answerable for an outrage is the man who commits the deed, and that those who may have suggested the deed are free from all responsibility. That is a doctrine which the House will, I think, be slow to accept.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to refer to any passage in the Report showing that the respondents suggested outrages?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have stated to the House what the Commissioners have found, namely, that the respondents incited to intimidation, that intimidation led to crime and outrage, and that the respondents persisted in their incitement to intimidation with knowledge of its effect. Will any one venture to assert that that does not amount to responsibility for the crime and outrage committed? If I invite a man to cross a bridge which I know to be rotten, or to partake of a dish which I know to be poisoned, am I not answerable for the consequences of his crossing the bridge or partaking of the dish? The Commissioners have found that the respondents were guilty of carrying on an Association whose object was treasonable by means that I must describe as criminal. Nothing seems to me to have been more clearly established than the truth of the words spoken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1882, that "crime with fatal precision dogs the footsteps of the Land League." Another plea that has been set up by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian is that offences of which the Commissioners have found certain hon. Members guilty are 10 years old. It is free, of course, for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and hon. Members opposite to argue that after 1886 came that magic change over Ireland which has disconnected the leaders of the National League for crime; but the Commissioners thought that that was not so, and that the continuity between the Land League and the National League still exists. The remarkable case of Mitchell, in page 47 of the Report, shows that a man with whom all had gone well prior to 1881 was boycotted in that year for letting out on hire agricultural machines to boycotted persons, and that he was persistently persecuted from 1881 to 1887. In the latter year his son, a boy of 11 years of age, going home with bread for his father, who had been two days without food, was attacked by three men, who hit him in his side with a large stone, which, to use Mitchell's expression, "rendered him worthless for his life." That was a case of outrage which was persisted in throughout the existence of the Land League and of the National League with a similar purpose and a like design. It is open to hon. Members opposite to maintain that the findings of the Commissioners on this point only concern ancient and musty history; but it is open to us to contend that the crime that existed at that time was exactly similar to the crime that led this House to pass the Crimes Act of 1887. Then another plea that has been set up by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian is that the very grave crimes that the Commissioners found had been committed were due to some other causes than agitation—such as iniquitous rents and evictions. The finding of the Commissioners, who have dealt with that argument, is, we are told, to be set aside on the ground that their finding is non-judicial; but, in my opinion, the evidence before the Commissioners showed that the crime that prevailed was due not to distress, iniquitous rents, and evictions, but to agitation. The Commissioners have given 16 instances of outrages in one part of their Report. In five of these instances men were shot for having paid their rent. What had those outrages to do with iniquitous rents or evictions? In another case a man was shot for buying out a tenant, and in two other cases men were shot for being caretakers. Thus, out of 16 instances of outrage, eight examples had no connection with iniquitous rents, evictions, or other agrarian wrongs. Then, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian asks the House not to record these adverse findings, because, according to him, the agitation which occurred during the years to which the Commissioners allude did more good than harm by preventing rather than causing crime, and because that agitation brought about the passing of the Land Act of 1881. The policy of the Land Act of 1881 may be open to a great deal of criticism. It was an exceptional

Act, which ran counter to many ancient principles and to economic science. It was justifiable only if it was a measure resorted to in a great public emergency; but it became odious and oppressive if it was a concession to turbulence and crime. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian told us that an agitation which led to all these results in the judgment of the Commissioners deserved, not the censure of the House, but to be passed by in silence, because it had led to the passing of the Land Act. This is the second time that the right hon. Gentleman has enunciated the most dangerous and disastrous doctrine that those who are guilty of crime, who commit outrages and make law and order impossible, are to be rewarded by the passing of an exceptional Act such as is not granted to any other class of the community. The right hon. Gentleman told us yesterday that the Act for the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the Land Act of 1870 were free gifts to the Irish people, and he drew a distinction between those Acts and the Act of 1881. But his memory misled him; for, on a previous occasion, he told his audience in Mid Lothian that it was the blowing up of Clerkenwell Prison and the murder of a policeman at Manchester that made the disestablishment of the Irish Church a practical question of politics. I believe that the House of Commons will not accept that reasoning as sufficient to set aside the condemnatory findings of the Commissioners. The House will not admit that outrages and crime were really beneficial to the country because they brought about the Land Act of 1881. Then there is another question with regard to the connection that exists between the constitutional and lawful organisation in this country and the other organisations in America. With regard to that, the Commissioners have taught me many new facts which I did not know before. The Commissioners have taught me that the Clan-na-Gael is certainly as desperate and infamous a society as was ever known in history. It is a society which deliberately recommends the use of dynamite, and is continually engaged in the promotion of its use, and it is a society which rejected a man of the name of Collins as its temporary President, because he had been guilty of the enormous crime of offering a reward for the discovery of the Phœnix Park murderers. It has lately been distinguished by the facts that have appeared in connection with the trial of Dr. Cronin's murderers. Connected with that society is Mr. Patrick Ford, the editor of the *Irish World*. That is a newspaper which preaches the use of dynamite as a political weapon, and which suggested the laying in ashes of English towns, and advised that England ought to be plagued with all the plagues of Egypt, and that she ought to be scourged by day and terrorised by night, and wished success to the National League and more power to dynamite. The Clan-na-Gael and Mr. Patrick Ford and the *Irish World* were taken under the special protection of the Land League. Why was it that the *Irish World* was disseminated? Was there any social science to be learnt from that newspaper? Did it contain items of news which Irish readers could not obtain from any other source? What reason can ingenuity suggest why this paper was circulated by the Land League if it was not to accustom its readers to the kind of doctrine it advocated? I am unable to suggest any other reason for the anxiety to disseminate this paper throughout Ireland. It was not only disseminated, but the editor received the thanks of the hon. Member for Cork on the part of the Land League. The Secretary of the Land League in July, 1881, declared—

> "That the success of the cause is to be measured by the acceptance of its principles. When the *Irish World* is read in every hamlet in every county, it will be beyond the power of earth and hell to perpetuate landlordism in Ireland."

It is found that the respondents did invite the assistance and co-operation of Patrick Ford and the *Irish World*, that they accepted his money, and that the payments made by him were received by various persons, including the respondents. It is found that the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation of the Clan-na-Gael in order to get help from it, and that the hon. Member for Cork in particular abstained from any denunciation or condemnation of the *Irish World* for that purpose. Forsooth, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian compared that with the case of the

different bodies of Catholics in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when there were Catholics who were loyal, and others who were inspired from abroad to assassinate the Queen. If Lord Montagu and his son had taken the money of the criminal conspirators, if they had circulated their correspondence and disseminated their views in the way that the Land League did in regard to the *Irish World*, I would not have given five minutes' purchase for their lives. Then the action of the Clan-na-Gael is also stated for us by the Commissioners. The Clan-na-Gael sent dynamitards to this country in 1883. One was named Lomasney, and the other, Dr. Gallagher, is still alive in this country. Then it is said that from 1883 to 1885 there was a lull in the outrages that occurred; because, as stated in one of the circulars of the Clan-na-Gael, a more active policy would be perilous to the leaders of the public movement in this country. This was the most disinterested friendship on the part of the Clan-na-Gael. Then, on December 16, 1885, there appeared in the *Leeds Mercury*, after a good many rumours, the first announcement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian's famous scheme of Home Rule. Then began the first dawning of those sweet hopes which we are told will bring about a union of hearts and peace and prosperity to Ireland. No doubt the Clan-na-Gael was informed by telegraph what had happened, for two days after they issued a curious circular in which they announced their readiness to accept Home Rule, because they would have their friends in the Castle, and the plant of an armed revolution, and they recognised Home Rule as a step in the progress of their own designs. Then on December 23 there is another circular of an equally interesting character, in which it is said—

"We expect to resume active operations after the present exigencies of the Constitutional Party are passed."

Here is a touching support given by the Clan-na-Gael to the Parliamentary Party. The Clan-na-Gael said they purposely abstained from doing anything which would embarrass the Constitutional Party during the crisis of the elections. As soon as the exigencies of the Constitutional Party demanded it the Clan-na-Gael ceased its outrages, and when the exigencies of the Constitutional Party no longer demanded it they declared their readiness to begin again.

MR. SEXTON: Where is that?

*MR. MATTHEWS: "We expect to resume active operations after the present exigencies of the Constitutional Party are passed." They declare their readiness to begin again. It is a finding that cannot be passed over in silence. All these findings show the connection between the organisation which claimed at home to be a Constitutional organisation and the Clan-na-Gael, with Patrick Ford and his newspaper, the *Irish World*, at their back. It appears that these persons in America held the "throttle valve of crime" in their hand, and were ready to turn on and turn off steam as it suited the exigencies of the party in this country and the leaders of the open movement. I do not in the least wish to withhold from the record of the Commission that the hon. Member for Cork was not aware that the Clan-na-Gael had by a contrivance, explained in the Report, obtained control of the American organisations. That is perfectly true; but the observation does not controvert the fact that there is in America a body of persons perfectly lost to all the ordinary rules that govern men, perfectly regardless of what duty and morality require, and who are ready to interrupt or continue proceedings—which must be characterised as desperate and criminal—just as it suits the purposes and desires of the so-called Constitutional Party in this country. Is the House of Commons to pass by these facts without notice? The excuses that have been made for these things seem to me to make the matter worse. That facts so grave and so alarming as these found by the Commissioners are palliated and excused on such grounds as have been set forth by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian seems to me to make it more than ever necessary that they should be recorded on the Journals of this House for the instruction of the country.

(5.40.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I think the course of this debate, and especially the speech to which we have just listened, shows most conclusively both the unfairness and the unwisdom of using the weapon of the Criminal Law for the purpose of attacking our political

opponents or for dealing with political issues. The whole of the Debate hitherto, so far as it has gone, on the other side has been a systematic attempt to insinuate to the House that the character of hon. Members from Ireland who sit below the Gangway is unworthy, unconstitutional, criminal, and of a censurable description, and quietly, without saying it openly, speeches are being made which are speeches against any change of Government in Ireland supported by those hon. Members. Now that seems to me an extraordinary position to take up, because if I entertained their view—the view of the so-called Unionist Party—and if the Commissioners had found that not one single line of censure ought to be distributed to these hon. Members, if they had eulogised them as patriots of the highest order and had commended every act and speech of the respondents, it would not affect by a hair's breadth my opposition to Home Rule. The character of the men is immaterial; in the issue you are dealing with a nation, and leaders come and leaders go; but the great Constitutional question remains. But dealing with a great Constitutional question, I think it is most unfortunate, most unfair, one of the most unfair things in this inquiry, thus imparting into a political question the weapon of the Criminal Law, endeavouring to fight those to whom we are politically opposed by charges of criminal offences which, if you believe them to be true, it is your bounden duty to follow up by a Motion to expel the accused Members from the House. Now, last night the President of the Board of Trade made the following remark—

"On our side we believe that the Report contains condemnation as well as acquittal, and we think it right and just to record both."

Condemnation and acquittal! Yes, but for what are the respondents condemned and of what are they acquitted? The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) last night gave us a history—and he was quite right in giving us that history—of the circumstances under which this Commission was instituted, and he very properly said we could not appreciate the findings of the Commission unless we recalled to recollection the circumstances under which that Commission was issued. I propose to supply one or two points that the right hon. Gentleman did not refer to. My hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Lockwood) has to-night called attention to one or two passages which form the basis of the original charge, but I think the House should have a rather more extended prospect put before it of what was the original charge in *Parnellism and Crime*, and what was the charge which the Attorney General made in "O'Donnell *v.* Walter." It was these two together that formed the basis or instruction for the inquiry ordered by Parliament. Let us see whether the main objects for which this inquiry was directed are not the objects upon which hon. Members have been acquitted. I am going to give the House four or five quotations. I will not repeat the quotations my hon. and learned Friend has given, although his contention is singularly illustrated by the speech just made, namely, that the *Times* in its first article said that treason was not the main charge against the hon. Member for Cork and his friends—

"Treason in these days of flabby tolerance is leniently regarded as personal indiscretion. We regard that as one proof of the decay of public opinion."

And the article goes on to say they have to deal with something more serious, and they go on to connect their accusation against Irish Members with murder from first to last. They stated the Land League was a movement based on a scheme of assassination "carefully calculated and coolly applied." They stated—it cannot be repeated too often—that the League was provided with funds by the murderers who shared their councils, and that murderers had gone from the League offices to set out on their bloody work, and returned to consult the Constitutional leaders on the progress of the cause. The next quotation I will give is one we have not heard very much about. I do not recollect if any evidence was produced in regard to it, but it is absolutely rejected in the findings. A distinct charge was made in *Parnellism and Crime* that the hon. Member for Cork, when he was let out of prison in order to attend a funeral in Paris, at a meeting with Land League members at Willesden, was made cognisant of the intended Phœnix Park murders. That is clearly set out on page 24 of *Parnellism and Crime*, and though it is not

stated in the words I have used, the innuendo is clear and conclusive. Then again, on page 29, it is stated that Carey's evidence did not directly confirm the universal conviction that prevailed, that the League controlled the throttle valve of crime. The right hon. Gentleman said just now that that control was with the Clan-na-Gael. Here the charge is that Members of this House were actually accessories to the crime. In another passage the *Times* says—

"Not only was this murder club organised by one of Mr. Parnell's official chief organisers, but its victims were selected by Mr. Parnell's organisation."

Then we have a charge distinctly bearing on Members of this House. The *Times* says—

"We have seen how Mr. Parnell's 'Constitutional organisation' was planned by Fenian brains, founded on a Fenian loan, and reared by Fenian hands; how the infernal fabric 'rose like an exhalation' to the sound of murderous oratory; how assassins guarded it about and enforced the high decrees of the secret conclave within by the bullet and the knife. Of that conclave to-day three members sit in the Imperial Parliament; four are fugitives from the law; against one a true bill for murder stands recorded: all the exiles consort with professed assassins since their flight. It remains to show that the 'distinguished representatives' at home have continuously maintained their relations with the murderers who fled and the murderers who harbour them."

Then, on page 36, we find that the evidence put forward by the *Times* has

"Revealed nearly all the chief Members of the first Home Rule Ministry—Mr. Parnell himself, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Healy, Mr. Biggar, the Messrs. Redmond, Mr. William O'Brien, and Davitt—in trade and traffic with avowed dynamiters, and known contrivers of murder."

Those were the charges which Lord Salisbury said sent a thrill through the country, and which induced Parliament to interfere. When the Attorney General addressed the Court in the case of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter" he repeated those charges, and stated that they were the very worst libels which could be brought against a public man. The First Lord of the Treasury quoted some extracts from Lord Coleridge's judgment, but the most important extract was not given by him. Lord Coleridge says—

"The charges made against them were charges of complicity in murder, that they shut their eyes when crime was contemplated; in some cases they actually knew that murder was going to take place, and on other occasions they were present when murder was being talked about and did not disavow it."

As the Lord Chief Justice summed up the charges he said the main issue was whether Parnellism was sustained on murder, rapine, and robbery. Those were the facts which were brought before Parliament, and which caused Lord Salisbury to say that they sent a thrill through the country—not what the late Mr. Forster said in 1881 or 1882, not the ravings of the *Irish World* or the *Irishman*, or any other newspaper of the kind. They created no indignation; we have heard them over and over again. What did send a thrill through the country was the charge that men on these Benches were contrivers and accomplices in murder. The debate on the Commission Bill in the House of Lords was distinguished by a speech from Lord Herschell which I will venture to say if delivered in this House would have stopped the progress of the Bill. It was an admirable masterly statement of the objections to the Bill, and every one of the noble Lord's prophecies has been implicitly fulfilled. But after Lord Herschell, Lord Carnarvon rose to call attention to the subject matter of the Bill, and he said—

"Your Lordships will remember that about April or May last year there appeared in the *Times* a series of charges which were followed up by the publication of a letter in *fac simile* of Mr. Parnell's writing. Such a charge happily had never been made before, and such a charge had never been attempted to be substantiated in the same way."

Then he went on to discuss the reasons for appointing a Commission. He alluded to the fact that it would not be appointed to discuss any ordinary case, but an extraordinary and exceptional case. He said—

"I can conceive nothing so ruinous to the fair fame of the House of Commons as to allow such a charge as this to remain unsettled. Consider what it really means. It means that you have a large section of the House of Commons so condoning and so conniving at the most hideous crimes that they become participators in those crimes. I can only recall two cases in any degree analagous to this state of things in the whole history of the House of Commons. In the beginning of the last century you had a large Jacobite Party in the House of Commons. There were many serious and grave charges levelled against them, and history has failed to clear up many points. They were pledged to upset, if they could, the

present dynasty. They plotted with outside opponents of the existing state of things, and grave charges were brought against them. But I venture to think none of those charges were so grave as that with which we have to deal at the present moment."

What does he mean but the charge of murder? I am sure the right hon. Gentleman who gave us an exaggerated statement of the doings of the Clan-na-Gael will admit that the charges are graver than those against the Jacobite Party. Lord Carnarvon went on:—

"At the close of the same century, there was a Party in the House of Commons who sympathised warmly with the French Revolution, and whose language carried them to the extreme verge of disloyalty to the Crown and the country. But no one ever brought such a charge against them as has been repeatedly and unequivocally levelled against the followers of Mr. Parnell."

What did he mean by that? He was dealing with the charge of murder, and nothing else. Now my argument is this, that the real purpose for which the Commission was constituted—I think it was an un-Constitutional tribunal; I think it was an unfortunate tribunal—but the real object for which it was constituted was to find out whether there was any truth in the fact that the Irish Members were knowingly guilty of complicity with murder, and every one of the charges has been proved to be absolutely worthless and baseless. The Irish Members are acquitted of complicity with murder, of a knowledge of the Phœnix Park murder, and of associating with known murderers, of providing money to allow criminals to escape from justice; and if this is so then it justifies the position we take up, that the main object of the Commission being to find out whether they were guilty or not guilty, and those hon. Members having been pronounced to be not guilty, it is the duty of the House specially to record, in the language of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, what the House thinks of such charges, falsely and foully made against the Irish Members without a tittle of evidence to support them, and which ought not to have been made or listened to for a moment. The First Lord of the Treasury said that the House is precluded by the terms of the Act from inflicting any criminal penalties, or indeed any penalty whatever, on the incriminated persons. But I ask the right hon. Gentleman, as Guardian of the House of Commons, himself a man of spotless honour and integrity, whether, if the Judges had found those men guilty of murder, if they had found that the hon. Member for Cork knew of the Phœnix Park murder, he would have abstained from moving his expulsion from the House. If the right hon Gentleman omitted to perform this duty, then I can tell him that we on these Benches would have done it. And no technical objection ought to stand in the way of the House of Commons vindicating its own fair fame and character. What are the other charges? The Home Secretary has gone through them, but there is nothing new in them. Those who remember the memorable evening when Mr. Forster, standing where the noble Lord the Member for Paddington now sits, made his tremendous speech, will come to the conclusion that there is nothing in the Report of a graver character than was uttered by Mr. Forster at that time. The worst charges which Mr. Forster made, how have they been dealt with by the Judges? The Judges have found that the Irish Members are innocent of them. I remember that one of the first things I heard on coming into the House was a speech from a right hon. Gentleman now sitting opposite, the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket), and I am sorry that now we seldom hear that accomplished oratory we all admire so much. I remember the First Commissioner of Works denouncing with tremendous force, and with his almost inimitable rhetoric, the whole Plan and Campaign of the Irish League. He dwelt on the points which the Home Secretary has been dwelling upon to-night; but the House of Commons is familiar with all this; there is nothing new about it. The House of Commons knows this thing as it knows its multiplication table. We remember the "leper" speech, in which the hon. Member for Cork said that if a man committed any offence as a landgrabber he should be treated as a leper. There is, I think, hardly a debate in 1881 and 1883 in which that "leper" speech is not quoted over and over again. So far as these things are concerned, there is nothing new. But, before dealing with the main part of the charge, I want to refer to what the Home Secretary has said, first upon the law of conspiracy,

and, secondly, upon the Clan-na-Gael. The Home Secretary said—

"It is true these hon. Gentlemen did not incite to murder, but they made speeches which caused murder, and knowing that murder would be the result, they are responsible;"

and he gave us these illustrations—

"If," he said, "I know a bridge is rotten and I send a person over the bridge, and he loses his life, or if I know a dish is poisoned and I invite a man to partake of it and he loses his life, I am responsible. And so in like manner hon. Members are responsible for the crime which followed their speeches."

True, if they knew that crime would follow their speeches; but the Judges say they did not know it. They say that the charges have not been substantiated, that no proof has been given, and that they do not believe that there was any intention on the part of the respondents, or any of them, to procure murder; and, further, that those who used the most dangerous language did not intend to cause murder. Therefore, the charge of constructive murder and constructive knowledge of murder goes to the winds. Then, as to the Clan-na-Gael, I recognise the zeal and impartiality with which the Judges discharged their difficult duties, and the Report, as a whole, is a signal monument of the uprightness of English Judges. But the Attorney General and the right hon. Gentleman know that nothing is more usual than to move for a new trial on the ground of misdirection or mistake in point of law, or, where a Judge is sitting without a jury, on the ground that the decision is wrong. Now, the whole of the Clan-na-Gael case, as I understand it, depends on the evidence of Le Caron, or rather the man Beach. The learned Judges believed Le Caron. With all respect for them, I do not believe him; and if I had been sitting on a jury and Le Caron had been brought forward as a witness, I would have rejected his evidence. I do not believe there is a single Judge on the Bench, including the three Commissioners, who would have directed a jury to find a man guilty of a capital offence on Le Caron's evidence. Le Caron was, by his own admission, a perjurer. He made one statement about the hon. Member for Cork so preposterous, absurd, and ridiculous that any person who has the slightest knowledge of the hon. Member for Cork would reject that statement. He said that in the Lobby of this House the hon. Member for Cork told him—a perfect stranger just arrived from America—that he did not see any reason why a successful insurrectionary movement could not be inaugurated in Ireland, as they would soon have £100,000 in the Land League funds! Well, I have heard many charges brought against the hon. Member for Cork, but I never heard any man call him a fool, and he would certainly have been worse than a fool or a lunatic outside Bedlam if he had made any such statement. No, I reject that as the invention of a liar; I reject it all the more as Le Caron admitted that he had committed perjury on various occasions. What is the real point of the case? It is that there was boycotting and that there was intimidation. The Judges have found that the hon. Member for Cork and his allies have been guilty of boycotting of a severe and drastic character. I do not question that finding at all. I believe, under the instrumentality of the Land League and the working of the scheme, there has been boycotting. I never heard hon. Members below the Gangway deny that there was boycotting or that there were other crimes besides boycotting. There was agrarian crime. If you go back into the history of Ireland for the last 30 or 40 years, you will find that agrarian crime was prevalent; you will find instances by the hundred. There was agrarian crime during the famine and whenever there were evictions. But the Judges did not touch upon that point. They did not find whether there was any cause for boycotting or agrarian crime. It was very much as if, after a great railway accident, an inspector should be sent down to ascertain whether there was an accident and how many were killed, but he was not to inquire into the cause of the accident, into the working of the line, or the quality of the materials used. It was an essential part of an inquiry into agrarian crime, to inquire also what were the causes; and so it was an essential part of the inquiry into boycotting to inquire into its causes. The Home Secretary told us that the Judges had found that agrarian crime followed boycotting. But anyone who knows Ireland must know that the figures they gave are absolutely worthless. The Judges carried their inquiry down only to 1879. I do not know

whether that was by arrangement of counsel on both sides; I understand that it was by arrangement that they terminated their inquiry at 1886. Here is a statement I will give to the House—

"In 1879, again, there is another famine. In that year the country was paying £1,001,888 in taxes for the support of its poor, against £523,000 20 years before. It was paying £117,275 in outdoor relief alone, against £3,239 in 1859. According to the Local Government Report, the number of poor actually in the Workhouses reached 59,870 in February, 1880, the highest number during the famine of 1846 having been 51,302. In the spring of 1880, there was the enormous number of 117,454 persons receiving relief at the expense of the taxpayers, many of the latter themselves being little removed above the necessities of relief."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): What is the hon. Member quoting from?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: From Mr. J. A. Fox's book. Let us think of the half a million of people who, in two years, perished miserably in the Workhouses or on the wayside—more than have fallen by the sword in any of our wars; let us think of the crop of horrors which is now growing up in Ireland, the disastrous fruit of which may be gathered in years to come! One whose absence we all deplore, the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, dealing in 1883 with the Conservative attacks upon him for this lawless agitation, which they said the Government ought to put down, said—

"Lawless agitation was brought prominently forward; but had there been nothing in Ireland in the past two or three years but lawless agitation? Were there no grievances, no confiscations of the tenants' improvements, no evictions for impossible rents? Was there no general opinion, not only among the disaffected as well as the most respectable classes in Ireland, that judicial interference in some shape was required to settle the relations between the landlords and the tenants? The evidence of this opinion did not rest only on the Report of Lord Bessborough's Commission, but on the Report of the Agricultural Commission, the Duke of Richmond's Commission, and on the opinion of almost every person entitled to speak with authority on the affairs of Ireland."

Lord Hartington says that in 1883 there were causes for agitation. The Judges say—

"It is not our business to inquire, it is not our duty."

And they are right. Mr. Tuke, who is an impartial witness, writing in 1880, says—

"In South Mayo, from Westport eastward, the chief landlords are nearly all non-residents—five or more—whose total rentals taken out of the country cannot be less than £80,000 a year. . . . It is in South Mayo that the great seat of disturbance exists, and where, as I have noticed, the largest body of police is quartered, and where there are many men who dare not stir out of their houses without their escorts."

I will not multiply illustrations. There was a great deal we ought to condemn, regret, and deplore. But behind these acts there was something far worse—there was the worst land system of Europe, under which the property of the tenants was confiscated and the tenants evicted. The people were put into a state of constant antagonism to the law; and can you wonder that they refused to become informers to assist the law? The landlords of Ireland neglected the rule that property has its duties as well as its rights. The Home Secretary referred to the observation of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that great reforming and political movements are accompanied by crime. He said the doctrine was odious, detestable, dangerous, and disastrous. Let us look a little into English History. I should like to ask my right hon. Friend, who I suppose is the only man in this House who remembers, whether there was not crime connected with the agitation for the Reform Bill? Was not Bristol in flames, and Nottingham in flames? Was there not immense destruction of property? Did not the men of Birmingham threaten to march on London? Was there not a correspondence—perhaps some day it will come out—with Joe Parker, of Birmingham, afterwards rewarded by a post in Chancery, and who in after years wrote on the authorship of the *Letters of Junius?* Was there not correspondence between the responsible Ministers of the Crown and the organisers of the Birmingham Unions with reference to the carrying of the Reform Bill? We are told that a great many of the tenants will not pay the landlords' rents. I am sure the Home Secretary, with his high Constitutional opinions, will say that the Queen's taxes come before rent. What were the placards in London?—"No taxes paid here until the Bill is passed." I find in Roebuck's *History of the Whig Ministry*, that when the tax gatherer called, not on Radical agitators in Birmingham, not upon one of the despised Members of the Irish Party, but

upon the heir to the great Earldom of Fitzwilliam, Lord Milton "requested the tax gatherer to call again because he was not certain that circumstances might not arise which would oblige him to resist their payment." And the Tory Members came down in those days, as now, and asked the noble Lord if he admitted the truth of the statement. "Certainly," said Lord Milton; and in the presence of the House of Commons he declared that he would not pay the tax. I am not defending any one of these things. I say they are part of the history of the country. It is all nonsense to attempt to separate this political movement from other political movements. It is wrong, I know—I agree with the Home Secretary that it is odious, it is dangerous, and sometimes disastrous—that Governments and Parliaments will not concede to reason what they do concede to revolution. But the men who are responsible for revolutions are not the men who rise; they are the men of the obstinate, stupid, hard-hearted, hard-headed Governments who say *non possumus* to everything, and resist, resist, resist until resistance is too late. You talk about taxes. I will give you an illustration. During the agitation for the great Reform Bill, the then Lord Chancellor had a young brother, subsequently Lord Brougham, who went to Southwark in London. He said—

"Something has been said about not paying taxes. A resolution to that effect would be highly illegal. People may individually refuse without rendering themselves amenable to the law."

I am afraid the Home Secretary would call that constructive conspiracy. This is a great dignitary speaking. He says—

"If the tax gatherer calls upon me and asks you to settle his little bill for taxes, I may say to him in reply, 'I have got a little bill of my own which I should like to have settled by gentlemen down at Westminster, and who owe it me, and unless that little bill of mine be satisfactorily settled, you must never expect me to settle this.'".

Sir, there were men in those days, like the Home Secretary and the Attorney General, who were very angry with this tampering with the law. And in the last debate which took place in this House on the Reform Bill, one of the most distinguished Members of the Tory Party, Mr. Mackworth Praed, said—

"When the means by which recent events have been accomplished are stated there will be no blacker page than that which records the passing of this Bill in our history."

I commend that language to the Home Secretary. Can there be anything stronger? "No blacker page" even than all these charges about the Clan-na-Gael and the Land League agitation. It was an agitation in which the whole of the leaders of the Whig Party, and nearly half the aristocracy of the country, were involved, and the country was within 24 hours of revolution. Another illustration occurs to me with reference to the Corn Laws. Hon. Members may, perhaps, not be aware that Sir James Graham, then Home Secretary, sent down a Commission to Manchester to see whether he could not prosecute Cobden and Bright. He saw the folly of attempting a prosecution. In the presence of my illustrious Colleague and his true and legitimate heir, I say that the most memorable thing Sir Robert Peel ever did was, not the abolition of the Corn Laws, in reference to which he said—

"Hereafter my name will be associated with the untaxed food of the people,"

was not the breaking up of a party—for no great movement has ever yet been gained without breaking up a party—but the greatest thing Sir Robert Peel ever did was, after hearing Cobden make his speech, and Sidney Herbert come up and asked him to answer it, to say—"That speech is unanswerable." It convinced his reason and his judgment, and he achieved the highest statesmanship and highest patriotism in carrying out that great measure, which, if it had not been passed, would have caused bloodshed and turmoil in the country. But how have we dealt with Ireland? The Home Secretary speaks of the odious, detestable, dangerous, and disastrous results of my right hon. Friend with reference to the Crimes Act. I was not a Member of the Cabinet of 1881. I do not know what induced them to bring in that measure; but, if my recollection serves me right, the Duke of Argyll left that Cabinet because that Irish Land legislation constituted no part of the programme of that Cabinet when it was formed. But I will take a cautious statesman from either House. I will

take, first, the Chairman of Committees in this House. He said—

"Speaking broadly, nothing has been done in justice to Ireland, simply because she demanded it. Successive steps of justice have been taken. Why? Because we could no longer resist."

Then, what did Lord Derby, not a man likely to give way to what the Home Secretary calls an odious and detestable doctrine, say?—

"Fixity of tenure in Ireland is the direct result of two causes—Irish outrage and Party obstruction."

Lord Derby is not defending outrage and Party obstruction; he is simply making a philosophic statement of fact. Any man who sat in this House in 1880 knows as well as I know that if it had not been for Irish agitation and Irish outrage, we should never have had the Irish Land Act. I say, in passing judgment upon Irish Members, the Government should bear in mind not only what they have done, but they should also recollect the circumstances in which they are placed. The Judges did not inquire whether the acts were palliated. If anyone will read the history of Ireland, the story of her agrarian life, I think they will find that if anything will palliate even the most serious crime, it is to be found in that history. Condemn the Irish Members if you like for being associated with the National League, condemn them for boycotting, for their foolish speeches, and all the nonsense which they have spoken and written, yet they can point to the Land Act of 1881, to Lord Ashbourne's Act, 1885, to the Arrears Act, 1882, and to your Land Act of 1887 as triumphs they have achieved. You may enter upon the Journals of this House, I have no doubt you will with your majority, the Report which you believe is condemnatory of them, but as long as those Journals retain, as they will retain, the fact of those great measures, Irish Members will have something to point to in those Journals calling for the gratitude of their country, and which will far outweigh any censure by a Party majority of this House.

(6.29.) MR. ELLIOTT LEES (Oldham): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words upon the Report and upon the propositions to which I am asked to give my consent. I find my consent is asked by the leader of this House to the adoption of this Report; and I am asked by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to express my reprobation of these false charges brought against the hon. Member for Cork. By the hon. Baronet I am asked to deplore the guilt which has been brought home to several Members of this House in connection with conspiracy and criminal conspiracy. I should like, if I were able, to adopt every one of these propositions. I should like to adopt the Report, and I should also, by my vote, like to adopt the view of the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, who expresses satisfaction that the charge against the hon. Member for Cork has been disproved. I should further like to assent to the proposition of the hon. Baronet opposite that we should thank the Commissioners for the zeal with which they have discharged their duty. But I am placed in a difficulty. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian is not merely a constructive Amendment. It is also a destructive Amendment. It asks us to leave out the pith of the Resolution moved by the First Lord of the Treasury, and not to adopt the Report of the Commissioners. I think the right hon. Gentleman must have had some inscrutable reason for taking this particular line. He has told us that he is an old Parliamentary hand. We all know that there is no more expert political tactician than the right hon. Gentleman. Well, for some reason or other, he has, by the terms of his Amendment, rendered it impossible for me, agreeing with him as I do, to express that agreement by my vote. I suppose he also had some reason for devoting the greater part of his speech not to the finding of the Commissioners as to the forged letters, but to the task of discrediting the finding of the Commissioners on the other charges submitted to them. Before I go on to those matters, I should like, most fully and most heartily, to express my satisfaction that the most important charge against the hon. Member for Cork has been conclusively disproved by the authority of these three Judges. The charge, I admit, was calumnious and ought never to have been brought. I admit, as fully as any hon. Member opposite could do, the criminal recklessness with which it was

brought; and I say that before such a charge was made, every link in the chain of evidence upon which it was founded, ought to have been submitted to the closest scrutiny and to the most careful test. But that was not done. I rejoice that a Member of the greatest Legislative Assembly in the world—I rejoice that a Member of the British House of Commons—has been proved innocent of the charge of having, by proxy, struck knives into the hearts of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. Years hence, when we look back to the events of the present day, free from private interests, free from prejudices and partialities, I am sure we shall all rejoice that a Member of our own Body has been acquitted of such a charge. I am able to say this, perhaps with the more justification, because from the very first I dissociated myself from the charges that were brought by the *Times* newspaper. At that time I declared in this House that we ought to consider hon. Members from Ireland innocent until they had been proved guilty. Two years ago, also, I invited hon. Members to assent to the granting of the Commission on the ground that if they could disprove this charge they would produce a great revulsion of feeling in the country. I think we must admit that they did produce a great revulsion of feeling when the charge was disproved, but how did they fritter it away? It is no part of my duty to advise hon. Members as to their political tactics, but never did an important party on an occasion of the very highest importance throw away such an opportunity. I should have thought that hon. Members above the Gangway would have contrived to prevent the opportunity being thrown away. What occurred? Hon. Members came down here naturally in a spirit of triumph and exultation over the dramatic incident which had taken place in the Commission Court when Pigott was proved to be the forger. They exhibited much triumph and exultation. That was of course all right and proper, although perhaps a little moderation might have been more dignified; but when they went on to take a mean revenge by attacking the personal honour of two Gentlemen—the Attorney General and the First Lord of the Treasury, whose personal honour stands as high or higher than that of any other two men in this House—then I think that even those who had sympathised most deeply with hon. Members opposite felt that, after all, they were not men of such delicacy of feeling as that even such attacks as they had been subjected to would have caused them very poignant anguish. I therefore say that hon. Members opposite threw away their chance upon that occasion. Before I pass on to discuss other points contained in the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, I should like to refer to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite, thanking the Commissioners for the zeal which they have displayed. I think we do owe our sincere thanks to the Commissioners for the manner in which they have conducted the inquiry and written their Report. That they are men of ability and integrity goes without saying, because they are English Judges. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has accused them of unconscious partiality, but I submit he had no right whatever to bring such a charge against them. We owe them thanks for the language in which they have drawn up their Report. The document might have been made a triumph of literary skill, or a model of legal learning; but, instead of that, it is couched in language of almost Biblical simplicity, written so that he who runs may read, and every elector can, if he chooses, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest every word of the Report, and form his conclusion as to the finding of the Commission. I now come to the objections raised by the right hon. Gentleman to our adoption of the Report. He asks whether we shall adopt the Report without having read the evidence. But surely our very contention in granting the Commission was that the House of Commons itself was not a Body fitted to inquire into the value of the evidence in cases of this nature, but that it would be better to submit such evidence to three impartial Judges. Upon the verdict of those Judges we are content to rest. It would be impossible for us, without re-trying the whole case, to consider the evidence, because part of the evidence is the manner in which it is given, and the simple perusal of printed evidence might convey an imperfect and wrong idea as to what had passed in the Court. There was one part of the right

hon. Gentleman's speech to which I listened with great astonishment. In dealing with that portion of the Report in which the Judges find that certain Members of the Irish Party were guilty of an attempt to separate Ireland from England, he talked about the evils of the Act of Union, which Act, he said, had been productive of great misery to Ireland.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: No, no.

MR. LEES: I am in the recollection of hon. Members.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: If the hon. Gentleman desires, I will refresh his memory. I spoke of the means by which the Act of Union had been procured, and after detailing those means, I said one could not wonder if Irishmen stated that the Act of Union was devoid of moral authority. On the effects of the Act of Union I did not say a single word.

MR. LEES: I entirely accept and welcome the right hon. Gentleman's statement. It seems to me to strengthen my argument, for we have said on our side that the effect of destroying the Act of Union would be to bring about a complete separation of Ireland from this country. We have before us a finding of the Judges that certain Members have worked to bring about that separation, and the right hon. Gentleman simply meets that charge by pointing to the means by which the Act of Union was brought about. Surely the Report shows there has been something more than a mere attempt to destroy the Act of Union—that there has been treason to the Queen, and treason to the United Kingdom; and when I heard the right hon. Gentleman talk about the Act of Union in connection with the finding of the Judges, winding up as he did with one of the finest perorations, I was reminded of the speech which he delivered last summer in this House, and in which he said he hoped that, after a long career spent in the service of the people, he had not forgotten the duty he owed to the Crown. He illustrated his contention by alluding to the behaviour of the Roman Catholics in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and he reminded us that Roman Catholics then were loyal to the Crown, but did not think it necessary to expose conspiracies entered into by members of their body who were not loyal to the Crown. But is that to justify the conduct of hon. Members opposite in the present day? If so, the Government would be equally justified in dealing with hon. Members in a very curious way, and probably did the methods of the days of Queen Elizabeth still prevail, many of them would make a much closer acquaintance with Tower Green, and even the right hon. Gentleman himself might possibly see something of the small archway which leads from the Thames to the Tower. I refuse altogether to admit that the end can in any way justify the means, although that was really the line of argument which ran through the right hon. Gentleman's speech. According to the right hon. Gentleman, the hon. Member for the City of Cork would have been justified in writing the letter which has been proved to be a forgery; he would have been justified in doing what the right hon. Gentleman has himself described as a vile, cowardly, and hypocritical act —there is no extent of atrocity which you cannot justify by this argument, provided always that you can connect that atrocity with political agitation. The same argument ran through the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton—it was that because a movement was of a political nature, therefore all crime committed by those who professed to follow the leaders of the movement was not to be repudiated or condemned by Members of this House. It is useless to put forward the argument that history has justified such crime and such methods of advancing political opinion. The question is not whether history has justified them; but whether this House is, by refusing to adopt the Report, to signify its approval of such methods? I listened with great interest, and with some emotion, as I suppose other Members did, to the peroration of the right hon. Gentleman last night. He appealed to our consciences; he appealed to us as men to commune with our hearts in the silence of our chambers. He asked us to be guided solely by conscience, and not by political feeling or prejudice. I must admit I have had a great temptation with regard to the vote I shall deliver on this question. I have been tempted to gain a brief notoriety by voting for the Amendment of the right hon. Gentlemen; and I could have so voted with

less inconsistency than many hon. Members on this side, because of the stress which, at the time the Commission was proposed, I laid on the immensity and gravity of that charge against the hon. Member for Cork which has been disproved. Had I yielded to the temptation, I should have been lauded by the ubiquitous Press of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I should have been treated as the one honest hero on the Conservative side of the House; but when I communed with my heart in my chamber, when I appealed to my conscience, I felt that in spite of the gravity of the charge against the hon. Member for Cork, which has been disproved, the crimes of which hon. Members opposite have been found guilty are not crimes which we, as the upright rulers of an honest country, ought to consider trivial or unfit to be condemned.

*(6.55.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): The hon. Member for Oldham seems to be in an uncertain state of mind; and although he has alluded to his conscience, I venture to suggest, with all respect, that he appears to have been striving against the dictates of that conscience. Undoubtedly he was, like the rest of us, much moved by the magnificent speech we heard last night; and what the hon. Member has just said reminds me of the experience of a certain character in Scripture, who trembled when he heard the Apostle speak on righteousness and the judgment to come, but who afterwards, when he communed with his own heart, thought better of it and refused to yield. I am afraid that that has been the experience of the hon. Member. His hesitating speech also reminded me of the saying of another listener to the words of righteousness, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The hon. Member was almost persuaded to go into the Lobby with us. I wish he had been quite persuaded, for he would thereby have gained not a little brief notoriety, but a just fame for having followed the dictates of conscience in a political controversy. I am afraid that hon. Members have not realised the solemnity of the appeal made to their consciences. But perhaps before this Debate is concluded hon. Members opposite will listen to the voice within, and vote, not as mere politicians, but as gentlemen and as men. The speeches we have heard from those Benches seem to have been intended to work up a feeling of moral indignation for which there are no materials, while the speakers have carefully shirked the elements that exist for explosive indignation against the real crime which has been perpetrated, and of which they dread to speak. What do the charges on which the Irish Members have not been pronounced absolutely innocent amount to? They amount to political indiscretion; to a want of a proper sense of proportion between means and end; to an insufficient apprehension of their responsibility for results which might accrue from the desperation of the Irish people after sufferings for which the National Members had no responsibility whatever, but which have come upon them through the indiscretion of their rulers. Speakers opposite have been challenged to express their indignation by passing some sort of censure or sentence upon the National Members. Through the lips of the leader of the House they make their excuse: he talks of certificates of indemnity which the Royal Commission were authorised to grant, and on this ground he says it would be highly improper for them to pass any sentence upon any Member of the House. But who has asked for a certificate of indemnity? I believe the informers of the *Times* newspaper have; but I am not aware that any Nationalist Member has. There is no reason given which justifies the inaction of the Government. Then, the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House in the course of his speech referred in feeling terms to one gentleman, not a Member of this House, whose history is in some respects a most tragic one—I allude to Mr. Davitt. The right hon. Gentleman distinguished him—as the Commissioners do—on account of the earnestness with which he personally had endeavoured to "discourage crime." "He is the one man," said the right hon. Gentleman, "who discouraged crime." Yes, Sir; and he is the one man amongst those accused who has suffered most from the savagery and cruelty of our unreasonable laws. This is the man who was condemned to a long period of penal servitude, as if he had committed some atrocious crime. This is the man who, if I remember rightly,

was harnessed like a beast to a cart and used as a mere slave. This is the man who is now distinguished even from Members of Parliament as being superior to them on the ground that he discouraged crime; and yet for this man—I know that both parties are to blame—the law could find nothing better years ago than to send him to a felon's prison. What statesmanship is this, I should like to know? Surely this terrible history ought to be a lesson to us. In future, we ought to know better how to deal with the heroes of Irish emancipation. We are told that if Mr. Davitt's advice had been taken much suffering and misery would have been saved to Ireland. With those words I agree; but I make a very different application of them than seems to have been in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Mr. Davitt's advice was not given to the tenants only, but to landlords and rulers; and if that advice had been taken by the Government undoubtedly very much suffering and misery would have been saved. But, Sir, there is another branch of the subject in regard to which it seems to me the judgment of the Government is altogether at fault. They do not seem to have observed the testimony contained in the judgment of the Commissioners themselves—undesignedly, I think—to the influence exerted for years past by the hon. Member for Cork and the Land League in favour of constitutional as distinguished from unconstitutional action. The Commissioners insist on beginning the history of the affairs of Ireland from the year 1879, and what was the state of things then? Every one knows that the records of that unfortunate country for many years previous to that time were full of bloodshed, crime, and disorder; there was little, if any, constitutional movement. We have had references to the inseparability of violence from revolutionary movements; but there is one special kind of revolutionary movement which more than any other seems most difficult to keep from connection with crime and disorder, and that is a revolution which affects the land. A very few years ago—in 1886—there appeared a very interesting article in the *Contemporary Review*, by Mr. R. E. Prothero, on *Tenant Right and Agrarian Outrage in France*. I have often thought that this article did not obtain sufficient notice, nor has it been allowed to convey sufficient instruction to those who have dealt with agrarian outrages in Ireland. The writer pointed out that in a certain portion of France—in Picardy—there was precisely the same idea of tenant right that had existed in Ireland—there was precisely the same opposition between the law of the land and the notions entertained by tenants and farmers and tenant right, and there was the inevitable conflict between the tenant right on the one hand and the laws of the land on the other—just what we have lamented to see in Ireland, though I, for one, should distribute the blame very differently from Members on the other side of the House. I will quote a passage to illustrate what I mean. Mr. Prothero says—

> "No greater insult can be offered to a native of Santerre than to call him by a name which implies that he is a false brother, a traitor to his class. From this moment war is declared. If threats fail, men in masks or with blackened faces sow tares by night with the seeds of the *dépointeux*, break his implements, destroy his growing crops, mutilate his horses and cattle, burn his ricks, set fire to his buildings, fire shots into his house. Finally, if these hints are disregarded, the *dépointeux* is found '*Gis-ant au evin d'un bois, frappé d'une balle dis-crête.*'"

A number of instances are given of crimes committed of which the perpetrator could never be discovered. People have been shot in Church without the discovery of the assassin. Why do I allude to these things? Is it from the slightest sympathy with such abominable outrages and crimes? Very far from it. I merely mention these things to show that, human nature being what it is, wherever there is the choice between starvation and crime one can hardly expect that the people will accept starvation. But in Ireland now there is a new spirit. Until comparatively late in this century such disorderly agitation was too much the weapon of conflict in Ireland, and the crude and cruel method of boycotting and other forms of offences against the law have been almost the only method employed. But now how different it is! There are very few signs of such crime. To whom is the credit due? I know that we shall be told that it is due to the action of the Government and the Chief Secretary and to coercion. But does coercion

generally ameliorate people's tempers, and conciliate them and persuade them to adopt Constitutional instead of un-Constitutional modes of action? I do not think experience shows that in the past, and I am sure the Report itself shows that a different influence has been at work. Down to 1879 the people of Ireland had very little confidence in political agitation or operation through Parliament. For instance, in the Report I find mentioned speeches of John Devoy and Davitt—for which, in the circumstances, I do not blame them—which show an utter despair of ever emancipating their country as long as it was bound by any link to England. I am not in the least surprised that these gentlemen should have entertained that conviction, looking at what the past history of Ireland has been. Mr. Davitt in one of his speeches in New York, in October, 1878, said—

"Heretofore the National Party has held aloof from the Parliamentary Question, because of the treachery of the men who misrepresented Ireland. Those men have given a wrong impression of the Irish Question to the world. They have given the impression abroad that all that Ireland wanted was a fair Federal Union with the British Empire, a thing that the Irish people will never willingly consent to."

["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Gentleman opposite says "hear, hear!" I am trying to show that at that period there was no notion whatever of the possibility of the conciliation of this country. Again, John Devoy said, about the same time—

"This kind of thing has been said to us before, and it will continue to be said so long as we send only two sets of men to Parliament—one to support the present state of things, and the other to proclaim to the world that Ireland would be satisfied with the bastard Federal connection proposed by Isaac Butt."

We find the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) coming more and more to the front as the leader of his fellow-countrymen, and the Report contains many evidences of the gradual steps by which he at length succeeded in convincing them they had much to hope for from a constitutional agitation. In one of his speeches in America—in 1879—the hon. Member says—

"I am convinced that nothing would more effectually promote the cause of self-government for Ireland than the breaking down of those barriers between different classes. Nothing would be more effectual for that than the obtaining of a good Land Bill—the planting of the people in the soil. If we had the farmers of Ireland the owners of the soil to-morrow we would not be long without getting an Irish Parliament."

These words indicate the methods by which he desired his fellow-countrymen to proceed. The Land League was formed in October, 1879, and again the hon. Gentleman went to America and delivered speeches. Of course, very much fault may be found with what he said if you do not look forward to the ultimate fruit of the hon. Gentleman's work; but I say that already the germ of a constitutional agitation was suggested in his remarks. He declared that he did not counsel the Americans to send armed expeditions to Ireland; but to prevent the people in Ireland, who were exhibiting an attitude of devotion which had never been surpassed, from being starved to death. In affording help, he said, they would not only engage in an ordinary work of charity, but would assist in breaking down the system which had proved the ruin of Ireland. He added that in one way or another the Irish people would insist on having the land of Ireland for themselves. On the 21st of March, 1880, the hon. Member was presented with an address by the Nationalists of Cork, of Fenian proclivities and opinions. In the course of that address it was stated that the Nationalists of the country had determined that, as a political party, they would take no part in the coming elections, and consequently no part in the adoption, rejection, or support of the Parliamentary candidates. That is to say, they would have nothing to do with Constitutional agitation. Well, where are the people in Ireland who say that now? And what has caused their disappearance? Is it coercion? I do not think it is. I think it is the action of the hon. Member for Cork and his colleagues of the Land League and of the National League. I read in the Report that Mr. Parnell says he always objected to the resolution restraining the employment of Land League funds for Parliamentary purposes, and that it was afterwards rescinded. It was not very long before fruits began to result from the seed the hon. Member for Cork was sowing. We are told, for instance, in the Report that there was a great dis-

turbance at a National League meeting in Dublin; the Physical Force Party drove the speakers from the platform and created a riot. After that, however, the Report says Mr. Parnell was no more opposed by the Physical Force Party. The truth is that he had disposed of that Party altogether by moral influence, and had persuaded his friends to restrict themselves entirely to Constitutional means. The Report says the majority had become convinced by this time that the new movement, so far from being an obstacle to the realisation of their aims, was really a stepping-stone to their fulfilment. The Commissioners, of course, mean that the Physical Force Party expected by means of the agitation to bring about entire separation from England. I daresay they did; but they have learnt better by this time, and purely through the Constitutional action of the hon. Member for Cork. In August of that year a resolution was passed by the Cork branch of the League in reference to a raid for arms. I know that that resolution was afterwards rescinded, and that there was much difference of opinion amongst the members of the Land League as to the propriety of passing a resolution; but, at all events, the incident shows that the tendency in the direction of peaceful agitation was gradually growing up and ripening. The resolution expressed regret at a robbery of useless old firearms, and condemned lawlessness in any shape. It was rescinded not out of any sympathy with robbery, but because it was thought it was no part of the province of the League to condemn a thing which some members of the League reprobated, but which might appear right in the eyes of others. I note that it is stated in the Report that certain extracts called "Incidents of the Campaign," that appeared in one of the more notorious newspapers, were brought to an end expressly on the ground that they were not pleasing to Mr. Parnell, who did not like paragraphs that seemed to incite men to violence. After the year 1883 all forms of violence gradually disappeared, and little by little the movement was changed into the constitutional agitation we now see, and which is very rarely indeed polluted by any form of disorder. I think, Sir, we ought all to rejoice at this, and ought to do all we can to convince our Irish fellow-countrymen that membership of this United Kingdom is for their good, and that they are likely to get far more by going on with us than by separating from us. Is everything to be looked at from the landlord's point of view? Are we to go on insisting that, while public opinion rules in England and Scotland, Irish public opinion is not to be allowed to rule in Ireland; and are we to go on insisting that while in England the opinion of the Democracy is to be taken, in Ireland it is only the opinion of a privileged class which is to be considered worthy of consideration? I think that no worse contempt could be shown for the Irish people than to enter upon the Journals of the House a Report of this kind; for the Commissioners expressly disavow entering into any political considerations whatever, and refrain from saying any word of reprobation or condemnation of that most foul crime which was the beginning of the action of the House in regard to the Royal Commission. Not enough has been said, not enough can be said, of the iniquity of the libels and the slanders that were supported by forgery. I declare that, after looking at all the records of the history of this country, I do not know anything fouler than the criminal carelessness with which those wicked forgeries were accepted—accepted, as we find, without any kind of reasonable inquiry into their origin, and without any real endeavour to verify them at all. It was thought that even poisoned weapons were good enough against the champions of the Irish people; and, therefore, the forged letters were hastily accepted. I do hope that hon. Gentlemen opposite will still bethink themselves that the individual need not be wholly merged in Party; that the individual has a conscience of his own, to which he must answer sooner or later. It may be all very well now to save their Party from defeat; but when a few years have passed these things will have become matters of history, and hon. Gentlemen opposite will not look back with pleasure to having taken part in a vote to support this exceedingly lame and impotent conclusion to a most interesting inquiry; whereas if there are anyone on that side who prefers the voice of conscience to that of Party, in years to come he will look back with pride and exultation upon his vote, and to handing

down to his children a name all the more honourable as being that of a politician who dared on one occasion, at least, to sacrifice the superficial claims of Party to the profounder claims of conscience and justice.

*(7.35.) COLONEL HILL (Bristol): If I rise, perhaps, at an unfortunate moment, as regards the number of my audience, to say a few words in this debate, I do not do so in the hope of eliciting any fresh facts from the Report for the consideration of the House, nor of adding anything to the powerful criticisms of the Amendment which have been made by my right hon. and hon. Friends, nor yet of making more complete their perfect demolition of the pretensions of the Party below or of their supporters above the Gangway. It is because I think it is not altogether undesirable that private Members, representing, as I have the honour to do, large commercial centres, should briefly, plainly, and clearly state their views upon this much vexed matter. I cannot offer to the House the fervid eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, nor would I, if I could, support the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House, by what, in my humble judgment, seems such an unfortunate style of reasoning. But I could not help thinking whilst listening to that marvellous effort of oratory that, great as are the known powers of the hon. Member for Hackney, the respondents had found a still more powerful advocate and apologist in the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian; nor can I offer to the House those special pleadings which are the results of the trained intellects of the hon. and learned Members who have addressed the House, or will do so in the course of the debate. I can only offer such views as an ordinary intellect and an ordinary business mind can arrive at, and the views which guide me in my resolve to support the Motion and oppose the Amendment. We have heard a great deal about two conspiracies. One is the conspiracy alleged by the *Times*, against the integrity of the Empire and law and order, and asserted to be closely connected with crime; and the other, retorted by the Separatists (if I may for convenience use the term), a conspiracy between the Government and the *Times* against the political honour and the morality of the hon. Member for Cork and his Party. As to the latter, three points were relied upon for justification. These were that the Government was supported by the *Times;* that the Attorney General was counsel for the *Times;* and it was asserted that sundry special advantages were granted to the agents of the *Times*. The third assertion has been completely disproved, and I need not trouble the House with any remarks upon it. As to the second, I do not know what are the powers of Her Majesty's Government over the Law Officers of the Crown; but if they have a power of control, surely they must be very poor conspirators, for it is self-evident that the purposes of conspiracy would have been better advanced by the selection of a stranger as counsel. I am under the impression that the humblest member of the community has a right to demand and obtain the services of Her Majesty's Attorney General or Solicitor General, providing he has the money in his pocket to pay their fees; and I do not know why, if that be so, Mr. Walter should be made an exception. But does not the selection by the *Times* as its counsel of one than whom no one's honour is more unimpeachable, against whom the tongue of slander has never been heard, whose very official position is a guarantee for the exercise of that fairness for which he is distinguished—show a desire for fair and impartial investigation which can hardly be attributed to conspirators? I think, too, it will be admitted on all sides that the *Times* acted with great fairness in giving minute *verbatim* reports of the inquiry. We hear much about forged letters and foul conspiracy. It has been insinuated that the Government and the *Times* knew that these letters were forgeries. Hon. Members opposite are always ready, both in season and out of season, to shout "Pigott" and "forgeries." [IRISH MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Yes; but they do not seem always to recollect that the wretched man who forged these letters was for years one of themselves. ["No, never."] Well, if not one of themselves—he was not a Member of this House it is true—I believe I am correct in stating that for many years he was

connected with the Nationalist Press. [Colonel NOLAN: Not with the Home Rule movement.] No doubt the publication and subsequent withdrawal of the letters, together with the finding of the Judges, is a point in favour of the respondents, and it is a point on which I certainly congratulate them; but I cannot help thinking that under all the circumstances, perhaps the result had better have been received with more of calmness. To suppose that the Government had anything to do with the letters, or that the *Times* published them otherwise than in perfect good faith, is against the presumption of common-sense. Carelessness on the part of the *Times* there undoubtedly was—a carelessness which we all deplore, while at the same time we all regret the pain caused to the hon. Member for Cork by that carelessness. But the attributes of a foul conspiracy are certainly absent. I never heard of a conspiracy for which there was not some motive. What could have been the motive of the *Times* in publishing the articles other than the patriotic one of laying bare certain sayings and doings, which, in their opinion, seemed to be detrimental to the interests of the State? As to the Government receiving the support of the *Times*, that is a point too puerile for serious argument. An unprejudiced mind can come to but one conclusion—that no such conspiracy, with or without Her Majesty's Government, ever existed. But what about the other conspiracy? Three of Her Majesty's most able Judges have, upon sworn evidence, declared that while on some points the respondents have been acquitted a conspiracy did exist, and that eight of the respondents, including seven who are Members of the House of Commons, were guilty of taking part in that conspiracy; that the whole 65 respondents were guilty of conspiracy to expel the landlords from Ireland, significantly styled the English garrison; guilty of inciting to intimidation, which led to crime; guilty of continuing that course after they knew that it led to crime; guilty of defending prisoners charged with crime, and of supporting the families of criminals; guilty of disseminating the abominable *Irish World* and other papers inciting to sedition and other crimes; guilty of receiving money from dynamitards and advocates of crime; guilty of inviting and obtaining the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force Party, including the infamous—I do not think the adjective was too strong—Clan-na-Gael; guilty of abstaining from repudiating and condemning the action of that Party in order to obtain their assistance. But, Sir, there is something more. We have the admission of the hon. Member for Cork that upon one occasion he stated to the House that which was inaccurate for the purpose of misleading it. I do not think it is right for a Member to make such a statement without giving the grounds on which he makes it; and therefore I must read one or two extracts from the Report, and from the evidence given before the Commission. In page 87 of their Report the Commissioners said—

"Mr. Parnell, in the House of Commons, on January 7, 1881, stated that secret societies had then ceased to exist in Ireland. Mr. Parnell was then alluding to secret societies other than that of the Fenian conspiracy, and in our judgment Mr. Parnell was accurate when he made that statement. It appears to us that this suggestion was first made during this inquiry."

Now, it will be recollected that the late Mr. Forster and the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) were at that time supporting their Bill by asserting the existence of secret societies. The hon. Member for Cork was opposing the Bill and denied the allegation. But when the catalogue of crimes was brought forward before the Royal Commission the hon. Member's policy became reversed, and it became expedient to relieve the Land League by throwing the responsibility upon secret societies. A quotation was read from *Hansard*, ending with—

"Secret conspiracies do not now exist in Ireland,"

and the hon. Member was asked—

"Do you remember using these words?"—"Yes; I recollect it personally."

I suppose it is meant for "perfectly." The examination continued—

"Did you believe them to be true when you used them?—I cannot exactly say, without reading the context of the speech, what my view was in urging the argument, but it was possible I was endeavouring to mislead the House on the occasion.

Do you mean, Sir, it is possible you were endeavouring to mislead the House on that occasion?—In order to cut the ground from under the Government in support of the Bill.

Do you mean, Sir, by a statement false, in fact, and contrary to your own opinion which you have sworn to-day?—I mean that it was a boastful and an exaggerated statement, and probably designed to mislead the House upon the question of the greater or less existence of secret societies in Ireland.

Did you or did you not intend to mis-state the fact when you made that statement to the House?—It is very possible that I did.

Deliberately?—Deliberately; quite possible."

How it can be "very possible" and "quite possible" for a man of honour to say that which he believes to be inaccurate for the purpose of deliberately endeavouring to mislead the House is a question which I leave to the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to explain. It is a task far beyond my powers, and one which I think will overtax even the great intellect of the right hon. Gentleman. This is a matter which should not be passed over in silence, for it goes to the root of all public life. Now, what were the charges made by the *Times* as stated by the Commissioners in the first page of their Report? They say:—

"In times not yet remote they would assuredly have been impeached for one tithe of their avowed defiance of the law, and in ages yet more robustly conscious of the difference between evil and good their heads would have decorated the city gates.

"In particular, Mr. Parnell and his associates were accused of having established an organisation 'depending upon a system of intimidation carried out by the most brutal means and resting ultimately on the sanction of murder.'"

The more I study the lucid Report of the Commissioners the more am I confirmed in my view that the main charges brought by the *Times*, as distinguished from the personal, have been proved up to the hilt. There can be no doubt that a most serious verdict has been returned—a verdict which is as damaging as the worst enemies of the respondents could possibly have desired. The country is but little concerned with the mere question of the forged letters; what it wants to know is this: was Parnellism connected with crime or was it not? Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen now on the opposite side of the House, many of whom formerly held high office, and, therefore, had special sources of knowledge at their command, have assured the public in language which for strength and earnestness has never been exceeded or equalled on my own side of the House, that it was so connected, and now we have the official corroboration of the Judges. I shall, indeed, be more than surprised if my countrymen do not justly appreciate the verdict contained in the Report, and are not more than ever determined to set their faces against what is called Home Rule as the greatest disaster that could befall Ireland. I earnestly hope that Irishmen, whether in this House or out of it, who really love their country, will take to heart the Report of the Commission; that they will abandon the idea of separation in any form as a wild theory, the realisation of which will be as injurious to Ireland's best interests as it will be impossible for this country to permit it. I trust that, having learnt that lesson, they will endeavour to teach it to some of their less instructed brethren, and endeavour to convince them that the happiness and prosperity of their country can only be obtained by the progress of civilisation, the first condition of which is due regard for law and order; that happiness and prosperity for their country could only be obtained by its remaining a faithful and honoured portion of this Empire, the most magnificent the world has ever seen, and which so many eminent sons of Ireland have done so much to build up and to consolidate.

(8.32.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I have not very great hopes that the few remarks I am about to address to the House will induce any large number of the Conservatives who at present occupy the Benches opposite (the Conservative Benches were absolutely empty) to do an act of justice to the Irish people. But I must not complain of the absence of hon. Members, for I noticed when a Conservative Member was addressing the House just now there were, beyond two or three Members of the Party who by reason of their official position are bound to be present, only two Conservatives seated on those Benches, and although when the Division comes we shall get about 320 Conservatives and Unionists voting against us, of those only two will have heard the excellent speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Bristol. The hon. Gentleman made a most effective Party speech, although he somewhat spoilt it by one of those appeals which have been too frequently made in this debate—an appeal to hon. Members to vote for principle and not

for Party. I remember that Disraeli, when a Member of the Party opposed to him made a similar appeal, and declared the subject under discussion not to be a Party question, replied that he—

> "Was too old a Parliamentary bird to be caught by the chaff; it was very much a Party question, and the Government were very much affected by it; and, therefore, it was necessary for the Conservatives to vote straight."

This, too, I believe to be a Party question' and I am rather curious as to the votes which will be given by two Conservative Members, who did me the honour of congratulating me when the Report of the Parnell Commission first appeared. I am glad to see the Attorney General is now in his place, for I wish to say something as to his taking a brief and leading the prosecution against a large body of Irish Members. I know it is in accordance with professional usage that the Attorney General should take briefs in private cases, and that much is to be said in favour of it, seeing that it keeps him in touch with the general work of the Bar. But I viewed his action in taking a brief in this case with very great regret, for it reminded me of a story of William I., the Duke of Normandy, who, when he was summoned to appear before the King of France (of whom he was a vassal) for some misconduct on the part of his subjects, replied that, unfortunately, the Duke of Normandy could not go to Paris unless the King of England went too, and the King of England would be obliged to bring so many retainers that it might prove unpleasant for the people of France. The misfortune of the action of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight was that he could not take part in the case for the *Times* without introducing the Attorney General as well. In fact, as the legal heads of the Conservative and Unionist Party have taken part in the case, they have implicated the whole Party in a manner which must induce a lot of ill-feeling between men of Irish blood and the Conservative majority in this House. I do not think the people of England approve the action of the Government; indeed, recent election returns show that they are opposed to the Government policy. The Conservative Members, I am afraid, will vote on this matter in accordance with the instructions of their Whips. Before the First Lord of the Treasury put his notice of Motion on the Paper I found Conservative Members were in a reasonable state of mind. On the night the Report was issued one hon. Member told me it amounted to a virtual acquittal, while another—and he was a learned man—said—"What the Judges have done has been to find that the Irish Members did what every single soul in the United Kingdom knew they had done; they have found out nothing fresh." I was always against the appointment of the Commission. I held that the only result would be the keeping up of bad blood between the two countries. When it was started I thought a certain amount of mud would be thrown, that it would be shown that certain speeches had been delivered, and a certain amount of crime committed; as to the letters, I was quite convinced that they were absolute forgeries, but I never hoped we should be able to prove it so clearly as we have done; I never expected we should have laid our hands on the forger, although, if I had known Pigott was associated with the matter, I should have expected something of the sort. But I did expect the Commission would have had to fall back on a general indictment that there was some connection between the speeches delivered and the crimes committed. The Judges have not gone into the question in a very statistical form. Let us take the crime of murder, for instance. In England there are fewer murders committed than in most countries in Europe; but in Ireland there are still fewer, in comparison with the population, and there have been a lesser number during the past 10 years than there were in the preceding decade. Unfortunately, murders are committed, and they group themselves about popular movements, and if the Attorney General went to the North of Ireland to get up an agitation in favour of the imprisonment of the Nationalist Members, and riots followed in which fatalities occurred, we should at once attribute the deaths to his action, although his speech might have been a perfectly constitutional one. In that sense, no doubt, there was some connection between our speeches and Irish crime. Now we have to deal with two important propositions. The First Lord of the Treasury

asks the House to adopt the Report. But has this House a right to adopt the Report? The Irish Members charged before the Commission practically represent in this House the whole of the Irish people, and the indictment which was preferred against them, was against not merely Irishmen in Ireland, but against Irishmen throughout the world. The Irish people constitute an important element in Australia and Canada, and in the Republic of the United States, and they will ask why should this Report be entered on the Journals of the House? There are several reasons against the adoption of this course. The first is that the House of Commons was not elected for the purpose. Of course if Lord Salisbury went to the country and returned with a majority at his back, then the adoption of the Report would be the act of the English nation; but the Government have now only an accidental majority, the bye elections go against them and prove that their majority is only a fictitious one. If, then, you have this Report entered on the Journals of the House, the next Parliament may feel it its duty to order the entry to be expunged, and that, I think, would be neither a pleasant nor a dignified course for the House to have to adopt. We have also before us the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, which, unlike the Resolution of the Government, has in it a sense of proportion and looks at the real points of the case. Remember it was the forged letter question which procured the appointment of the Commission. The Irish Members would never have consented to the appointment of the Commission but for the appearance of the forged letters in the *Times*, which was a great power in the land, and had, for the preceding half century, had almost as much power as the House of Commons itself. Its power has now been considerably shaken. It pledged its reputation and everything it had to the authenticity of the letters, and that was the main point referred to the Commissioners. Englishmen and Irishmen differ considerably in their feeling on national matters. Englishmen are of course imbued with a strong national feeling; they are a somewhat proud race, and they are to an extent intolerant of outside interference of any kind whatsoever. But the case is different in Ireland. We consider the Irish-Americans as part of ourselves. The great majority of Irishmen are anxious for peaceful and Constitutional methods to be adopted. We knew, when the Commission was appointed, that our opponents would make the most of the American connection. I am not one of those who repudiate that connection; I am proud of the success of our fellow countrymen in America. We knew that in the minds of Englishmen there would be great impatience at the idea of Americans interfering with Irish politics, but it is impossible to keep them out of it, and the Irish Americans cannot help feeling deep interest in the fortunes of their country. The hon. Member for Oldham says he is much concerned for the honour and probity of this House, and yet I am afraid he will cast his vote against us. He admitted we had cleared ourselves from the charge of complicity with murder, but he complained that we had shown a certain want of delicacy of feeling in attacking the public acts of the Attorney General and the First Lord of the Treasury, and he said that he must consequently vote against us. Yet those attacks were only made in self defence. My main objection to the Motion of the First Lord is that it gives no prominence to the question of the forged letters. Because we have completely disproved that charge we are now to be attacked on general grounds. The leader of the Opposition has, in his Amendment, supplied the omission of which I complain, and those who listened to his speech last night must have felt that he thoroughly justified his proposal. May I make a suggestion to the First Lord of the Treasury? Will he not, of his own accord, if the Amendment of the leader of the Opposition is defeated, introduce into his Resolution a reference to the forged letters, because the simple adoption of the Report would be most unfair without such a reference. Hon. Members desire further that the Judges should be thanked for their services. Of course we know that they took a good deal of trouble, but the way to reward them is not by drawing up an indictment against the Irish nation in the Resolution; it would be far better to make them baronets, or peers, or to promote them in their profession. But, certainly, the entering of the reference

to the Report in an extremely unfair form in the Order Book of the House is not the proper way of producing good feeling in the matter between the Conservative section of the English race and the Irish people who are now distributed over the four quarters of the globe.

*Sir W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I am anxious to say a few words on what I consider to be one of the most important questions that has been brought before this House and the country during the present century. No one will deny the gravity of the question we are now considering. The Report of the Commission brings charges against hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, and I venture to say that every fair minded man will seriously consider whether these charges have been proved, and if so, I do not think that even Members opposite will say the Report of the Judges ought not to be entered in the Journals of the House. I, for one, have condemned as strongly as any man, the letters which have been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and I took the earliest opportunity of showing what was my feeling in regard to them. I care not who may have been the author of those letters, but it has been clearly proved that they were forgeries, and therefore, I would join with anyone in stating my gratification that the hon. Member who was charged with having written them has been fully exonerated from that accusation. I have never altered my opinion with regard to Ireland and the action of hon. Members below the Gangway. I have stated them fairly and freely, and when I have thought that my hon. Friends on the Front Bench have been doing what they ought not to do, I have never failed to declare my opinion both in this House and outside the House. The question before us is a very grave one. It implies that although the hon. Gentlemen have not been convicted of complicity with the more serious crimes of murder and outrage, yet it is to be inferred from this Report that they have been guilty of things which have led to the commission of crime. I was never more astounded than upon hearing the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and also the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) contend that hon. Members were right in urging the Irish people to do certain things if they were in the interests of their country. This, as far as I know, is the first time in our history that we have heard right hon. Gentlemen in the exalted position of the Members for Mid Lothian and Wolverhampton saying they were prepared to regard crime as justifiable when it accomplishes the object for which it is committed. [*Cries of* "No!"] Hon. Gentlemen say no! I listened most attentively to the magnificent speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and eloquent as it was, especially in the peroration, I must say that I never heard a speech which more completely covered what I may term veiled treason than the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. No one can better judge of those things than the hon. Members below the Gangway. They knew exactly what was their position a short time ago. Let me look for a moment at the position occupied by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). As I have said, I am delighted to recognise his innocence in regard to the letters, but can it be said he was innocent in regard to other matters? Before, however, I would go to that I would ask any man in this House if he had such charges made against him as were made against the hon. Member he would not spend his very last shilling in proving his innocence before a competent tribunal.

*Mr. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): Not the tribunals of this country.

*Sir W. BARTTELOT: It is all very well for the hon. Gentleman to say "not the tribunals of this country." Is there one of them in which justice would not be done? See what the three Judges have done in this particular case. Have they not found out and exposed the fraud that was practised with regard to these particular letters?

*Mr. T. HARRINGTON: No; we did it ourselves.

*Sir W. BARTTELOT: I say that the Judges discovered that forgery, and with the greatest care and calm consideration went into every case that was put before them, so that there is no one who can now get up and say he was not treated with perfect fairness and impartiality by

those learned gentlemen. Why was it that the hon. Member for Cork did not accept the offer made him by the Government, when they were willing that all his expenses should be paid, and that he should have the best Law Officers that could be found to conduct his case. I would ask my hon. Friend opposite whether, had he been placed in the same position, he would not have gone before a Court and endeavoured to clear himself? Why did not the hon. Member for Cork take that course? Was it because there was a feeling that something more might come out than he desired to make public in regard to his connection with certain proceedings in Ireland which would not be to the advantage of the Nationalist cause? Hon. Members asked for a Committee of this House. If there was a man in this House who could have got up and suggested that that would be an unfair and partial tribunal, it would have been the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, who must recollect the debate which took place in which the question was raised in this House as to the trial of election petitions, which used to be decided by Committees of the House. The right hon. Gentleman, in a speech he then made, pointed out that such Committees did not constitute a fair tribunal, because of the Party feeling which was brought into play. I ask would not Party feeling have been brought into play in this question 10 times more than in the case of an election petition? Such being the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, he was the very first man who ought to have said that a Committee of this House would have been a most unwise and improper tribunal for dealing with this question. I may here say, as I do honestly and openly, that I did not like the Commission which was appointed. I think the Government stood in a sufficiently firm position as they were before. However, the Commission was appointed, and hon. Members opposite did not oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, thereby showing they were perfectly satisfied with the impartiality of the tribunal before whom they were to be arraigned. And if we look at the matter fairly and impartially, I say that there are no three men who, whatever their political opinions may be—and in this country we do not allow politics to interfere with the administration of law and justice—who are more absolutely prepared to do their duty, however difficult that duty may be. Can any one below the Gangway get up and say hon. Members opposite have not been fairly and honestly treated by those three Judges? Never before have men been called upon to judge under such circumstances, and I fully believe that they have done justice to all. They have fairly stated the charges that have not been proved, but they have also recorded those cases in which they think the charges have been substantiated. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has said everything was legitimate so long as the ends were good. I do not quote his exact words, but that was their purport. I must repeat my regret that two men occupying the position of the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Mid Lothian and Wolverhampton could have made such a statement as they have put forward in justification of crime where it accomplishes its intended object. I am not going into the history of the whole of this case. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian astonished me by his statement with reference to the Act of Union. He designated it by every epithet he could possibly think of. He went on to say that since the year 1882 he had never had occasion to say a single word against those Gentlemen below the Gangway. But in the year 1879, the right hon. Gentleman made a memorable speech in Mid Lothian, in which he called attention to the blowing up of Clerkenwell Prison and the murder of the policeman at Manchester, and held that the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church would never have been carried unless attention had been brought to it by means of that kind. The right hon. Gentleman came into power in 1880. He allowed the Peace Preservation Act to lapse. Were you thankful for it? Did you take it, as it was intended, in good faith? You immediately imported arms into Ireland, and as soon as the Act was taken off your heads, you were determined to do something which you knew was against the opinion and wishes of a large majority of your fellow countrymen in England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland, and to such an extent did you carry it out that

in 1881-2 the right hon. Gentleman had to bring in the two strongest Coercion Acts that ever were inflicted.

"You have had an opportunity," said Mr. Parnell, at Wexford, in 1881, "many of you, no doubt, of studying the utterances of a very great man, a very great orator—the person who recently desired to impress the world with a great opinion of his philantrophy and hatred of oppression, but who stands to-day the greatest Coercionist, the greatest and most unrivalled slanderer of the Irish nation that ever undertook the task. I refer to William Ewart Gladstone."

I mention these things because these are the people with whom you are now hand and glove. What happened after that? I find that up to the year 1885 the Protection of Life and Property Act existed. Do you recollect the Division which took place in this House upon a trifling Motion with regard to the Budget, and upon which the Government went out? I believe I am correct in stating that the Government went out because there were dissensions and differences of opinion amongst them as to the maintenance of the Protection of Life and Property Act. A Conservative Government was returned in a minority, and I think it was a grave mistake that they did not endeavour to carry out that Act, even if they had been beaten, as they would have been beaten, for it would be shown that they thought it necessary that an Act of that kind should be still maintained in Ireland. What happened after that? Why, we had an election in the autumn. And what was the prayer of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone)? That he would be saved from temptation by having granted to him a majority without having to deal with the Irish Representatives. He did not get that majority, and then came the proposal of Home Rule, which the right hon. Gentleman had never considered before, so far as I am aware. And, mark you, if he had obtained a majority which would have enabled him to do without the Irish Representatives he would never have offered you Home Rule. It was a miraculous alteration. I would like to know what your opinion is with regard to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. You know what he said about you.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It would be better if the hon. Baronet would address the Chair, and not so pointedly address any section of the House.

*(9.24.) SIR W. BARTTELOT: I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker; one gets perhaps a little excited. I am very sorry if I have transgressed the least in the world. I will just read you one or two passages which show that the conversion is something more than miraculous.

"To-morrow," said Sir William Harcourt, on March 3rd, 1881, "every subject of the Queen will know that the doctrine of the Land League is the doctrine of treason and assassination. Sir, I think it is my duty, and I think the House will think it is my duty to tell them what I know, that the Land League is an organisation which depends upon the support of the Fenian Conspiracy."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby was in office; he was then Home Secretary, and he states that the doctrine of hon. Gentlemen who were members of the Land League was the doctrine of treason and assassination. He afterwards became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and you will all recollect what he did on the 16th December, 1885, after the election had taken place. He was at a meeting at Lowestoft, and he then said what was going to happen:—

"The Party of 250 Tories in the House of Commons would claim to govern the country and the House of 670 members. That would be a new proceeding in the political history of the country. They proposed to do it by an intimate alliance with men who openly avowed their object was the dismemberment of Ireland from England. Was it possible that this country was going to tolerate such a transaction? Liberals must not be in a hurry to turn the Tories out—he would not say before they were paid out. He would let them have a few months to stew in their own Parnellite juice."

Not a very elegant expression; at the same time that was the statement. I want you to mark it, because if I recollect aright a Division was taken in this House on the 26th January, in the year 1886, and the Conservative Government were turned out upon the question of the hon. Member for Birmingham, namely, "three acres and a cow," or the question of Allotments, which measure was never attempted to be granted by the Liberal Party. Home Rule was brought in, and you know what happened to Home Rule. My particular point is that the right

hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, having denounced the Conservative Party, and having denounced the Irish Party, in December, 1885, took office as Chancellor of the Exchequer under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in February 1886, that all I can say is that looking to his strong opinions and feelings, one would have supposed that he would not have been subservient to Party considerations. I would have said: "I cannot change my opinion, and I cannot take office in a Government which proposes Home Rule." Such was unfortunately not the case. ["Fortunately."] That depends upon what you think of the versatility of a Member. For my part, I stand by the man who adheres to what he believes is right. As hon. Gentlemen know, I had a good deal of experience in older days of these matters. It was my good fortune, or anything else you may be pleased to call it, to be in Limerick at the time when the Old Ireland Party—the O'Connell Party—attacked the Young Ireland Party. There was a great disturbance, and I was ordered to turn out with a squadron of dragoons. I was sharp, and I happened to get down quicker than some others, and I was just in time to save three men, Mitchell, Martin, and Meagher. After that what is called the "Cabbage Garden Disturbance" occurred, and these three men, one of whom afterwards came into this House as a respected Member, were arrested and transported for 15 years. I declare boldly that there was nothing in the journal of which Mitchell was then editor to compare in scurrility with what now appears in *United Ireland*, although Mitchell was transported for 15 years for what he wrote, and other things. When you talk of toleration I venture to say that no Press in the world has been more tolerated than the Irish Press has been. If the English papers wrote about you [pointing to the Home Rule Members] as these papers write about Englishmen and the Government of England you would come down at once with a strong, earnest, and just complaint. You know——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member has misapprehended my meaning. What I suggested was that instead of addressing hon. Members directly he should do so generally as hon. Members in this or that part of the House. In this way he would avoid irritation.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT: I hope I have not said anything to irritate, and I shall endeavour not to do so. I was saying that when you came to write articles in *United Ireland*, the Government have not been one bit too firm in their action, for you have gone beyond all ordinary forbearance, and have done things which would not have been tolerated in any civilised country in the world. I should like to see such things done in America, Germany, or Italy. You know you have as much license as you could have, and the question before us—and it is a very serious question—is whether you have done——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*SIR W. BARTTELOT: I beg pardon; the question is whether hon Members have acted in the interest of our great Empire? Has everything been done to maintain the integrity of the Empire? Take the condition of the West of Ireland. Is it any better than it was in 1843, when I first went there? Certainly not. The population cannot be properly maintained on the soil, yet hon. Gentlemen opposite have done nothing to remove the population. The hon. Member for Cork talks about migration, but he proposes to migrate a pauper population to the best parts of Ireland; to the County of Meath, for instance, where he would turn the grazing farms into small holdings. I maintain that so far as the condition of the West of Ireland is concerned, nothing has been done for it; and yet it is only wonderful without agitation it remains contented. A relative of mine, who has an estate in the county of Mayo, says that this year he has received his rent, nothing having been forthcoming during the previous four years. He has had not only to lose his rent, but to pay the rates and taxes on all holdings below £4 a year, and on the estate of 264 holdings four only are over £4 a year. Things are better now; but on those estates where the Plan of Campaign is in operation, boycotting and the greatest cruelties have been practised on the people taking farms and on the people paying their rent. Such persecution every honourable man must condemn as against national civilisation and national humanity. And yet the persecution,

it is said, has been practised by hon. Members opposite. They are solemnly accused of making speeches, knowing that the consequences of those speeches would be injury to persons and property. Well, I believe that history will show that the Chief Secretary has done his duty honestly, humanely, and well. Up to the time when the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian proposed his scheme for Home Rule, law and order had always been maintained by both sides of the House. But now every difficulty is placed in the way, and the speeches of many hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches have tended more to create the existing state of things in Ireland than anything else. A great deal of responsibility lies at the door of those right hon. and hon. Gentlemen. The Government have now to govern Ireland in the best way they can. Law and order, however, must be upheld, because they are the indispensable factors in the civilisation, progress, and prosperity of every country; and if law and order are firmly, fairly, and honestly maintained, as the Chief Secretary is now upholding them, a lasting beneficial effect would in the end be produced. I heartily support the Motion.

*Mr. T. HARRINGTON: Mr. Speaker, while I admit that the hon. Baronet is an exception to hon. Members near him in the spirit of fair play which he exhibits toward the Irish Members, yet I must remind him that the occasions on which he displays that spirit are very rare. The hon. Baronet has said that in no other civilised country in the world would the same toleration have been extended, as has been extended by this country, to the Irish Press. Aye, but has the Irish Press been tolerated? What is the history of the Irish Press? Is there a man in this House who ever conducted an Irish newspaper who has not been once, and sometimes oftener, within the walls of a gaol? The hon. Baronet speaks of Mitchel, Martin, and Meagher. The three were Press men, and the three were imprisoned, and if the Governments of this country have been unable to suppress National opinion in Ireland, it is not because they have tolerated it, but because they have failed to put it down. Every Ministry and Party in this country has endeavoured to stifle the voice of the National Press of Ireland, and if that Press speaks out boldly to-day the national sentiments, we have not to thank this House, but the sturdy independence and the fearlessness and firmness of the men whose speeches and writings are bringing to speedy fruition the cause for which they have laboured. The hon. Baronet tells the House that upon the Report being issued he was among the first to come down to congratulate the hon. Member for Cork upon his acquittal. But the argument of the hon. Baronet this evening is strangely inconsistent with the sincerity of a man who comes to congratulate the hon. Member for Cork on his acquittal, for he asks—"Why did not the hon. Member for Cork appeal to the tribunals of the country? Was it because he feared that something worse would come out?" And yet the hon. Baronet is forced to acknowledge that the Commission has acquitted the Irish Members of those graver charges which his Friends circulated by their speeches and supported by their money—calumnies on which many Members of their Party have lived, and been able to take a part in the government of Ireland for the past two or three years. These expressions of regret of the hon. Baronet came from him just as the verdict of acquittal has come from the Judges—the expressions were forced from him. We owe him nothing for his sense of fair play in this matter; we owe no one anything on that score. If the Party opposite are not able to asperse our characters it is because their malignity has failed in its worst efforts. Before I sit down I think I shall be able to show to the House that Members, at least of the Party to which the hon. Baronet belongs, have not been so clear and innocent of questionable transactions in connection with this Commission as some of their friends claim credit for. I shall be able to show the House that there was a conspiracy, apart from the conspiracy which the Judges had to consider, that that conspiracy progressed as the inquiry progressed, and that Members of the Government especially were involved in it for the purpose of bribing perjured witnesses—not so much to injure the Irish Members or to damage our characters as individuals, for that they did not care about, but to assail and damage our country and ruin its future. Upon every charge which this House regarded

as a grave charge in the beginning the result of the Commission has been an acquittal. Looking back to the debate on which the Act was founded, and the arguments by which it was forced on by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by those more active supporters of the Government on this side of the House, I find that of every charge they made we have been acquitted. With regard to the charge of conspiracy and the charge conveyed in vague and general terms of not being sufficiently active in denouncing and suppressing crime, nobody meant to constitute a tribunal of three Judges to try such a charge or to have the public time wasted in such an inquiry. The letters were the grave portion of the accusation against us, and also the charge of complicity with murder. Day after day and week after week were allowed to elapse, witness after witness was placed in the witness-stand, but the Attorney General, who conducted the case, kept carefully away from any of these graver charges. Time after time he was pressed to come to an issue. The Judges frequently expressed impatience at the way in which the inquiry was being conducted. The Attorney General smiles; but I attended the inquiry as regularly as the hon. and learned Gentleman himself, and I maintain that I am not speaking without authority. The President said, after the Commission had sat two or three months—

> "If this inquiry proceeds in this manner, I cannot see that it will be ended in our lifetime."

Upon that the hon. and learned Gentleman apologised, and stated that the evidence he was giving had been very carefully considered. The President said he had heard that statement before, and he wanted to know whether the inquiry was to be brought to an end within a lifetime. If the Attorney General was satisfied that he was speaking upon *bonâ fide* instructions and upon proofs of the truth of which he had satisfied himself, as he was bound to do, why was he hunting up America for evidence during the Commission to back up the letters, and why was his solicitor offering enormous bribes to Sheridan to come over—Sheridan, for alliance with whom the Irish Members had been denounced, but upon whom the Attorney General seems to have leant to save his reputation and his honour. We went into the Commission Court to meet the graver charges alleged against us, and we offered evidence to meet those graver charges wherever an attempt was made to establish them. But with regard to the charges of boycotting and intimidation we offered no evidence, as we wished to waste no time on the inquiry. I challenge the Attorney General to deny it, or deny that we put forward the respondents as witnesses for cross-examination, but who were never asked a question, upont hose very charges of which, forsooth, we are now found guilty. Why did not the Government specifically state to this House, as they were asked to do, the charges upon which they wished to proceed before the Commission? If they did not want to obscure the issue, or to fall back on the expedient of throwing mud all round, why did they not set the charges forth in the Bill? Why did they except from the purview of the Commission the Plan of Campaign, if it was their intention to have an inquiry into a political conspiracy and agrarian crime? The Attorney General himself, with the consent of his Party, refused to go into the Plan of Campaign. I believe the hon. and learned Gentleman would readily have entered into that inquiry before the Commission; but he was precluded by the express pledge of his Party in this House. We have heard a great deal from the hon. Baronet (Sir W. Barttelot) as to the strict impartiality of the Judges. He thinks we ought to be extremely grateful to the three Judges for having vindicated our characters. I tell the hon. Baronet we are grateful only to ourselves. Does he mean to tell us that a great deal of credit attaches to three men in the position of these Judges, because they have not gone in the teeth of the evidence brought before them by holding us guilty of the charges made against us? The hon. Baronet must have formed a much lower opinion of the English Judiciary than we have, if he conceives it possible that three Judges could, without a shadow of evidence to support their findings hold us guilty of complicity with murder, especially after Pigott had made his confession, and sealed that confession with suicide. We do not wish to be understood as being extremely

grateful to the Judges, or as carrying away with us from the Commission any very high sense of the great impartiality and fair-play with which they conducted the inquiry. For my part, as one who attended the Commission professionally, I wish to state in the most positive and distinct terms that I have brought away no such feeling, and I do not know that any of those I represent have any different opinion in the matter. I would ask the House to take a sensible view of this matter. Take the general charge of criminal conspiracy. There is one single instance in the whole record of the evidence where a payment seems to have been made by the Land League for medical assistance for a person who had been injured in the commission of crime. We do not know what the crime was; but it was quite evident that there had been some disobedience of the law. Not one of the 65 respondents in the case was brought into privity with that incident. I was in gaol at the time it occurred; and my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was in gaol; my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) was ill at home; my hon. Friend the Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) was in gaol; and my hon. Friend the Member for Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) was in this country. And yet these three English Judges, of whose impartiality you want us to carry away so lively a recollection, gravely found our whole party guilty of the offence, and upon that incident constructed a general indictment. I refuse to believe that we were treated in that matter as Englishmen or Scotchmen would have been treated. It is only in dealing with Irishmen that the Commissioners would have dared to commit the enormity of which they were guilty. Another matter on which the Judges have found hostilely to us, is for the want of that vigorous denunciation of crime which we should have exercised during the agitation. It is a singular fact that while they have carefully selected the passages which support the contention that some of the language used led to intimidation which might eventually result in crime, they have only made a casual and general reference to those speeches in denunciation of crime which were proved daily even by the witnesses who were called by the *Times*. That is not our idea of fair-play. We may, some of us perhaps, have been remiss in denouncing crime when it would have been wise to denounce it. For my part, I can accuse myself of nothing of the kind. I stated on oath before the Commission that I never spoke in a district where crime was in existence without denouncing it. I challenge the Attorney General to say whether one letter or speech of mine was produced which was not a denunciation, not only of crime, but of boycotting. I do not want to separate myself from my colleagues. If I had been in the habit, like them, of speaking in the country, and the same instances of oppression had come under my eyes as came under theirs, I might have spoken as they did; but being in charge of the National League Organisation, it was my duty to be as conservative as possible in the administration of that Organisation. As one instance of the fair-play with which we have been treated, I may say that while the Land League existed for two years, and the National League for eight years, the Commissioners have dwelt entirely on the two years of the Land League, and have slurred over the much longer period of the existence of the National League. But do we stand alone in apathy in denouncing crime? How many of the hon. Members opposite have denounced the crime of forgery committed by the *Times*? You cannot set up one code of morals for yourselves and another for us. And when we are lectured by the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) about blood-curdling paragraphs in Irish newspapers, we cannot but recollect the time when the right hon. Gentleman as a politician was run by Richard Pigott, when the Fenians of the South of Ireland were his constant companions, and when Patrick Ford was his energetic supporter. As to the dissemination of the *Irishman* and the *Irish World*, some of us can say we had nothing to do with it; and during the eight years I had charge of the office of the National League not a single number of the *Irish World* entered or left that office. But was the *Irishman* a more amiable organ in the hands of Richard Pigott than it has since become? When the Attorney General was exercising his ingenuity to find out what sort of a character Richard Pigott was, where was the Home Secretary? Our people are the judges of our characters, and they have confidence in us.

Those who have confidence in you are those who do not know all your acts. The Attorney General month after month fought shy of the question of the forged letters before the Commission, and then tried to put in the expert evidence first, in order to blacken the character of the hon. Member for Cork. If the Attorney General's recent congratulation offered to my hon. Friend the Member for Cork was honest and sincere, we ought to suppose he was sincere when acting as counsel in the case, and that he would not wish to do a wicked or a dishonest thing. But if he wished to act honestly between man and man, why did he endeavour to evade the issue of the letters? When he knew what Pigott's character was, why did he try to put the letters in by a side issue, so as to blacken the character of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork? There is something more. During the whole course of this inquiry agents of the *Times* had been in America, and had been in communication with the solicitor of the *Times*, who had been advised by an eminent counsel, who was also the adviser of Her Majesty's Government. I propose to read to the House some statements which, I think, will startle hon. Members, and which, I think, will tell against the Government in the constituencies, and which will convince the people of England that if there was a foul conspiracy on foot it was against, and not among, the Irish Members. They will show that while we were accused of associating with dynamitards and murderers, our accusers were in constant association with dynamitards, and were trying to obtain the testimony, true or false, of alleged murderers and assassins. Some time ago there appeared in an American paper an affidavit sworn before an American solicitor by P. J. Sheridan. I am not going to rely, however, upon any statement made by Sheridan. I intend to call as a witness the confidential solicitor of the *Times*. On February 14, 1889, Mr. Soames, in his examination before the Commission, was asked a question as to the time when he learnt that Pigott was the person from whom the letters came. The reply was that he knew subsequently to the trial of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter" that the letters came from Pigott. The witness added that little things came to his ears from time to time, and although nobody told him, he practically knew in the Summer of 1888, that the letters came from Pigott. Surely there was sufficient warning to a Government which had the advantage of having within its ranks an old associate of Pigott's. Whether there were monetary relations between the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) and Pigott it will be for the right hon. Gentleman to state, but Pigott was not the man to do anything for nothing. During his examination Mr. Soames was asked as to certain agents whom he had employed. Mr. Kirby was an agent employed by him in America, and Mr. Soames described him as being a man of independence. The witness stated that Kirby was paid by him to take journeys and to have interviews for the purpose of taking evidence. He added that he did not mean evidence relating to the letters, but general evidence relating to the inquiry. Now, I will demonstrate by Mr. Soames's own hand and the telegrams in cypher between him and Kirby that that statement was absolutely false. Later on in the examination a very extraordinary fact was elicited as to Pigott. Not only did Mr. Soames know—and, of course, the Attorney General knew—that Pigott was the person out of whose possession the letters had come, but he stated that as early as October, before the inquiry commenced, he had seen a letter written by Mr. George Lewis to Pigott, accusing him of having confessed that he forged the letters. That was the time for inquiry. That was the time to hunt up the Home Secretary and ask him about his knowledge of Pigott. What was done? Can the Attorney General plead that he had not an opportunity of meeting the Home Secretary; or does he allege that he did not know that the right hon. Gentleman was pretty well acquainted with Mr. Richard Pigott? Now, I will read another remarkable portion of this evidence.

"Q. I am asking you did it occur to you to press Mr. Pigott as to where he got these letters?—A. No, it did not.

Q. And you never have?—A. I never have.

Q. Has any one, to your knowledge, interested in the *Times*?—A. No one.

Q. And so far as you know no one has pressed him on that point?—A. He showed me a letter from Mr. Lewis accusing him of having admitted he forged them, and he also showed me his reply.

It was not only a letter from Mr. Lewis that was shown to him, but it was a letter charging Pigott with having confessed to Mr. Lewis that he had forged the letters, and yet there was no inquiry, but telegrams were going out to America to see if even a worse character than Pigott could be got who would perjure himself. Now, I will read a few telegrams. They are telegrams which were couched in the most intricate cipher. Sometimes there were obscurities, which I have no doubt the Attorney General will assist us in deciphering. I tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that I regard this as a grave matter, and I will speak plainly. I do not mind what is the etiquette of those who are associated with him in his profession in this country, but I know that the hon. and learned Gentleman made the best use of his position to blacken and assail the characters of the Irish Members, and we owe him nothing. On one occasion the hon. and learned Gentleman accused me by insinuation with having, during an adjournment of the Court, approached a witness with a view to get him to alter his evidence. That was as false and as calumnious an accusation as ever was made. The hon. and learned Gentleman had never had the courage to offer an apology, or the manliness to endeavour to sustain the charge. Up to this day not one word of regret has come from him for having brought such a charge against a professional colleague engaged with him in the conduct of the case. I suppose that in his own estimation he is a gentleman above reproach, but I am only an Irishman, and any material which came to the hon. and learned Gentleman's hand was always a good enough instrument to hit his opponents with if they were Irishmen. I think we shall be able to turn the tables on the hon. and learned Gentleman to some extent, and I invite him, for the honour of his profession, to separate himself, if he can, from the transactions which I am about to bring under the notice of the House. On December 13, 1888, while the Commission was sitting, an agent of the *Times*, named Thompson, thus telegraphed to Mr. Soames, addressed "Assert, London," which Mr. Soames swore was his telegraphic address—

"The final decision of F.M. is that he is now ready to come over and give evidence on three days' notice, upon payment of £5,000 down and the remaining £5,000 to be paid to him after his evidence and cross-examination, and he is no longer required. I think him of the utmost importance. Cable reply in full."

But when the House is informed who "F. M." was, I think they will be still more surprised. We have been accustomed in this House to violent denunciations of the Irish Americans, and during the course of these discussions one name has been prominently associated with the dynamite plots carried out in this country, and especially with the dynamite plot to blow up this House. That name was the name of General Millen, and that was the gentleman whose assistance the Attorney General was trying to obtain, in order to prove the charge against us. Who are the associates of the dynamitards? Who are the men to lean upon them for assistance in political emergencies, for this was a political trial? This was a political emergency, and the Government were on their trial as well as the *Times* and the Irish Members. No reply seems to have gone immediately to that telegram, and the gentleman in America was a little urgent. On the 17th of December the same correspondent wired, again in cipher:

"Reply cable twelfth urgently needed."

Hon. Members will observe that the twelfth is given for the thirteenth. Whether the discrepancy is made up by the difference in time between the two countries or not, it is clear that the telegrams relate to one another—

"Reply cable twelfth urgently needed. Brown Bros have no advice yet of remittance—five hundred."

That was for Mr. Thompson, who was described later on by Mr. Soames as an independent gentleman too. They were all independent gentlemen. This is a rather curious occupation for independent gentlemen. Well, Sir, did that telegram or that cipher come under the notice of the Attorney General?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Not one of them.

*MR. T. HARRINGTON: We will see. If that is so, the hon. and learned Gentleman has indeed been sadly betrayed by his Colleagues. They have

broken faith with him, and if I were in his position I would, before this debate is closed, take care to set myself right with the country and denounce those who played me so false. On the 20th of December, 1888, Mr. Soames telegraphed in cipher to "Thompson, New York"—

"Am waiting final instructions of counsel. Will wire the moment I get them.—Assert."

Who was the counsel? The public records of the day show that the Attorney General was then the counsel for the *Times*. He was the leading counsel in the case. He was appearing every day in Court, and is he going to say that Mr. Soames falsely brought his name and his high position into this telegram, or that other counsel engaged in the case dared to advise in this matter without consulting him?

"Am waiting final instructions from counsel. Will wire the moment I get them.—ASSERT."

That is Mr. Soames. Then, on the 24th of December, 1888, came another telegram from New York in an altered cipher, which, however, we are able to translate—

"To Assert, London," saying, "With General daily, and thus learn that."

Millen, the chief of the dynamitards, the man who is said to have been in charge of the party with design to blow up this House, was that General referred to, and he was advising the case of the *Times* in New York while the Attorney General was advising it in London. If, therefore, we had assistance in America advising us in the Irish movement, so had the *Times* assistance there. It is known, say the Judges, that dynamitards contributed to our movement, and so also the prime dynamiter was giving the Attorney General a helping hand. The telegram continued—

"Henry can prove 6th May case."

This was the shadow you were pursuing, this was the shadow that landed you in this disgraceful position for a Government to occupy! Then come the concluding words of the telegram—

"Says he can prove more both before and after if you close with him at once. Will come over with me in *Servia* on Saturday. Reply immediately."

Then comes in the word "refuse" and three or four words in cipher I have not been able to make out, but which, with the assistance of Mr. Soames and the Attorney General, perhaps the House may eventually have translated. Then comes the concluding part of the message—

"Or you risk losing your best witness."

Evidently the sense of the message is—"If you refuse his terms you risk losing your best witness." Now, as to the gentleman here referred to, let me turn to the evidence of Mr. Soames before the Commission. Before the Commission Mr. Soames was asked whether the name of Henry had been mentioned to him as an intending witness from America, and he replied in the affirmative, saying that Henry was P. J. Sheridan. I will for a moment break the continuity of the telegrams from New York and go back to the agent who was in direct communication at this time with P. J. Sheridan, and I will read to the House the terms that the New York agent advised Mr. Soames to close with Sheridan for. The telegram I have just read is dated 24th December. On November 19th a telegram was sent from the "independent gentleman," Kirby, as follows—

"19th November, '88.—Pueblo, Colo., to Assert, London.—Message yesterday intended to mislead operator and others."

Fortunately we were not among the others—

"Have been with Sheridan three days. He will give whole history of Land League that will convict if I buy his two ranches and 3,000 sheep, price £25,000. Will then give evidence here if you force P. to call him for a like amount. Reply Chicago, Monday.—MOHAWK."

This is the telegram which the agent in New York was referring to when he spoke of General Millen, reviser of the proofs of the *Times* in New York and the collaborator of the Attorney General. This is the sum he advised should be given for Sheridan's evidence. There is no statement as to what that evidence is, and there is no means of ascertaining the worth of it, but of course the presumption must be strong that a man with a character such as Sheridan's has been described to be by the Attorney General would for £50,000 give the evidence that was required of him, whether it was true or false, right or wrong. When hon. Gentlemen on the other side get up and charge us with

conspiracy, I say there is evidence here of a conspiracy more deep, more foul, more degrading than any we are accused of being engaged in. Now I go back again to the New York cipher telegrams, and the advice of counsel Mr. Soames was waiting for. I hope a grave injustice has not been done the right hon. Gentleman, and that he is not the counsel in question referred to in these transactions, while he stood before the world as the chief advising counsel for the *Times* before the Commission. On the 28th of December, 1888, Mr. Soames, who was taking a holiday at Eastbourne, telegraphed to Thompson at New York giving advice of counsel. Who was that counsel? The telegram said—

"Counsel thinks Henry the most important witness. He says we must know what he can prove."

That was an astute counsel who first of all thought Henry a most important witness and then wished to know what he could prove. The telegram continued—

"And if he has papers, will he give you a written statement, not to be used unless we agree.—ASSERT."

The value of those papers was therefore to be tested, not by their genuineness, but solely by the fact as to whether they could or not establish even a fairly plausible case against us before the Commissioners. Here there is a lapse of some time, during which no messages were sent; or, at all events, we have not been fortunate enough to get hold of them. We have been sufficiently regardful of truth, however, not to forge telegrams when they were not forthcoming. If anybody challenges our authority for these things, then I advise him to ask for a Committee of the House of Commons, when we can prove them, as military Gentlemen opposite say, "up to the hilt." On the 7th January, 1889, the following telegram was despatched from London:—

"To Thompson, New York.

"Been absent from England. Cable only just received. Clients away for Christmas. Get him to extend time—fourteen days."

There appears to have been considerable reluctance about giving the money. On the same date, January 7, another telegam was sent—

"To Thompson, New York.

"Kerby left Saturday. M. Thompson, of 24, University Place, New York, who wrote on 23rd December, has something to sell. See him. Find out all particulars, and price.—ASSERT."

Again going into the market months after Pigott had shown the prosecution the letter in which he confessed the forgeries, and months after knowledge of this had been brought home to the Attorney General. Is it not a strange thing that the *Times* was unable to get one unpurchased supporter of their policy in New York? Is it not a strange thing that the most tempting bribes could procure them no better testimony? On the 12th of March the following telegram was sent from New York:—

"To Assert, London.

"Delaney not known at address sent, nor in directory. Expected cable to-day; reply to mine. Cannot see General again until hear from you."

This seems to indicate that the gentlemen concerned was reluctant to give further information if more money was not sent, and we shall see that it was sent. On the 1st of April—a very appropriate day—the following message was sent to New York, this time to Johnstone. Whether Johnstone is the same as Thompson I do not know; but it would appear from those telegrams that they are one and the same person, or, at any rate, that the one acted for the other. This is a message to which I invite the serious attention of the House, because here is clear and conclusive evidence that the Government have been engaged in these transactions. The telegram is as follows:—

"1st April, '89, London—To Johnstone, Gilsey House, New York.—Hoare, British Consul, has authority to give you names of some informants like Major Le Caron. See him; get all particulars, and induce one or two men to come over. Assistance will be sent you for Millen."

This is the first instance in which the name of Millen is shown to be the "F. M."—Frank Millen—mentioned in the earlier telegram. Here we have a promise to send assistance to the dynamitard who had been advising proofs for the *Times* in America. I hope that before we pass away from this debate some right hon. Gentleman will stand up and explain what Member of the Government is responsible for giving authority to the British Consul to send over informers for the *Times*. Mr. Hoare was a little doubtful as to the genuineness of

the authority he had received, and accordingly the answer came back—

"Hoare very civil. Cannot assist us in any way."

The right hon. Gentleman opposite is amused; but remember the adage, "He laughs best who laughs last." Here is the message which went out in reply on April 2—

"All informers' reports, including those from Philadelphia, passed through his hands up to 1884, and were sent by me here. If he does not know names himself he can refer you to those who do."

I want to know what colleague of the Attorney General was able to give Mr. Soames this information? I now pass to another chapter of this story, to the messages going on at the same time between Mr. Soames and the gentlemen at Sheridan's headquarters in Colorado. On November 16, 1888, came a message, not in cipher—

"Can purchase ranches and sheep. Particulars from Pueblo to-morrow."

And then on the morrow came the telegram I have already read—

"Message yesterday intended to mislead operators and others. Have been with Sheridan three days. He will give whole history of Land League that will convict if I buy his two ranches and 3,000 sheep. Price £25,000. Will then give evidence here if you force P. to call him for a like amount."

Then comes a short message from Chicago, November 21—

"Reply Saturday. Cable from Pueblo, Col."

Then a break comes in during which, I presume, some messages did pass, but we have not been so fortunate as to get them; and on December 11, 1888, there was the following message sent from Chicago to "Assert," London :—

"Cable £200. Must return."

That is a pretty fair amount for a voyage from Chicago to London. Now I turn to Mr. Soames's evidence before the Commission on March 13, when he was examined a second time. Mr. Soames was asked by my late lamented friend, Mr. Biggar, with reference to his sending Kirby to interview Sheridan. The witness was asked—

"What did Kirby telegraph?"

And he said—

"That Sheridan asked £20,000 to come over, and I immediately telegraphed to Kirby to come back."

I will test the truth of that statement. Mr. Soames would have it appear that he was virtuously indignant at this demand of Sheridan's; but what are the facts? The telegram recalling him was never sent till December 12, 1888, and it was not a telegram of disapproval—

"To Kirby, Mohawk, Chicago.—Court adjourns for five weeks. Come home at once. I must discuss matters personally with you. Money sent to Brown Brothers, New York. Reply when sail.—ASSERT."

A few days later Kirby appears to have been on one of his numerous sprees—for this "independent character" has been described as one of the lowest vagabonds that the American Republic ever turned out—a fit gentleman to sustain the calumnious accusations of the *Times*, and accordingly on December 24 the following telegram was sent to him :—

"To Kirby, Chicago. Never allow drafts to be drawn on me. Cannot accept yours. Have cabled 250 Bank of Montreal. When will you sail?—ASSERT."

In the course of about 10 days two sums of £250 were sent to Kirby; but what became of Kirby's recall? Was Kirby detained at home by Mr. Soames? No; he was sent out again on his nefarious expedition, and on April 3, long after the *Times*' case about the forged letters had been blown to atoms, long after Pigott had blown himself out of this world, long after the Attorney General's so-called expression of regret, there came the following telegram from him to "Assert," London :—

"Sheridan has wired to meet him, Montevista, Tuesday morning. Leave to-night. Cable to-morrow night.—TAX."

On April 4, came another message, not in cipher, to "Assert"—

"*Veni, vidi, vici.* Will cable early to-morrow, Pueblo. Returning there."

Then came a remarkable telegram in cipher so difficult that it was with considerable labour I made it out, and even Mr. Soames who had the key had to wire to have it repeated—

"To Assert, London.—Sheridan met me yesterday; train Montevista; drove to ranche; explained altered conditions mentioned in letter left your possession, that your evidence saying he offered to go to London and give evidence for £20,000 caused Clan-na-Gael to sentence him to death. Two parties of the Clan were ordered to carry out sentence of the executive. A member warned him, also two others. His life is sought; hence he threatens

that he will now go to London and prove the *Times* justification. His life is in hourly je pardy here; two men have been on his track, and he has become desperate and determined to be revenged. He sticks to his terms and price, but demands immediate action, as his death has been ordered. He will go with me after 12th if he is not killed, and justify the *Times*, but demands proof of amount being at my command."

I am not surprised that the House is amused at this sort of silly play going on. But the character of Members of the House is at stake. This is the fit instrument with which it was determined to assail the Irish Members; and it was because the man was determined to be revenged that the *Times* were ready to avail themselves of his services, and to ruin Ireland and her cause. A transaction more foul has surely never been brought to public knowledge.

"Agrees upon £10,000, which is to go to his family if he is killed before his evidence is given. Papers for ranches and stock to be completed, the balance to be paid to order after Commission justifies the *Times*."

You see he is willing to trust the Attorney General and Mr. Soames for the little balance of £40,000 until his evidence is completed. Then the telegram goes on—

"Beyond all which his evidence accomplishes he has all documents to implicate Parnell, Dillon, and others. He is desperate and determined, and I believe he will do as he says. He showed me documents connecting Parnell, Dillon, with himself as of the executive existing at the time of Parnell's arrest, 1881."

What a monstrous find! What a terrible thing that Sheridan should be able to produce documents addressed to himself as a member of the Land League! Then the message continues—

"If you want me to take him over you must amend your evidence in Court after reading my report as to his refusing to accept any sum to go over to make his life more safe here. If I am to carry it through, place the net amount named to my credit, Montreal Bank, Chicago, and £500 more for contingencies, and I will have it transferred on notice. He is to meet me Colorado Springs. Saturday. If you do not accept he will leave at once, foreign clime, to save his life if he can. He will on the stand and otherwise prove the Parnell letter and his and other complicity."

I invite the attention of the House to the date of this telegram. This was on April 5, and Pigott's flight and death had taken place in February. The whole month of March had elapsed after the withdrawal of the letters by the Attorney General, and after he had stated in spare and ungenerous terms that he was unable to sustain the letters. Here was an attempt to bribe this unfortunate man Sheridan to back up the case of the forged letters. Was the Attorney General's withdrawal of the Parnell letters sincere, or did he withdraw them at the instance of his client, and, if so, was he a party to this wicked endeavour still to back up the false accusation? I think that the result of the election which took place to-day shows what opinion the English people have formed on this subject. I have read a long cable message. The next one received the same day was a reply in cipher—

"5th April, 1889. London to Tax, Pueblo. Can't make out part of cable as to terms he wants. Repeat."

Another letter was sent on April 23, not in cipher—

"Immediate reply most important."

On the 27th this message was sent, not in cipher—

"Am sending to you."

On May 2 another cablegram was sent to this effect—

"Am sending to you by Saturday's mail. Cable name you use and address."

That has reference to the sending out of a third agent, Mr. Birch. I do not know who Mr. Birch is, as I have not had the advantage of having his biography from Mr. Soames in the same way as we got the biography of Kirby and Thompson. But a Mr. Birch is mentioned as an expert belonging to the British Museum who has been employed by Mr. Soames in testing the Pigott letters, and probably he was sent out by Mr. Soames to test the genuineness of the Sheridan letters. The next telegram was addressed to him in that country. It is dated June 19, and is in these terms—

"Has he satisfied you as to the value of his evidence and existence of confirmatory documents? Reply, and I will then cable definitely Are you satisfied he is acting straight and will go on board with you? Cable fully."

The reply was as follows:—

"June 20, 1889. Colo. Springs. To Assert, London.—Satisfied he will go, as determined to revenge those who ordered his death. Believe he possesses full testimony and has documents here, but won't divulge same till on ship. Insists on payment for ranch, which is for the money

to secure wife in case of his death; balance as cabled, after evidence, justifies *Times*. Must secure him now or leaves country. Should advise take ranch; no other chance."

Rumour has it that Mr. Kirby, who had spent the greater part of his life in America, and was certainly not known as a man of independent means, was acting in collusion with Sheridan, and that they were agreed that if they could induce the *Times* to buy Sheridan's ranch they could not do better than put Kirby in as caretaker for the *Times*. Probably Kirby would then have started a No Rent Manifesto on his own account. On June 22 the following telegram was sent by Mr. Soames to Birch:—

"June 21, 1889, London. To Birch, Colo. Springs.—Do not believe in his threat to bolt; nor can we place ourselves entirely in his hands. If risk so great between leaving and ship it is all the more necessary he should not have documents on him. If he will show you documents, you are satisfied of their value, as evidence, and he will hand them over; when transfer made and money paid you may dispense with written statement till he is on ship. If he will not agree to this, it means he intends to sell us. Too late to cable money to-day. He gives no reason why he cannot do as asked."

This was the reply—

"June 25, 1889. Colo. Springs, to Assert, London.—Foresaw as to documents. Daughter here; travels with them; nothing on him to identify; will give all on ship. Says if anything came out meantime he had disclosed, family would be sacrificed, as wife aware P. and others met at his house. Says ranch covers money and forfeits balance unless evidence satisfies. This final—he will go."

But he did not go, and the *Times* has been without his valuable assistance. On July 5 the following message was sent by Mr. Soames to Birch:—

"July 5, 1889, London. To Birch, Cdo. Springs. He must satisfy you that he has a number of documents genuine and of value. For all we know those shown in bulk may be of no importance whatever. His danger is all the more reason why he should satisfy us if he means to go straight. Money deposited and ready to be cabled at moment's notice."

If Sheridan did not go, and if he were the character such as he has been frequently described by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, it was not because the *Times* did not make every endeavour to buy his evidence. It was not because adequate offers were not made; and if the example of Pigott had not been before him, if exposure had not been before him, we do not know what he would have done. I do not say he would have been wicked enough to perjure himself. I know nothing of the man, whose character you have yourselves repeatedly blown upon; I never have had any communication with him; but after the description which has been given of him by the Government—for you have accused him of planning murder and plotting outrages in Ireland, and of being the director of the Phœnix Park murders—I say there could be no criminality higher than that involved in these efforts to obtain his evidence. On July 10 the following was cabled:—

"July 10, 1889. Colo. Springs. To Assert, London. Did not see letter. Was shown K. He saw it again last night. Finds he made mistake in Castlereagh. It dates Feb. 80. One with check to pay in Ulster for outrage eviction, and urge Leitrim tenants agitate; another more money to hurry crisis. Both on League paper, signed Dillon. Says genuine, and affirms me to-day has 'D' letter as to Castlereagh and others showing large payments. Have only his word that documents in bundle are from members and leaders implicating all with League and outrage. Won't show me documents till on ship as his name got in Press before. Think go straight to secure family, as home broken up; life in danger; and wants revenge leaders who he made and condemn him. But for that would not split."

Evidently the £50,000 offered was not sufficient; it was also necessary as an additional inducement that the man should realise he was in danger. The next telegram was—

"July 12, 1889, London. To Birch, Cdo. Springs. Yes; leave K. and return."

Towards the close of the proceedings before the Commission the country and the Press remarked how very flat the right hon. and learned Member for Bury was in the conclusion of his speech. It was not like the right hon. Gentleman at all. I do not wish to cast any aspersions on him. I recognised, and those whom I represented recognised, that in him we had to deal with a gentleman. However he might differ from us politically, he did not exhibit towards us malignity and bitterness; his language was courteous, and his tone conciliatory. He did his duty as counsel for the *Times*, and his clients had no reason to complain on that score. On October 29, while the right hon. and learned Gentleman was still addressing the Commission, a message was sent by Kirby to Mr. Soames. The telegram was as follows:—

"Montevista, Col.

"To Assert, London.

"Long interview to-day with wife, to-day privately. She gives positive assurance he will go, if one thousand is paid to her at once; thousand to him in gold in steamer leaving port; all the rest as cabled. Am satisfied on these terms he will go and give history to shorthand type-writer on board for brief; and no other terms possible is my positive opinion."

There was no abatement of the original demand, but a desperate endeavour at the last moment to get something out of the clients of the hon. and learned Gentleman. No doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman will rely on that telegram to show that he and his clients knew that Sheridan was deceiving them. If so, why did they continue in treaty with him? Have they entered into negotiations with that man for the purpose of producing evidence, true or false, which might again stir up the flames of prejudice against us? If these telegrams are genuine they have—and I challenge the hon. Member to cast any doubt on them, for I can produce the cipher in which they were written—I will tell the hon. and learned Gentleman furthermore that while his clients were offering these enormous bribes of £50,000 and £10,000 for men to perjure themselves against the Irish Party, neither that Party, nor any one connected with it, ever paid a penny to procure this evidence. I will not say how the information came into my hands. But let the Government give us a Commission to inquire into these matters. If they do I will prove these things, and even more. The hon. and learned Member pledged his honour and reputation to prove the genuineness of the letters. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL dissented]. Has the hon. and learned Member any defence or apology to make for the language he used during the prosecution of the case, and the still more doubtful, I will not say criminal, but regrettable and condemnable language, for one in his position, at the termination of the case for the letters, when he withdrew them? I again challenge the Government to give me a Committee of inquiry into the genuineness of these letters. I shall be able to prove from Mr. Soames himself that every one of these telegrams is genuine, and I shall have additional evidence on other matters to bring forward. The information I have laid before the House places the hon. and learned Gentleman in a serious position. The worst case we ever alleged against the hon. and learned Gentleman was that he has been associated with the former "pals" of the Home Secretary, when these persons helped to defeat the Government at Dungarvan. The honour of the profession, and the position he holds, now casts upon him the duty of separating himself in clear language from all responsibility for the conspiracy which I have unfolded, and furthermore of casting that conspiracy upon the persons who were guilty of entering into that conspiracy.

(11.28.) MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

(11.29.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure the hon. Member will see that I cannot consent to that.

MR. MAC NEILL: Then put up some speaker on your side.

*(11.30.) MR. R. A. YERBURGH (Chester): I rise to support the Motion of the First Lord of the Treasury, and in doing so I cannot but express my regret that in view of the mere rejection of the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the Government have not thought it advisable to alter the terms of their Motion so as to have expressed their satisfaction at the acquittal of Mr. Parnell, adding their solemn reprobation of the conduct of right hon. Gentlemen opposite who have been guilty of a treasonable and criminal conspiracy. Before the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman was placed on the Paper, the Motion of the Government appeared to me to be the necessary sequel to the result of the Judges' investigations. The fact that this special charge made against Mr. Parnell in connection with the forged letters has been proved to be false was known to all the world. For months it has been household talk, and the leader of this House has expressed in terms in which we all on this side concur his detestation of that charge. With regard, however, to the other charges, graver by far, which have been proved against hon. Members opposite, the Report has only now placed them before the country. And how has the the Government proposed to treat them? Without one word of comment, treating

them with absolute silence, the Government merely propose to adopt the Commission Report, leaving the public to gather from its pages the verdict which has been passed after the most mature judicial consideration. The course taken by the Government was, undoubtedly, the right course to pursue. It was a high-minded and generous course. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman has, however, entirely altered the situation. That Amendment is of so extraordinary a character, inasmuch as it fails to traverse or in any way affect the subject matter of the Motion before the House, that one is tempted to ask, in passing, what can have suggested it? One reason for it may be found in the fact that if we reject it the right hon. Gentleman may be able to brand us with having refused to apologise for the injury received by Mr. Parnell. Another in the further fact that the Opposition feel the charges which have been proved to be so grave that they must, at all hazards, divert public attention from them, and endeavour to produce the belief that the *gravamen* of those charges consists mainly in the forged letters. These, Sir, I believe to be the reasons which have dictated this Amendment. With regard to the Amendment itself, I take the strongest objection to it. I have no hesitation in saying that it amounts to a *suppressio veri*. It suggests that all the charges made in the Report have been disproved. In face of this I could have wished that the Government had proposed to have placed on record in their Motion the whole of the findings of the Court in language "understanded of the people," so that the country might have placed before them the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Turning to the arguments by which the Amendment has been supported, I think I shall carry the general body of the House with me when I say that able and eloquent as have been the speeches delivered by learned Gentlemen engaged in this case, they are after all but the speeches of counsel for the prosecution and defence respectively, and as it is upon those speeches that the Judges have issued their Report, they can carry no weight in this House. The arguments and speeches which we have, I think, to consider are those which have been addressed to this House by others than those to whom I have alluded. Chief among them is the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and here I must confess that I could not resist the inducement to cheer that speech, so rich was it in eloquence, beyond anything I have before heard even from the right hon. Gentleman; but rich as it was in eloquence, that eloquence only served to bring into greater relief the poverty of its argument. Now, what are the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman? In the first place, we had reference to the Judges, on whom the right hon. Gentleman bestowed great praise for their ability, although I fail to discover that he said anything as to their impartiality. And he went on to say that he could not agree with their judgment. I read a speech a short time ago delivered by the right hon. Gentleman in 1881, in which he said that, in his opinion, the outrages in Ireland were not due to evictions or distress, but, on the contrary, were due to the operations of the Land League. It is an extraordinary thing that what the right hon. Gentleman stated in that speech now appears to be the unanimous opinion of the Judges who sat upon the Commission. He went on to say the Judges were debarred from going into certain matters, and that the scope of their inquiry was consequently limited, so that they were not able to look at all the aspects of the case. I would venture to say that such a judgment as is here indicated is one that would have been suited only to the historian, and not to Judges, whose duty it was to determine matters of fact. Then the right hon. Gentleman referred to various charges which had been proved against hon Members opposite. He dealt with those charges in a very cursory manner—indeed in a manner that was almost calculated to mislead the House, and induce it to believe that the charges were much less serious and far less numerous than they really are. He dealt with the charges as to the dissemination of newspapers with a view to inciting to crime, and he also touched upon the £6 case and the question of the seven Members who were found guilty of treason. The general argument of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to those who were found guilty of conspiracy was that the offences were

committed so long ago that it was now unnecessary to consider them. This portion of his argument goes to the question of whether there should be punishment or not, and not to the question whether this House should adopt the suggestion contained in the Commissioners' Report. He went on to the question of intimidation, and here again used the argument that the charges were so old that they were unworthy of consideration. He further dealt with what had taken place in the years 1881 and 1882, and asked whether the facts were unknown? In answer to this we reply that the facts were not unknown, inasmuch as they have been frequently insisted upon by the right hon. Gentleman himself, and laid before this House by him. But, Sir, these facts which the country in 1881 had only upon the *ex parte* statement of the right hon. Gentleman have now been investigated by a Commission composed of Judges of great experience and knowledge of the law, pronounced upon by them after a lengthy, minute, and exhaustive inquiry. Well, the right hon Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian went on to say he had found that the hon. Member for the City of Cork was a conservative force in Ireland, and that he had rather assisted in putting down outrages than in their promotion. If that be the right hon Gentleman's real opinion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork I shall anxiously wait to hear the apology the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian will offer the hon. Member for the language he has used at various times with regard to him. The right hon. Gentleman dealt with what he called the condonation of the offences that had been committed, alleging that the circumstances of the interview between Lord Carnarvon and the hon. Member for the City of Cork amounted to condonation. But that argument has been sufficiently dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks Beach). In point of fact, the right hon. Gentleman has completely disproved it; but that there has been condonation by lapse of time I do not deny; and, therefore, I am disposed to go with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian as far as this, that where there has been so great an interval no prosecution or punishment ought to follow. In defence of the Irish agitation, the right hon. Gentleman asked the House whether Ireland would ever have got the Land Act without that agitation? Surely never has a more dangerous, a more injurious, a more demoralising doctrine been heard within the walls of this House. We are told by the right hon. Gentleman that we are bound to look at all the facts connected with a great movement—that we must look around and take a complete view of the whole of the social and political condition of Ireland when these crimes and outrages were committed in Ireland before we can regard what may have been done as a fit subject for Parliamentary censure. But why, I ask, did not the right hon. Gentleman do this in 1881? Why did he not then see that it was his duty, not only to look at the crime committed, but at all the attendant circumstances by which that crime was surrounded? I now turn to the Bath speech of the right hon. Gentleman the member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) who is one of our most bitter opponents on this question, and in reference to what has fallen from him to account for the contempt with which we regard his attacks I shall content myself with quoting a passage from an early and unexpurgated edition of a work called *Gladstone's House of Commons*, written by a very able and eloquent Member of this House, one of the right hon. Gentleman's present leaders. The description given of the right hon. Gentleman in the work I have alluded to is as follows:—

"Sir Wm. Harcourt is a thorough Tory at heart. He is so notoriously, so ostentatiously, I had almost said, so avowedly destitute of all political principle that he may be trusted to take up any cry that pays."

In conclusion, Sir, I would draw the attention of the House to the extraordinary doctrine that has prompted the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and that is the foundation of his speech—namely, that an injury to an individual is superior to a crime against the whole body of individuals who constitute the State—that libel is worse than treason—that an attack upon a reputation is worse than outrages upon the lives and liberties of the free people of the United Kingdom. Sir, let me add a

protest against confining this discussion to narrow and petty grounds. It is not a question of individuals that we have before us; it is a question which concerns the safety of the State. For the Irish Members that are concerned in it we have no feeling of vindictiveness or personal dislike; let them only avoid the paths of treason and of criminal conspiracy; let them abjure Patrick Ford, the Clan-na-Gael, and all their works; let them place their faith in Constitutional agitation, and we will be glad—nay, proud—to hold out the hand of fellowship to them. But however this may be, we are happy in knowing that by our votes and efforts in 1886 we saved our country from as grave a danger as has ever threatened her, and we feel confident that when this Report has been read, marked, and learnt, the great mass of our countrymen will look upon the Unionist Party as the saviours of their country.

MR. MAC NEILL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is very sanguine indeed if he believes that the Report will be of any benefit to his own Party. Still, I reciprocate the good wishes which the hon. Gentleman extended towards us—and, I believe, heartily extended. I think a perusal of the Report ought to convince the hon. Gentleman that the inquiry from first to last was an attempt to strike at the reputation of our country by striking at the Irish Members. The hon. Baronet (Sir W. Barttelot) seemed to be politically out of joint. We acknowledge the kindness which lurks behind all the asperity of his sentiments. We know that he has a great deal of kindness and goodness of heart, and I may say that his real disposition has been illustrated by the contrast which he afforded in his manner of speaking of the forged letters to the skilled apology of the Attorney General in open Court. I have often asked myself what the solution was, since early last March, of an utterance of the Prime Minister. I have never been able to discover it until to-night. It is the disclosure made by my hon. Friend (Mr. T. Harrington) of the close alliance which has existed between this Government and the Dynamite Party in America, and of the fact that even after the suicide of Pigott, through some influence or other, they sought to vamp up again that letter. It explains to me the language of Lord Salisbury, who, three or four days after Pigott's suicide, threw doubt upon the forgery, and said he believed it was a genuine document. Perhaps he will do me the honour of making an explanation in the other House, but it would appear that at the time he made that statement he knew that Mr. Soames was intriguing and negotiating with the Dynamite Party. And this, perhaps, throws some light on the circumstance that the Attorney General was unable to advise in a criminal charge against obscure prisoners without consulting the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor. Lord Salisbury, as superior officer, knew about the negotiations by Soames, and, perhaps, in the same way the Attorney General was so marvellously conscientious as to feel impelled to consult his superior officers, the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor, in reference to a wretched twopenny-halfpenny case. By the Motion of the First Lord of the Treasury you are merely reducing Parliament to a machine for the registration of the findings of the Judges. That is not a position which the House of Commons should occupy. It is not the position taken up by the Judges, who divested their investigations of all political considerations. But that is not the spirit of the Government. I think we can point to evidences of political feeling in the way in which this Report is being treated by the other side. All through the entertaining speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for Sussex there were references to past controversies. And in this connection I am reminded of an incident, a somewhat sorrowful one. A member of the Irish Party, some years ago, lost his mind, and, in 1875, when crossing from Holyhead to Ireland, we heard him talk of events of 1866 as if they were just then current. So did the hon. Baronet the Member for Sussex. He spoke of the events of 1884, and seemed to forget that we are in 1890. But he stopped short of the Carnarvon negotiations. The hon. Baronet was justified, so far as he is concerned, for he will have nothing to do with Home Rule. But he appeared to forget that his own Party were Home Rulers in 1885. Lord Carnarvon, when he was Lord Lieutenant,

invited the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) to a Conference, which was to take place in an empty house in Dublin. The whole ins and outs of this interview have not yet been told, but I remember when the statement was first made, Lord Salisbury immediately wrote to the newspapers, saying that it was shameful to bring such accusations against Lord Carnarvon in his absence. Lord Carnarvon was in South Africa, and I happened to be there, too. Lord Carnarvon gave little lectures on Social Science to the colonists, and wherever he went, I followed, and told the whole circumstances of the negotiations with the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell). And during all the time the noble Earl maintained a marvellous silence, peace, and patience. The Attorney General the other night stated that the fetters were at last taken off his tongue. There is an expression in Classical literature of a man having the lock on his tongue, which meant that he had fee and reward. I do not understand how the Attorney General had the fetters taken off his tongue, except that, as counsel, he had ceased to have fee and reward, In this foul conspiracy —for I cannot call it by any other name—it was the *Times* and the Government from beginning to end. Why was the secret of the Pigott letter so long kept? The Attorney General was determined not to know anything about Pigott, and he did not put Pigott into the box until the 63rd day of the inquiry. In fact, the absence of Pigott from the witness box, and the indignant remonstrances of tne Judges with regard to him, all prove one thing, that the Government did not intend to produce him, because they knew that such results would quickly follow as have been in part fulfilled by the St. Pancras election to-night.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES—(RE-ARRANGEMENT OF VOTES.)

Ordered, That the Statement laid before the House, showing the changes in the Arrangement of Votes made in the Army and Navy Estimates for 1890-91, be referred to the Committee of Public Accounts.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That a copy of the Estimates for the year 1890-91 be referred to the Committee of Public Accounts.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

THEATRES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 133.)

Order for Second Reading, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

OUTRAGE AND INTIMIDATION (IRELAND).

Return ordered—

"Of certain cases of Outrage and Intimidation referred to by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in a Speech in the House of Commons, on 13th February, 1890."—(*Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 85.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[INDEX.

INDEX

TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCCXLI.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1890.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—R. P., Report Progress.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

The subjects of debate have been, as far as possible, classified under "General Headings:"—*e.g.*, ARMY—NAVY—INDIA—IRELAND—SCOTLAND—PARLIAMENT—POOR LAW—POST OFFICE—METROPOLIS—CHURCH OF ENGLAND—EDUCATION—LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—LABOUR, TRADE, AND COMMERCE.

Access to Mountains Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168

Accumulations Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 26, 1315

ACLAND, Mr. A. H. DYKE, *York, W.R., Rotherham*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 910, 933

ACLAND, Mr. C. T. DYKE, *Cornwall, Launceston*
Charity Commissioners' Schemes, 1769

ADDISON, Mr. J. E. W., *Ashton-under-Lyne*
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 80, 87

ADMIRALTY—(*see* NAVY)

ADMIRALTY—First Lord (*see* HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord G. F.)

ADMIRALTY—Civil Lord (*see* ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Mr. E.)

ADMIRALTY—Secretary to (*see* FORWOOD, Mr. A. B.)

ADVOCATE, The Lord (*see* ROBERTSON, Right Hon. J. P. B.)

AFRICA
Africa and the Indian Government, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 3, 1637

AFRICA (EAST COAST)
Congo Free State—Slave Trade, Question, Mr. S. Buxton; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 209
Portuguese in, Questions, Mr. Cremer; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 11, 40; *Feb* 12, 121; Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 14, 305

AFRICA (SOUTH COAST)
Affairs, Question, Colonel Laurie; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 24, 1013
Bechuanaland—Correspondence respecting Affairs of, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 13, 192
Cape Coast—Riots at Moree, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 28, 1492
Natal and Zululand—Troops in, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 17, 426
Swaziland, Question, Sir R. Fowler; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 14, 302; Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 18, 573
Transvaal, Question, Mr. E. Hardcastle; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 25, 1168
Indian Subjects, Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 25, 1159
Zululand—Native Chiefs, Question, Sir R. Fowler; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 14, 303; Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Mar* 3, 1642
Prisoners sent to St. Helena, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 13, 192

AFRICA (SOUTH-EAST)
Delagoa Bay Railway, Question, Sir J. M'Kenna; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 20, 728; Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Mar* 3, 1629; Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Mar* 4, 1769

AFRICA (WEST COAST)
Affairs, Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 27, 1340
Flogging Natives, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 28, 1493
Gold Coast—Correspondence of Affairs, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 13, 195
Niger Territories, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 196

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—*cont.*
Sierra Leone—Mr. C. Crawford, Questions, Mr. Picton, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answers, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 13, 197

Agricultural Department (*see* Board of Agriculture)

Agricultural Education Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 296

Agricultural Holdings Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 18, 675

Agricultural Labourers (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 165

Agricultural Tenants' Improvement Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 404

AIRD, Mr. J., *Paddington, N.*
Civil Service Clerks, 733

Allotments Act (1887) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 445

Allotments Act (1887) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1251

Allotments Act
Charity Commissioners, Question, Sir W. Foster; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther *Feb* 25, 1152
Banbury, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 17, 423
Twyford, Question, Captain Verney; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board *Feb* 25, 1160

AMBROSE, Mr. W., *Middlesex, Harrow*
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 96

AMERICA (NORTH)
Behring Seas Fisheries, Question, Mr. S. Hill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 14, 307; Questions, Mr. Gourley; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 25, 1157; *Feb* 27, 1340
Mails, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1014

AMERICA (SOUTH)
Chili—Emigration to, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 429
Falkland Islands, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 428

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill

l. Read 1ª* *Feb* 11, 37
Read 2ª* and committed to Committee of the whole House *Feb* 21, 849
Considered in Committee and Reported *Mar* 4, 1764

Architects Registration Bill

c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 13, 295

Army

Africa—Natal and Zululand, Troops in, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 17, 426

Auxiliary Forces

National Rifle Association—Bisley Common, Question, Mr. Hankey; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1510
Volunteers—Ammunition, Question, Mr. H. Vincent; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 20, 727; *Disqualification of as Voters*, Question, Colonel Hughes; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 17, 417

Barracks

Coal Supply, Question, Sir A. Rollit; Answer, The Financial Secretary for War *Feb* 25, 1163
Dublin, Typhoid Fever in, Questions, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Under Secretary for War *Feb* 21, 875; *Feb* 28, 1494

Contracts—War Office Contracts, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 20, 742; Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Financial Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1497
Education—Staff College—Turkish Language, Question, Sir R. Paget; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 27, 1319
Gibraltar—Guard Room, Question, Mr. Mount; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 24, 1012

India

Chin-Lushai Expedition, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 11, 41
Medical Officers, Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Secretary for War *Mar* 3, 1624; Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Mar* 3, 1651
Stores, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Financial Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1497
Volunteer Forces, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 4, 1768

Miscellaneous

Soldiers' Discharge, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary for War *Mar* 3, 1623
Soldiers in Uniform at Theatres, Question, Lord R. Churchill; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 27, 1350

[*cont.*

ARMY—*Miscellaneous*—cont.

Typhoid Fever at the Curragh Camp, Question, Colonel Dawnay; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 24, 1019

Officers

Downes, Major-General — Correspondence, Address for Copy *Feb* 27, 1351
Wolseley, Lord, and the Queen's Regulations, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 21, 814

Ordnance Department

Guns—New Magazine Rifle, Question, General Sir W. Crossman; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1489
Nordenfelt Gun Company, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 24, 1020
Army and Navy Guns, Address for Returns *Feb* 20, 760

Regiments—Waterford Artillery, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 24, 1002; *Feb* 27, 1333
Store Department—Tower Wharf, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Secretary for War *Mar* 3, 1622

Army Estimates

Arrangement of Votes, Motion to refer the New Arrangements to the Committee on Public Accounts *Feb* 28, 1612; Agreed to *Mar* 4, 1876
Barracks (*Consolidated Fund*) (*see* Barracks)

ATHERLEY-JONES, Mr. L., *Durham, N.W.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1098, 1099

AUSTRALIAN COLONIES
Conference at Melbourne, Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 21, 888
Federation, Question, Earl Belmore; Answer, The Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 17, 405
Natives—Flogging, Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 17, 432
Post Office—Letters to, Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 28, 1511
Victoria Divorce Act, Question, Mr. H. Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Mar* 3, 1647

AUSTRALIA (WESTERN)
Notes and Statistics on, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 14, 302

BADEN-POWELL, Sir G., *Liverpool, Kirkdale*
Africa (West)—Affairs, 1340
Australia—Conference at Melbourne, 888
Letters to, 1511

BADEN-POWELL, Sir G.—*cont.*
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1243
Diplomatic Services, 1232
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1370

Bakers (Ireland) (Sunday Labour)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 12, 173

BALFOUR, Right Hon. A. J. (Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), *Manchester, E.*
Ireland
Agricultural Report, 1009
Crime and Outrage
Killaloe, Affray at, 1498
Criminal Law and Procedure Act (1887)
Boycotting Returns, 1169
Crimes Act Statistics, 871
Dennis, Connell, 745
M'Hugh, Mr. 744
Newbridge Arrests, 759, 880
O'Connor, Mr. H. 1344
O'Mahony, Mr. J. E. 1491
Slattery, Mr. J. 200, 738
Drainage—General Code, 748
Shannon, 740, 875
Education—Model Schools, 731
National Teachers, Queen's College, 1326
Evictions
Clongorey, 1502, 1616; Res. 1045, 1046, 1047, 1048, 1049, 1050, 1051, 1052, 1055, 1056, 1254
Gweedore and Falcarragh, 1026
Olphert Estate, 420
Summonses, 874
Fisheries
Donegal, 1492
Galway Bay, Pier in, 750
Land Acts—Cork Leaseholders' Association, 887
Land Commissioners
Donegal County, 191, 1002
Down County, 315
Dublin County, 1329
Landlord and Tenant
Arrears Act, 442, 1338
Caretakers, 750, 1017
Judicial Rents—Revision, 186
Drainage Board Votes, 886
Land Purchase Acts
Commission Cases, 734
Returns, 206
Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill, 1252
Law and Justice and Police
Anonymous Leaflets, 434
Cork Justices, 427
Kilkenny—An Assize Case, 878
Londonderry Police, 1155
M'Keever, Charges against, 1501
Mayor of Cork, 311, 442
Police Escorts, 441
Police and Roman Catholic Priests, 874
Roman Catholic Policemen, 741, 886
Tipperary—Conduct of Police, 208

BALFOUR, Right Hon. A. J.—*cont.*
Light Railways, 1018
Local Government Board
Kilkenny Asylum, 1024
Kilkenny Infirmary, 747
Miscellaneous
Butter Trade, 885
Government Advertisements, 1328
Munster Coal Fields, 878
Poor Law—Board of Guardians, 310
Cork Union, 1004, 1150, 1499
Prisons, Condition of, 430
Derry Gaol, 419
Discipline, 301
Railways—Ardglass, 1155
Parliament — Privilege — *Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 70, 74
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 447, 521, 594, 597, 598, 605, 673
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1287, 1289, 1291
Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1017

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 12, 172

Bankruptcy Bill
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 12, 165

Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 19, 724
Order for 2R; Adjourned *Feb* 27, 1443

Barracks (Consolidated Fund)
c. Committee ordered *Feb* 26, 1315
Considered in Committee *Feb* 27, 1422
Report *Mar* 3, 1759

BARTLEY, Mr. G. C. T., *Islington, N.*
Income Tax Collection, 199
London County Council, 306
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1780
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 241, 900
Supply—Buildings—South Kensington, 1196, 1203
Trustee Savings Banks, 1159

BARTTELOT, Colonel Sir W. B., *Sussex, N.W.*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1437
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1839, 1840, 1844, 1846
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 781
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1210
Swaziland, 1247

BASING, Lord
County Councils and Local Rates, 1145

[*cont.*

BAUMANN, Mr. A. A., *Camberwell, Peckham*
Africa—Swaziland, 573
Berne Labour Conference, 121
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 237
Railway Companies, 754, 1319
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1247
South Africa, 1313
Telegraphic Engineering Inspectors, 757

BEACH, Right Hon. Sir M. E. H. (President of the Board of Trade), *Bristol, W.*
Bi-metallism, 1325
Companies (Memorandum of Association) Bill, 2R. 848
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1397, 1422
Electric Lighting, 1630
Immigration of Foreign Paupers, 890
Ireland—Lighthouses—Tory Island, 432, 1332
Special Commission Report Res. 1696, 1699, 1702, 1706, 1707, 1708
Merchandise Marks Act, 421
Merchant Shipping—Boats, 746
"*Laineter*," 1322
Railways—Canal Traffic Act, 1332
Coupling Appliances, 1015
Servants, 195
Southern Companies, 754, 1320
Working Men's Trains, 194
Reservoirs and Waterworks—Inspection, 1626
Sea Fishery Statistics, 1028
Supply—Diplomatic Services, 1232, 1233
Trade and Commerce—Importation of Frozen Meat, 1164
Trade Marks Protection Act, 1337

BEAUCHAMP, Earl
Special Commission, 1761

BEAUFOY, Mr. M. H., *Lambeth, Kennington*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1111

Beer Adulteration Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Beer Adulteration (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

Behring Seas Fisheries
Questions, Mr. S. Hill; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 14, 307; Questions, Mr Gourley; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 25, 1157; *Feb* 27, 1340

BELMORE, Earl of
Australian Federation, 405
Irish Land Titles, 849, 861
Public Trustee Bill, 2R. 995

BENTINCK, Right Hon. G. A. C., *Whitehaven*
Police and Cabmen, 203
Supply—Westminster Hall, 1177, 1184

BETHELL, Commander G. R., *York, E.R., Holderness*
Merchant Shipping—Boats, 746
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 777
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1241

BIGGAR, Mr. J. G., *Cavan, W.*
Club House Licences, 301

Bi-metallism (*see* Currency)

BIRKBECK, Sir E., *Norfolk, E.*
Van and Wheel Tax, 1650

BLANE, Mr. A., *Armagh, S.*
Ireland—Prison Discipline, 300
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1304
Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1208
Land and Buildings—South Kensington, 1198, 1204
Superannuation and Retired Allowances, 1250

Board of Agriculture
Agricultural and Dairy Schools, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 13, 207

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Question, Mr. C. Darling; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 17, 439
Pleuro-Pneumonia, Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 24, 1017
Rabies—Dog-Muzzling Order, Questions, Mr. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answers, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 14, 300
Fox-Hunting, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 17, 438
Importation of Store Cattle, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Mar* 3, 1627
Weighing of Cattle Act, Question, Mr. Marjoribanks; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Mar* 3, 1641

BOARD OF TRADE—President (*see* BEACH, Right Hon. Sir M. E. HICKS)

Board of Trade
Electric Lighting, Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Mar* 3, 1630

[*cont.*

Board of Trade—cont.
Lighthouses—Tory Island, Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 17, 432; Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1331

Merchant Shipping
Boats, Questions, Commander Bethell, Mr. H. Vincent; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 20 746; "*Laineter*," Question, Mr. Jarvis; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1322
Carriage of Russian Petroleum, Question, Sir E. Reed; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 28, 1495

Railways
Canal Traffic Act, Question, Mr. Tomlinson; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1332
Connemara Railway, Report, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1641
Coupling Appliances, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 24, 1015
Passengers Trains (*Correspondence*), Return ordered and presented *Mar* 3, 1760
Servants, Hours of, Question, Mr. Philipps; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 13, 194
Southern Railway Companies, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 20, 754; Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1319
Working Men's Trains, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 13, 194

Reservoirs and Waterworks, Inspection of, Question, Mr. S. Leighton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Mar* 3, 1626

BOLTON, Mr. J. C., *Stirling*
Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 703

BOORD, Mr. T. W., *Greenwich*
Post Office—Telegraph Office—Sunday Business, 569

Borough Funds Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

BOULNOIS, Mr. E., *Marylebone, E.*
Income Tax Collection, 198

BRABOURNE, Lord
Parliament—Appointment of Standing Committees, Res. 551, 562, 563

BRADLAUGH, Mr. C., *Northampton*
Australia (Western)—Notes and Statistics, 302
Customs and Inland Revenue – Oriental Plate, 872
Foreign Paupers, Immigration of, 889
India—Assam Coolies, 187
Burma Oil Concessions, 735
Chandolin Maharani of Rewa, 735
Chin-Lushai Expedition, 41, 190, 736, 1021
Crawford Case, 189
Crops—State of, in Southern India, 1022
Gilgit—Occupation of, 871
Grievances, 436
Indemnity Bill, 436
Kashmire, 568
Punjab—Rioting in, 1768
Railway—Chittagong to Assam, 1022
Revenue—Bengal Board, 568
Law and Justice and Police
Gay, C. J., Case of, 1158
Oaths Act, 1771
Registrars of County Courts, 1030
Parliament—Business of the House, 1521
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 94
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1107, 1114, 1124
Royal Yachts, 190
Supply—West End Scandals, 1575, 1576
Vaccination Acts—Prosecutions, 431
Western Australia Bill, 894
Yorkshire Provident Association, 209

BRASSEY, Lord
Navy—Gibraltar Dock, 1485

BRIGHT, Mr. W. L., *Stoke-upon-Trent*
Navy—H.M.S. "*Barracouta*," 193
Post Office Orders, 1324

BROADHURST, Mr. H., *Nottingham, W.*
Berlin Labour Conference, 194, 1153
Education — National Schools—Primrose League, 1154
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 265
Railways—Working Mens' Trains, 194

BRODRICK, Hon. W. St. J. F. (Financial Secretary, War Department), *Surrey, Guildford*
Army—Barracks—Supply of Coals, 1163
Contracts—War Office, 1497
Medical Stores, 1497
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 354, 356, 358

BROOKE, Lord, *Colchester*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 130

BROOKFIELD, Mr. A. M., *Sussex, Rye*
Importation of Frozen Meat, 1163

BRUSSELS
Anti-Slavery Conference, Question, Mr. S. Buxton; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 209

BRYCE, Mr. J., *Aberdeen, S.*
Burma and Siam, 1638
Crete, 1341
Newfoundland—Fishery Rights, 203
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 273, 275, 276, 277
Parochial Charities of London, 313
Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1207
Swaziland, 1247, 1248
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1387

BUCHANAN, Mr. T. R., *Edinburgh, W.*
Chili—Emigration to, 1021
Cruelty to Animals—Rabbit Coursing, 1323
Parliament—Business of the House, 1520, 1521, 1522, 1769
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 163
Presumption of Life Limitation (Scotland) Act, 1324
Supply—Swaziland, 1249
West End Scandals, 1526, 1528, 1529

Building Feus and Leases (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

Building (Sanitary Registration) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1177

Building Societies Act (1874) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Burials Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177

BURMA (*see* INDIA)

BURT, Mr. T., *Morpeth*
Llanerch Colliery Accident, 42
Navy—Contracts—Asbestos Company, 1160

BUXTON, Mr. S. C., *Tower Hamlets, Poplar*
Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference, 209
Congo Free State, 209
Ireland—Light Railways, 1018
Tramways Act, 1018
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 239, 925, 933

CADOGAN, Earl (Lord Privy Seal)
Irish Land Titles, 860
Irish Legislation, 414
Parliament—Standing Committees, Res. 560, 563

CAINE, Mr. W. S., *Barrow-in-Furness*
India—Excise Administration, 1768
Volunteer Forces in, 1768
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournments of the House, Res. 583

CALDWELL, Mr. J., *Glasgow, St. Rollox*
Scotland
Education Code, 308, 443
Lenzie Academy, 1003
Schools, 1517
Fee-Paying, 752
Grants, 1517
State-Aided, 884
School Boards, 742, 1344
Judicial Factors, 1020
Succession Duty, 1506

CAMPBELL, Sir G., *Kirkcaldy, &c.*
Africa—Portuguese in, 305
Civil Service—Lloyd, Mr. C., 744, 1019
Colonial Stocks, 743
India—Assam Tea Gardens, 1633
Chin-Lushai Expedition, 1021
Delhi-Umballa-Kalka Railway, 1505
Indian Government and Africa, 1637
Malta—Mission to the Pope, 1025
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournments, Res. 583
Territorial Standing Committee, 1514
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1239, 1242, 1243, 1246, 1247
Buildings—South Kensington, 1192
Crofters' Commission, 1232
Diplomatic Services, 1233
Westminster Hall, 1180, 1185
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 305, 756; 2R. 1359, 1360, 1380, 1381

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Right Hon. H., *Stirling, &c.*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1423, 1435
Parliament—Business of the House, 1517
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 584, 592, 908, 909

Canal Development Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

CAREW, Mr. J. L., *Kildare, N.*
Ireland
Criminal Law and Procedure
Arrest at Newbridge, 759, 880
O'Connor, Mr. H., 1344
Evictions—Clongorey Arrests, 1026, 1253, 1342, 1501

CARLISLE, Bishop of
Cathedral Churches Bill, 2R. 1131
Education—Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1458

Cathedral Churches Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 13, 182
Read 2ª and committed to Committee of the whole House *Feb* 25, 1131
Committee; Report *Feb* 28, 1488
Read 3ª * and passed *Mar* 4, 1764

CAUSTON, Mr. R. K., *Southwark, W.*
Africa—Delagoa Bay Railway, 1629
Electric Lighting, 1630
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 898
Prison Labour, 1013

CEYLON
Officers of the Crown, Question, Mr. P. Stanhope; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Mar* 3, 1636

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J., *Birmingham, W.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 967, 976, 981, 982
Supply — Buildings — South Kensington, 1201
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1391

CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. R., *Islington, W.*
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournments of the House, Res. 584

CHANCELLOR, THE LORD (*see* HALSBURY, Lord)

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (*see* GOSCHEN, Right Hon. G. J.)

CHANNING, Mr. F. A., *Northampton, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 806
Railways—Coupling Appliances, 1015
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1215, 1219, 1226
Technical Instruction Act, 748
Vaccination, Deaths from, 1329
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1393

CHAPLIN, Right Hon. H. (President of the Board of Agriculture), *Lincolnshire, Sleaford*
Board of Agriculture
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act
Dog-Muzzling Order, 300
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 439
Pleuro-Pneumonia, 1018
Dairy Schools, 207
Fox-Hunting, 438
Importation of Cattle, 1627
Weighing of Cattle Act, 1641
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1223, 1226, 1229

Charitable Trusts Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

Charitable Trusts (Rent-Charges)
Return ordered *Feb* 21, 895

Charity Commissioners
Allotments Act, Question, Sir W. Foster; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther *Feb* 25, 1152
Parochial Charities of London, Questions, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 14, 313
Schemes, Question, Mr. C. Acland; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther *Mar* 4, 1769
Sutcombe, Questions, Viscount Ebrington; Answers, Mr. J. W. Lowther *Feb* 18, 573; *Feb* 20, 751

CHINA
Yangtze, Upper—Navigation of, Question, Mr. R. G. Webster; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 423

Church Building Acts (Compulsory Powers Repeal) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1177

CHURCHILL, Right Hon. Lord R. H. S., *Paddington, S.*
Army—Soldiers in Uniform at Theatres, 1350
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1119, 1123

Church of England
Church Revenues, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14, 308
Incompetent Clergymen, Question, Mr. D. Thomas; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1513

Civil Contingencies Fund, 1888-9
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 11, 120

Civil Service
Clerks, Questions, Mr. J. Rowlands, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1644
Saturday Half-Holiday, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 25, 1165
Second Division, Questions, Mr. Aird, Mr. J. Kelly; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 20, 733
Treasury, Question, Mr. J. Kelly; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 25, 1164
Examinations for Class I., Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1515
Examinations for Official Appointments, Motion (Lords) *Feb* 28, 1445
Lloyd, Mr. C., Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 744; Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 24, 1019

[*cont.*

Civil Service—cont.
Ridley Commission, Questions, Mr. R. Power; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1643; *Mar* 4, 1770
Royal Commission — Report, Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 13, 210

Civil Service (Lower Division)
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 11, 120

CLANCY, Mr. J. J., *Dublin Co., N.*
Ireland—Boycotting Returns, 1170
Criminal Law and Procedure—M'Enery, Mr. J. 1126
Evictions, Clongorey, Res. 1060; Arrests, 1343
Fair Rents, 1329
Government Advertisements, 1328
Light Railways, 576
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 647, 667
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1298

CLARK, Dr. G. B., *Caithness*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 677, 713, 723
Scotland—Burgh Police and Public Health Bills, 206
Crofters' Commission, 1652
Crofter Emigrants to Manitoba, 1327
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1240, 1245, 1246, 1247
Land and Buildings, South Kensington, 1203

CLARKE, Sir E. G. (Solicitor General), *Plymouth*
Parliament — Privilege — *Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 109
Supply—West End Scandals, 1595

Coal Mines
Cruelty to Ponies in Mines, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 195
Llanerch Colliery Accident, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 11, 42; Question, Mr. Pickard; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 197
Longton—Explosion, Question, Mr. Fenwick; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 24, 1041

COBB, Mr. H. P., *Warwick, S.E., Rugby*
Allotments at Banbury, 423
Civil Service, 1515
Dairy Schools, 207
Epidemic of Influenza, 208
Fox-Hunting, 437
Ireland—Special Commission—Le Caron, 882, 891, 1155
Law and Justice and Police
Edgeware Magistrates, 564
Police Evidence, 425
Local Government Board
County Council Elections, 566
Harrow Weald, Sanitary State of, 565

[*cont.*

COBB, Mr. H. P.—*cont.*
Parliament—Business of the House, 1649
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 775, 903
Post Office—Distribution of Pamphlets by Rural Postmen, 1153
Small Holdings Committee, 1516
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1211, 1213
West End Scandals, 1609, 1610

COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Birmingham, Bordesley*
Charity Commissioners – Sutcombe, 573
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 777
Small Holdings Committee, 1516

COLOMB, Sir J. C. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.*
Destitute Foreigners, 1001
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1282, 1286
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1382

Colonial Courts of Admiralty Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 25, 1129
Read 2ª and committed to Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c. *Mar* 4, 1761

Colonial Marriages Legislation Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

COLONIES — Secretary of State (*see* KNUTSFORD, Lord)

COLONIES—Under Secretary of State (*see* DE WORMS, Right Hon. Baron H.)

Colonies
Trade Marks Protection—Colonial Legislation, Questions, Mr. O. V. Morgan, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1336

Colonisation
Committee, Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 4, 1773

Commissioners for Oaths Act (1889) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION—Vice President (*see* DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H.)

Companies Act (1862) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 24, 1128

Companies (Memorandum of Association) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 211
Order for 2R.; Adjourned *Feb* 20, 848
Read 2° * and committed to Committee on Trade, &c. *Feb* 27, 1422

Companies (Winding Up) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 211
Read 2° * and committed to Committee on Trade, &c. *Feb* 27, 1397

CONDON, Mr. T. J., *Tipperary, E.*
Ireland—Criminal Law—O'Mahony, Mr. J. E. 1489

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

Contagious Diseases (Animals) (Pleuro-Pneumonia) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1252

CONWAY, Mr. M., *Leitrim, N.*
School Board for London (Superannuation) Bill, 2R. 538, 541

CORBET, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow, E.*
Ireland—Statute of Edward III. 1498

CORBETT, Mr. A. C., *Glasgow, Tradeston*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 499

Corn Averages
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 11, 120

Corporal Punishment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

Corporate Associations' (Property) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Corrupt Practices at Elections (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 404

COSSHAM, Mr. H., *Bristol, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 503, 834

County Councils' Association Expenses Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 18, 584
Read 2° and committed *Feb* 26, 1311
Considered in Committee and Reported *Feb* 27, 1444
Read 3° * and passed *Feb* 28, 1612
Read 1ª * *Mar* 3, 1617

County Councillors' Travelling Expenses Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

County Courts Consolidation Bill
Question, Mr. B. Roberts; Answer, The Attorney General *Feb* 28, 1512

COURTNEY, Rt. Hon. L. H. (Chairman of Committee of Ways and Means, and Deputy Speaker), *Cornwall, Bodmin*
(*Rulings as Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker*)
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1237, 1244, 1245
Board of Agriculture, 1213, 1221, 1222
Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1540, 1570, 1573, 1575, 1582, 1583, 1594, 1609, 1610, 1611
Crofters' Commission, 1232
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1208
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1231

CRAIG, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Silver Coinage, 1646

CRANBORNE, Viscount, *Lancashire, N.E., Darwen*
Tithes Bill, 1351

CRANBROOK, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)
County Council and Local Rates, 1142
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1461, 1482

CRAWFORD, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 698, 761
Scotch County Council Elections, 422
Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1206

CREMER, Mr. W. R., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
East Africa, Portuguese in, 40, 121
Parliament—Business of the House, 1649
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 259, 976, 1126
Supply—Office of Works, Report, 1312

Criminal Cases Appeals Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

Criminal Law Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

Criminal Law Procedure Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

CROSS, Viscount (Secretary of State for India)
Education—Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1478
Indian Councils Bill, 849; 1R. 862; 2R. 1617
Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill, 410

CROSSMAN, General Sir W., *Portsmouth*
Army—New Magazine Rifle, 1489
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1439

Crown Office Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 18, 55
Read 2ª and committed to Committee of the whole House *Feb* 21, 869
Considered in Committee and Reported *Feb* 21, 1000
Read 3ª and passed *Feb* 25, 1129
c. Read 1° * *Feb* 27, 1444

Cruelty to Animals Act
Rabbit Coursing, Questions, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 27, 1322

Currency
Bi-metallism, Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Sir W. Houldsworth; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1325
One Pound Notes, Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 25, 1167
Pre-Victorian Sovereigns, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1653
Silver Coinage, Question, Mr. Craig; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1646

Customs and Inland Revenue
Assessment of Rateable Property in London, Questions, Mr. Morton, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 24, 1024
Club House Licences, Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14, 301
Excise Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Newnes; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 27, 1347
Horse and Wheel Tax, Question, Sir R. Paget; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 27, 1349
Income Tax—Collections, Questions, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 13, 198
Metropolitan Assessment Returns, Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1335
Oriental Plate, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 21, 872
Property Tax, Question, Colonel Hughes; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 17, 418

[cont.

Customs and Inland Revenue—cont.
Transfer Stamp Duty, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1660
Van and Wheel Tax, Question, Mr. B. Roberts; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 25, 1162; Question, Sir E. Birkbeck; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1650

CYPRUS
Postal Communication, Questions, Mr. Leighton; Answers, The Postmaster General, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 4, 1766

DARLING, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 439
Navy—Victualling Yard, Deptford, 305

DAVEY, Sir H., *Stockton*
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1402, 1418, 1421
Parliament Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 105

DAWNAY, Colonel Hon. L. P., *York, N.R., Thirsk*
Curragh Camp, Typhoid Fever in, 1019

Deaf, Dumb, and Blind
Legislation, Question, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 21, 893

DE COBAIN, Mr. E. S. W., *Belfast, E.*
Ireland—Postal Facilities at Knock, 1629
Queen's College, 1326
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 516

Deeds of Arrangement Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 24, 1128

DE LISLE, Mr. E. J. L. M. P., *Leicestershire, Mid*
Supply—Westminster Hall, 1184

DENMAN, Lord
County Councils and Local Rates, 1147

Devolution of Estates Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

DE WORMS, Right Hon. Baron H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
Africa (South Coast)
Affairs, 1014
Bechuanaland, 192
Cape Coast—Riots at Moree, 1493
Swaziland, 303, 574
Zululand—Native Chiefs, 192, 303, 164

[cont.

DE WORMS, Right Hon. Baron H.—*cont.*
Africa (West Coast)
Flogging Natives, 1494
Gold Coast—Correspondence respecting the Affairs of, 196
Sierra Leone—Mr. C. Crawford, 197
Australian Colonies
Conference at Melbourne, 889
Emigration to, 1336
Natives—Flogging, 432
Notes and Statistics, 302
Victoria Divorce Act, 1647
British Guiana, 570
Ceylon—Officers of the Crown, 1637
Falkland Islands—Governor of, 427
Indian Subjects and the Transvaal Government, 1159
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 279
Portuguese in East Africa, 306
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1235, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1241, 1245, 1246; Report, 1314
Western Australia Bill, 305, 894; 2R. 1353, 1360

Directors' Liability Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Dispensary Houses (Ireland) Act (1879) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

DIXON-HARTLAND, Mr. F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
Superannuation Bill, 1169

Drainage Separation Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177

Dublin Hospital Bill
Statement by Mr. Sexton *Feb* 20, 749
Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1350

DUFF, Mr. R. W., *Banffshire*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 832

DUNDONALD, Earl of
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1475

DUNRAVEN, Earl of
Irish Legislation, 411
Sweating System—Re-appointment of Committee, 297

Duration of Speeches in the House of Lords Bill
l. Read 1ª * *Feb* 11, 37

DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Kent, Dartford*
Education
Elementary Schools, 1489
National Schools—Fisherton, 1640
National Schools—Political Speeches in, 1152, 1154
New Code, 1348
Science and Art Grants, 1640
York Commercial School, 205
York School Board, 304, 730
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 936
Parochial Charities of London, 314
Technical Instruction Act, 748

East India (*see* India)

East India Local Councils Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

EBRINGTON, Viscount, *Devonshire, Tavistock*
Charity Commissioners—Sutcombe, 573, 751

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

Ecclesiastical Business Fees
Return ordered *Mar* 4, 1761

EDUCATION—Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (*see* DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H.)

Education Department
Agricultural and Dairy Schools, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture *Feb* 13, 207
Education Code, Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 27, 1348
Elementary Schools, Question, Sir J. Lubbock; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 28, 1489
Examinations for Official Appointments, Motion *Feb* 28, 1445
National Schools, Fisherton, Salisbury, Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Mar* 3, 1639
National Schools—Political Speeches, Question, Mr. F. Stevenson; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 25, 1151; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 25, 1154
Science and Art Grants, Question, Mr. Marjoribanks; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Mar* 3, 1640
Technical Instruction Act, Questions, Sir H. Roscoe, Mr. Channing; Answers, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 20, 748

[*cont.*

Education Department—cont.
York Commercial School, Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 13, 204
York School Board, Questions, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 14, 304; *Feb* 20, 730

EGYPT
Antiquities, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 25, 1167

Electoral Disabilities (Naval and Military and Police) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 445

Electors Qualification and Registration Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Electric Lighting (*see* Board of Trade)

Elementary Education Continuation Schools Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

Elementary Education Law Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177

ELLIOT, Hon. A. R. D., *Roxburgh*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1753

ELLIS, Mr. James, *Leicestershire, Bosworth*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 782

ELLIS, Mr. J. E., *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*
Ireland
Crimes Act Statistics, 870
Land Purchase Acts, 728, 756
Returns, 206
Special Commission—Cost of, 312

ELPHINSTONE, Lord
Gibraltar Docks, 1486, 1488

Emigration and Immigration
Argentine Republic, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 430
Australia, Western, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 27, 1336
Canada—Crofter Emigrants, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 27, 1327
Chili, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 429; Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 24, 1021

[*cont.*

Emigration and Immigration—cont.
Foreign Paupers, Immigration of, Questions, Mr. H. Vincent, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 21, 889
Wales—Returns, Question, Mr. D. Thomas; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 28, 1503

Employers' Liability Acts Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 27, 1444

ESSLEMONT, Mr. P., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 767, 824

Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act, 1886
Return ordered *Feb* 21, 992

Factory and Workshop Act (1878) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

Farm Servants' Wages (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 403

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
Army and Navy Medical Officers, 1624, 1651
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Pleuro-Pneumonia, 1017

Fee-Paying (Scotland) Schools
Return ordered *Mar* 3, 1654

FENWICK, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
Colliery Explosion at Longton, 1014
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 953

FERGUSON, Mr. R. C. M., *Leith, &c.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 233, 704

FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Manchester, N.E.*
Africa (East Coast)
Congo Free State, 209
Portuguese in, 41, 122
Africa (South Coast)
Delagoa Bay Railway, 729, 1630, 1799

[*cont.*

FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J.—*cont.*
Africa (West Coast)
Affairs, 1340
Niger Territories, 196
America—North Fisheries, 1157
Argentine Republic, Emigration to, 431
Behring Seas Fisheries, 307, 1341
Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference, 209
Chili, Emigration to, 429, 1021
China—Yangtze, Navigation of, 423
Civil Service—Foreign Office—Mr. C. Lloyd, 1019
Crete, 1341
Egyptian Antiquities, 1167
India, Burma, and Siam, 1638
International Labour Conference, 121, 194, 751, 1154, 1496
Malta—Mission to the Pope, 1025
Naval Manœuvres, 759
Newfoundland—Fishing Rights, 203
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 246, 251, 276, 277, 1118
Persian Kurds, 1024
Portugal—English Clerks, 191
Russia—Carriage of Petroleum, 1496
Turkey—Courts at Aleppo, 1332, 1507
Moussa Bey, 441
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1372

FIELD, Admiral E., *Sussex, Eastbourne*
Naval and Military Administration, 577
Navy—H.M.S. "*Ajax*," 566
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 796, 800
Supply — Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1231

FIELDEN, Mr. T., *Lancashire, S.E., Middleton*
Supply—West End Scandals, 1594

Fisheries
Sea Fishing Statistics, Question, Mr. Rowntree; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 24, 1024
(*See also* Behring Seas and Newfoundland)

Fisheries (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

Fishing in Rivers Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

FITZGERALD, Dr. J. G., *Longford, S.*
Ireland—Land Commission—Longford, 1628

FLYNN, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
Ireland
Cork Union, 1005, 1150, 1498
Emergency Man, Charges against, 1648, 1775
Eviction Summonses, 873

[*cont.*

FLYNN, Mr. J. C.—*cont.*
Falcarragh—Alleged Intimidation, 1775
M'Enery, Mr. J. 1166
M'Keever, 1500
O'Mahony, Mr. J. E. 1490, 1491
Police and Roman Catholic Priests, 874
Slattery, Mr. J. 738, 1339, 1501
Special Commission Report, 893
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 98
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 507
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1266

FOLEY, Mr. P. J., *Galway, Connemara*
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1254

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Secretary of State (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Under Secretary of State (*see* FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J.)

Foreign Countries (*Gold and Silver Marking*)
Return ordered *Feb* 19, 677

Foreign Goods (Mark of Origin) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175
Order for 2R.; Adjourned *Feb* 14, 401

FORTESCUE, Earl
County Councils and Local Rates, 1146
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1480

FOSTER, Sir B. W., *Derby, Ilkeston*
Allotments Act, 1152
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 814

FOWLER, Right Hon. H. H., *Wolverhampton, E.*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund), Report, 1759
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1413, 1417, 1422
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1802, 1811
Law and Justice and Police—Court of Judicature, 1348
Prosecution of a Surgeon, 754
National Debt Redemption, 737
Parliament—Papers Distribution, Res. 543, 676
School Board for London (Superannuation) Bill, 2R. 538
Supply—Retired Allowances, 1352

FOWLER, Sir R. N., *London*
Africa—Swaziland, 302
Zululand—Native Chiefs, 303

[*cont.*

FOWLER, Sir R. N.—*cont.*
Death of a Prisoner at Manchester, 309
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 287
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1239, 1247

FRASER-MACKINTOSH, Mr. C. F., *Inverness-shire*
Post Office—Abuse of Postal Service, 433
Scotland—Highlands and Islands, 1333
Islands—Postal Communication, 1013

Friendly Societies
Question, Mr. F. Stevenson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 21, 894

FULTON, Mr. J. F., *West Ham, N.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1713, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1729, 1732, 1734
Local Government Servants—Foulsham, Mr. W. S. 1643

GEDGE, Mr. S., *Stockport*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 762
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1386

GERMANY
Berlin Labour Conference (*see title* Labour, Trade, and Commerce)

GIBRALTAR
Dock Accommodation, Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 13, 198; Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth, Lord Brassey, Lord Elphinstone *Feb* 28, 1483
Guard Room, Question, Mr. Mount; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 20, 1012

GILHOOLY, Mr. J., *Cork, W.*
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1270

GILL, Mr. T. P., *Louth, S.*
Ireland—Evictions at Clongorey, Res. 1066

GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E., *Edinburgh, Mid Lothian*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1670, 1699, 1819
Parliament—Members—Mr. Labouchere's Suspension, Res. 1654, 1656
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 63
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 136, 151, 334, 356, 714

Glebe Land Sales
Address for Return *Feb* 20, 759

Glebe Lands Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 21, 895

GORST, Right Hon. Sir J. E. (Under Secretary of State for India), *Chatham*
India—Assam Tea Gardens, 187, 1634
Bengal Board of Revenue, 568
Bombay Factory Labour, 1321
Burma Oil Concessions, 735
Chandalin Maharani of Rewa, 735
Chin-Lushai Expedition, 41, 190, 736, 1021
Civil Service—Age of Candidates, 435
Crawford Case, 188
Crops—Southern India, 1022
Delhi-Umballa-Kalka Railway, 1505
Excise Administration, 768
Gilgit, Occupation of, 872
Government and Africa, 1637
Kashmir, 568
Local Councils, 567
Punjab—Rioting in the, 1768
Railways—Chittagong and Assam, 1023
Volunteer Forces, 1768
Works Department, 309
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 53, 55

GOSCHEN, Right Hon. G. J. (Chancellor of the Exchequer), *St. George's, Hanover Square*
Civil Service
Lloyd, Mr., 744
Ridley Commission, 1643, 1770
Royal Commission Report, 210
Treasury Clerks, 1164
Colonial Stocks, 743
Currency
One-Pound Notes, 1169
Pre-Victorian Sovereigns, 1651
Silver Coinage, 1646
Cyprus—Postal Communication, 1767
Inland Revenue
Club-House Licences, 301
Horse and Wheel Tax, 1349
Income Tax, 199
Oriental Plate, 872
Property Tax, 418
Transfer Stamp Duty, 1650
Van and Wheel Tax, 1162, 1650
Ireland—Derry Income Tax Surveyor, 426
National Debt Redemption, 737
Parliament — Papers — Distribution Committee, Res. 676
Perpetual Pensions, 422
Public Trustees Bill, 727
Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts, 728
Savings Banks
Cardiff, 186
Chelsea, 1647
Trustee, 1160
Scotland—Death Duties, 1158
Succession Duty, 1507
Supply
Army and Navy Estimates—Arrangement of Votes, 1614
Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1529, 1530, 1531, 1590

GOURLEY, Mr. E. T., *Sunderland*
American (North) Fisheries, 1157, 1340
Navy
H.M.S. "*Barracouta*," 193
H.M.S. "*Victoria*," 201
Royal Yachts, 1156
Supply—Diplomatic Services, 1232

Government Departments Securities
Colonial Stocks, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 743

GRAHAM, Mr. R. C., *Lanark, N.W.*
Army—Troops in Natal and Zululand, 426
Bombay—Factory Labour, 1322
Civil Service Writers, 1644
Coal Mines—Cruelty to Ponies, 195
International Labour Conference, 121, 751, 1496, 1773
Ireland—Special Commission—Le Caron, 881
Labour—Eight Hours, 1168
Law and Justice and Police
Feely, Case of, 1355
Pickets in Trade Disputes, 1504
Police and the London Strikes, 185, 308, 888
Newington Vestry, 1639
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 288, 1088, 1099, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1107, 1123, 1127
Post Office
Auxiliary Postmen, 743
Sorters, 1511
Letter Carriers—Christmas Presents, 870
Postal *Employés*, 1511
Working Expenses, 1774

GRANVILLE, Earl
Australian Federation, 409
Education—Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1472
Ireland—Special Commission, 1766
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 17, 21, 35

GRAY, Mr. C. W., *Essex, Maldon*
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1219

Guardians of the Poor (Election) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

Guardians of the Poor (Qualification) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 544

HALL, Mr. C., *Cambridge, Chesterton*
Supply—West End Scandals, 1600, 1603, 1608, 1609

HALSBURY, Lord (Lord Chancellor)
Crown Office Bill, 2R. 869; Committee, 1000; 3R. 1129
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1483

HALSBURY Lord.—*cont.*
Lunacy Consolidation Bill, 2R. 1621
Parliament
Appointment of Standing Committees, Res. 563
Resignation of the Clerk Assistant, Res. 545, 550
Partnership Bill, 2R. 1317
Public Trustee Bill, 2R. 994, 995
Trust Companies Bill, 2R. 998, 1000

HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord G. J. (First Lord of the Admiralty), *Middlesex, Ealing*
Navy
Artillery Volunteers, 1337
Bantry Harbour, 1016
Cadets, 433
Contracts—Asbestos Company, 1160
Gibraltar—Dock Accommodation, 198
Influenza at Sheerness, 1016
Medical Officers, 1651
Pensions to Seamen, 1652
Royal Yachts, 190, 1156
Ships
H.M.S. "*Barracouta*," 193
H.M.S. "*Victoria*," 202, 1347
Victualling Yard, Deptford, 305
Navy Estimates, 301, 737
Parliament—Members—Lord G. J. Hamilton and Mr. Labouchere, 1653

HANBURY, Mr. R. W., *Preston*
Army
Medical Stores, 1497
Soldiers' Discharge, 1623
War Office Contracts, 1496
Navy—Artillery Volunteers, 1337
H.M.S. "*Victoria*," 1347, 1508

Handloom Weavers (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

HANKEY, Mr. F. A., *Surrey, Chertsey*
Army—Bisley Common, 1510

HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir W. G. V., *Derby*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1705, 1706, 1707, 1708
Parliament
Business of the House, 1174
Members—Mr. Labouchere's Suspension, 1656
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 43, 55
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 980, 981, 982

HARDCASTLE, Mr. E., *Salford, N.*
Transvaal, 1168

Hares (Close Time) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

[*cont.*

Hares Preservation Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 11, 38
Read 2ª and committed to Committee of the whole House *Feb* 17, 410
Considered in Committee *Feb* 20, 725
Report *Feb* 21, 862

HARRINGTON, Mr. E., *Kerry, W.*
Bantry Harbour, 1016
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 85, 87, 101
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 338

HARRINGTON, Mr. T. C., *Dublin, Harbour*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1849, 1847, 1856

HARROWBY, Earl of
County Councils and Local Rates, 1133

HAYDEN, Mr. L. P., *Leitrim, S.*
Ireland
Arrears Act, 442, 1338
Police Escorts, 441
Navy—Galway Docks, 1339

HEALY, Mr. M., *Cork*
Ireland
Cork Long Leaseholders' Association, 887
Criminal Law, &c.—Kelly, Mr. J. 739
Judicial Rents and Drainage Board Votes, 885
Land Acts, 887
Police—Roman Catholic, 741, 886
Special Commission Report, 893

HEALY, Mr. T. M., *Longford, N.*
Ireland
Criminal Law, &c.—Kelly, Mr. J. 739
Land Acts—Anonymous Leaflets, 435
Police—Roman Catholic, 741, 886
Special Commission
Daly, Mr. J. 571
Report, 444

HEATON, Mr. J. H., *Canterbury*
Post Office—Halfpenny Postage Cards, 1023
Supply—Foreign Office, 1209
Victoria Divorce Act, 1647

HERSCHELL, Lord
Indian Councils Bill, 819
Parliament—Appointment of Standing Committees, Res. 554, 560
Partnership Bill, 2R. 1317
Trust Companies Bill, 2R. 996, 999, 1000

HILL, Colonel E. S., *Bristol, S.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1829

HILL, Mr. A. S., *Staffordshire, Kingswinford*
Behring Seas Fisheries, 307
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 758; 2R. 1367

HOARE, Mr. E. B., *Hampstead*
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1391

HOBHOUSE, Mr. H., *Somerset, E.*
County Councils and Urban Main Roads, 203

HOME DEPARTMENT—Secretary of State (see MATTHEWS, Right Hon. H.)

HOME DEPARTMENT—Under Secretary of State (*see* WORTLEY, Mr. C. B. STUART)

Hop Industry
Select Committee ordered and nominated *Feb* 28, 1612

HOULDSWORTH, Sir W. H., *Manchester, N.W.*
Bi-metallism, 1325

Housing of the Poor
Artisans' Dwellings, Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 27, 1318

Housing of the Working Classes (Metropolis) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 163

HOWELL, Mr. G., *Bethnal Green, N.E.*
Cardiff Savings Bank, 185
Chelsea Trustee Bank, 1646
Rateable Property in London—Assessment, 1024
Salford Gas Frauds, 749, 1029
Statute Law—Consolidation, 756
Statute Law Revision Bill, 311

HOWORTH, Mr. H. H., *Salford, S.*
Egyptian Antiquities, 1167
Naval Manœuvres, 759
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 211
Salford Gas Frauds, 749, 882

HUGHES, Colonel E., *Woolwich*
Parliament—Parliamentary and County Council Registers, 416
Questions in the House, 443
Property Tax, 418
Volunteers as Voters, 417

HUNTER, Mr. W. A., *Aberdeen, N.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, 758
Volumes of Evidence, 1777

INDIA—Secretary of State (*see* CROSS, Viscount)

INDIA—Under Secretary of State (*see* GORST, Right Hon. Sir J. E.)

INDIA
Africa, Indian Government and, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 3, 1637
Army—Volunteer Forces, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 4, 1768

Assam
Chittagong and Assam Railway, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 24, 1022
Coolies, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 13, 187; Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Sir G. Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 3, 1632

Bengal—Board of Revenue—Appointment of Mr. Beames, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 18, 568
Bombay—Factory Labour, Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 27, 1320

Burma
Oil Concessions, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 20, 735
Siam and Burma, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Mar* 3, 1638

Cashmir, Maharaja of, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 18, 568
Chin-Lushai Expedition, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 11, 41; *Feb* 13, 190; *Feb* 20, 736; Questions, Sir G. Campbell, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 24, 1021

Civil Service
Age of Candidates, Question, Mr. Mark Stewart; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 17, 435
Crawford Case, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary for India, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 13, 188
Public Works Department—Civil Engineers, Question, Sir R. Lethbridge; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 14, 309

Crops, State of, in Southern India, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 24, 1022
Delhi-Umballa-Kalka Railway, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 28, 1504
East India (*Age of Candidates for the Civil Service*), Address for Return *Feb* 18, 582
East India (*Board of Revenue, Bengal*), Address for Returns *Feb* 20, 759
East India (*Crawford Case*), Address for Return *Feb* 14, 298

INDIA—*cont.*
Excise — Administration, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 4, 1768
Gilgit, Occupation of, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 21, 871
Indemnity Bill, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 17, 436
Local Councils, Questions, Sir W. Plowden, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 18, 567
National Congress, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 17, 436
Punjab, Rioting in, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Mar* 4, 1768
Rewa—The Chandalin Maharani, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary for India *Feb* 20, 735
Transvaal—Indian Subjects, Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 25, 1159

Indian Councils Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª *Feb* 21, 862
Order for 2R.; Postponed *Mar* 3, 1617

Indian Councils Bill
Question, Lord Herschell; Answer, The Secretary for India *Feb* 21, 849

Indian Councils Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Infant Life Protection Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 404

Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

International Labour Conference (*See* Labour, Trade, and Commerce)

Intestates' Estates Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 173

Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Hours of Sale Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171
Order for 2R.; Adjourned *Feb* 26, 1309

Intoxicating Liquors (*Licences*)
Address for Return *Feb* 13, 210

Intoxicating Liquors (Local Veto) (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

[*cont.*

IRELAND

Agriculture—Report, Question, Mr. Lane; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1009

Army — Barracks — Dublin, Questions, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answers, The Secretary for War *Feb* 21, 875; Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1494

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act

Boycotting Returns, Questions, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 25, 1169

Connell, Dennis, Questions, Mr. W. A. Macdonald, Mr. A. Pease, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 745

Falcarragh, Intimidation at, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 4, 1775

Kelly, Mr. J., Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. M. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 20, 738

M'Enery, Mr. J., Question, Mr. O'Keeffe; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 888; Questions, Mr. O'Keeffe, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Attorney General *Feb* 25, 1165

M'Hugh, Mr., Question, Mr. P. M'Donald; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 744

M'Mahony, Mr. J. E., Questions, Mr. Condon, Mr. Flynn, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1489

Newbridge, Arrests at, Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 759; Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary, 880

O'Connor, Mr. H., Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 26, 1316; Questions, Mr. Carew; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 27, 1344

Slattery, Mr. J., Questions, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Lane, Dr. Tanner, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 13, 199; Questions, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 737; Questions, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 27, 1339; Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 28, 1501

Statistics, Question, Mr. J. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 870

Drainage

Drainage Board Votes and Judicial Rents, Question, Mr. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 885

General Code, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 747

[cont.

IRELAND—*Drainage*—cont.

Shannon, Question, Mr. W. Abraham; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 739; Question, Mr. O'Keeffe; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 875

Dublin Hospital Bill

Statement by Mr. Sexton *Feb* 20, 749

Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1350

Education

Model Schools, Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 731

National Schools, Bailieborough, Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 3, 1640

National Teachers, Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 871; Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 3, 1624

Queen's College, Questions, Mr. Johnston, Mr. De Cobain; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 27, 1326

Fisheries

Donegal, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1492

Inland Revenue

Income Tax—Derry Surveyor, Question, Mr. A. O'Connor; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 17, 442

Land Acts, Question, Mr. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 887

Anonymous Leaflets, Questions, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 434

Cork Long Leaseholders' Association, Questions, Mr. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 887

Land Commission

Applications for Fair Rents, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 13, 191; Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 27, 1329

Cavan, Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 4, 1775

Judicial Leases, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1002

Judicial Rents, Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 13, 186

Longford, Question, Dr. Fitzgerald; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 3, 1628

Land Purchase Acts, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 13, 206; Question, Mr. John

 [cont.

IRELAND—*Land Purchase Acts*—cont.
Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 728; Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 734; Question, Mr. John Ellis; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 20, 756

Land Titles, Question, Observations, Earl of Belmore, Lord Monteagle, Earl Cadogan *Feb* 21, 849

Landlord and Tenant
Arrears Act, Questions, Mr. Hayden; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 442; *Feb* 27, 1338
Caretakers, Questions, Sir G. Trevelyan; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 750; *Feb* 24, 1017
Clongorey, Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Carew, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1026; Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 26, 1253; Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 27, 1342; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Carew; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1501; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 28, 1614; Motion for Adjournment of the House *Feb* 24, 1023
Eviction Summonses, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 873
Fair Rents — General, Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 14, 315; Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 18, 576
Gweedore and Falcarragh—Battering Ram, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1025
Judicial Rents and the Drainage Board Votes, Question, Mr. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 885
Olphert Estate, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 420; Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 3, 1621

Law and Justice and Police
Agrarian Crime, Questions, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 740
Cork Justices, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 427
Kilkenny, an Assize Case at, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 878
Killaloe, Affray at, Question, Mr. O'Keeffe; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1498

[*cont.*

IRELAND—*Law and Justice and Police*—cont.
M'Keever, Charges against, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1500; Questions, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 3, 1648; *Mar* 4, 1775
Prosecutions under the Statute of Edward III, Question, Mr. W. Corbet; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Feb* 28, 1498

Police
Cork, Mayor of, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 14, 311; *Feb* 17, 441
Roman Catholic Police, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 741; *Feb* 21, 886
General Questions, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 13, 208; Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 441; Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 874; Question, Mr. J. M'Carthy; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 25, 1155

Prisons
Condition of, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 429
Derry Gaol, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 17, 418
Discipline, Question, Mr. Blane; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 14, 300

Lighthouses—Tory Island, Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1331

Local Government Board
Cork Board of Guardians, Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. O'Hea; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 14, 310
Cork Union, Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1004; Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Lane, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 25, 1149; Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 28, 1498
Lunacy—Kilkenny Asylum, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1024

Members of Parliament (Charges and Allegations)—The Special Commission
Cost of Commission, Questions, Mr. J. Ellis, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 14, 312

Report of Commission
Report Laid upon the Table *Feb* 13, 182; Motion *Mar* 3, 1656; *Mar* 4, 1719; Debate adjourned
Statement by The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 21, 992

[*cont.*

IRELAND—*Members of Parliament (Charges and Allegations)—Report of Commission*—cont.
Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 17, 444; Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 18, 577; Questions, Mr. Hunter, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 20, 758; Questions, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. M. Healy, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 21, 891; Questions, Observations, Earl Beauchamp, Marquess of Salisbury, Earl Granville *Mar* 4, 1764; Questions, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 4, 1776

Times' Witnesses
Daly, John, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 18, 571; Questions, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 27, 1331
Le Caron, Major, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. C. Graham, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 21, 881; Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 25, 1155
Pigott, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 21, 880
Times and Mr. Parnell—Privilege, Resolution *Feb* 11, 43

Miscellaneous
Butter Trade, Questions, Mr. Sheehan; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 885; *Feb* 24, 1030
Disturbance at Coulagown Church, Statement by Dr. Tanner *Feb* 17, 435
Government Advertisements—"Nationalist and Leinster Times," Questions, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 27, 1328
Kilkenny County Infirmary, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 747
Legislation, Question, Earl of Dunraven; Answer, Earl Cadogan *Feb* 17, 411
Munster Coal Field, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 21, 876
Phœnix Park—Band Stand, Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 24, 1015
Tramways Act, Question, Mr. S. Buxton; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1018

Piers and Harbours
Bantry Harbour, Questions, Mr. Murphy, Mr. E. Harrington; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 24, 1016
Fishery Pier in Galway Bay, Question, Mr. Paulton; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 20, 750

IRELAND—*cont.*
Post Office
Cork, Questions, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 25, 1160; *Feb* 28, 1503
Dublin—Telegrams, Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 20, 731
Knock—Postal Facilities, Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The Postmaster General *Mar* 3, 1629
Telegraphic Service, Questions, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1010

Railways
Ardglass, Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 25, 1154
Connemara—Report, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1641
Light Railways, Questions, Colonel Nolan, Mr. H. Stewart, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 18, 574; Question, Mr. S. Buxton; Answer, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 24, 1018

Irish National Teachers Bill
Questions, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Stack; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 4, 1777

JACKSON, Mr. W. L. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Leeds, N.*
Army and Navy Estimates—Arrangement of Votes, 1613
Civil Service Clerks—Second Division, 733
Writers, 1165, 1645
Inland Revenue—Metropolitan Assessment Returns, 1024, 1335
Ireland
Connemara Railway, 1642
Dublin Hospital Bill, 1350
Light Railways, 574
Phœnix Park, Dublin—Band Stand, 1015
Special Commission, 577; Cost of, 312
Local Government Board—London County Council, 307
Servants—Mr. W. S. Foulsham, 1643
Navy—Galway Docks, 1339
Parliament—Business of the House, 1254, 1614, 1769
Post Office—Half-penny Postage Cards, 1023
Telegraph Engineering Inspectors, 757
Supply—Buildings—Houses of Parliament, Report, 1312
Buildings—South Kensington, 1189, 1193
Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1528, 1533
Superannuation and Retired Allowances, 1249, 1250, 1352, 1353

[*cont.*

JAMES, Right Hon. Sir H., *Bury, Lancashire*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 658, 662, 667, 669

JARVIS, Mr. A. W., *Lynn Regis*
Merchant Shipping—"*Laineter*," 1322

JEFFREYS, Mr. A. F., *Hants, Basingstoke*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1440
Naval Cadets, 432

JENNINGS, Mr. L. J., *Stockport*
Naval Estimates, 301
Parliament—Business of the House, 1520

JOHNSTON, Mr. W., *Belfast, S.*
Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Hours of Sale Bill, 2R. 1310
Ireland
Queen's College, 1325
Railway at Ardglass, 1154
Tory Island, 432
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 375
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1266

Jurors' Detention Bill
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Right Hon. Sir U. J., *Lancashire, Clitheroe*
Local Government Act—Commissioners, 1623
Parliament—Business of the House, 1521, 1522
Supply—Buildings—South Kensington, 1188
Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1529, 1531, 1532, 1533
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1231

KEAY, Mr. J. S., *Elgin and Nairn*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 684, 688, 690

KELLY, Mr. J. R., *Camberwell, N.*
Civil Service Clerks, 733, 1164
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill, 1R. 1444

KENYON, Hon. G. T., *Denbigh, &c.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1079
Welsh Sunday Closing Commission, 182

KENYON-SLANEY, Colonel W., *Shropshire, Newport*
Supply—West End Scandals, 1585

KIMBERLEY, Earl of
Crown Office Bill, Committee, 1000; 3R. 130
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1476

KIMBERLEY, Earl of—*cont.*
Indian Councils Bill, 2R. 1619
Parliament — Resignation of the Clerk Assistant, Res. 546, 550, 551

KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN, Mr. H. T., *Kent, Faversham*
Dog-Muzzling Order, 300
Navy—Explosion of Torpedoes, 1309
Sheerness, Influenza at, 751, 1016
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 900

KNUTSFORD, Lord (Secretary of State for the Colonies)
Australian Federation, 408
Colonial Courts of Admiralty Bill, 2R. 1761

LABOUCHERE, Mr. H., *Northampton*
Army—Lord Wolseley and the Queen's Regulations, 884
Ireland
Special Commission, 577
Le Caron, Major, 881
Pigott, R., 880
Report, 891
Law and Justice and Police — Trivial Offences—Case of T. Barnes, 1161
Parliament
Business of the House, 42, 1032, 1170, 1254
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 74
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 221, 228, 251
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1243, 1244
Board of Agriculture, 1229
Buildings—South Kensington, 1199, 1200, 1202
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1205, 1206, 1207
Diplomatic Service, 1232
West End Scandals, 1534, 1538, 1540, 1542, 1543, 1550, 1552, 1553, 1555, 1557, 1563, 1564, 1566, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1572
Westminster Hall, 1186

Labour, Trade, and Commerce
Adulteration of Food, Questions, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 20, 734; *Feb* 27, 1336
Arbitration in Trade Disputes, Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1648
Eight Hours Question, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 25, 1168
Importation of Frozen Meat, Question, Mr. Brookfield; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 25, 1163
International Labour Conferences, Questions, Mr. C. Graham, Mr. Baumann; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 12, 121; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 194; Questions, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The

[*cont.*

[*cont*

Labour, Trade, and Commerce—cont.
Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 20, 751; *Feb* 25, 1153; *Feb* 28, 1496; Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 4, 1773
Margarine Act—Irish Butter, Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland *Feb* 21, 885
Strikes in London, Questions, Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 183; Questions, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14, 308; *Feb* 21, 888
Trade Disputes, Pickets in, Questions, Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham, Mr. Rowlands; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 28, 1504
Trade Marks Protection Act—Colonial Legislation, Questions, Mr. O. V. Morgan, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 27, 1336

Land Purchase and Divisions (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 19, 724

Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill
Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary *Feb* 25, 1252

Land Tenure (Wales) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12

LANE, Mr. W. J., *Cork Co., E.*
Army and Navy Estimates—Arrangement of Votes, 1613
Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Hours of Sale Bill, 2R. 1309
Ireland
Agricultural Reports, 1009
Cork Union, 1150
Criminal Law, &c.—Slattery, Mr. J., 200
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1302, 1304
Post Office—Cork, 1166, 1503
Telegraph Service, 1010

Larceny Act (1861) Amendment (Use of Firearms) Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 14, 297

LAURIE, Colonel R. P., *Bath*
South African Affairs, 1013

Law and Justice and Police (England and Wales)
Adulteration of Food, Questions, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 20, 734; *Feb* 27, 1336
Boycotting—Billow and Fitzgerald, Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 202

County Courts
Alleged Perjury in, Questions, Mr. B. Roberts; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 21, 883; *Feb* 25, 1163

Law and Justice and Police (England and Wales)—*County Courts*—cont.
Registrars, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General *Feb* 2 1030
County Courts Consolidation Bill, Questio Mr. B. Roberts; Answer, The Atto ney General *Feb* 28, 1512
Criminal Law
Barnes, T. — Trivial Offences, Questio Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Hon Secretary *Feb* 25, 1161
Excise Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Newne Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 2 1347
Feely — Wrongful Conviction, Questio Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Hon Secretary *Feb* 27, 1335
Gay, C. J.—Alleged Harsh Sentence, Que tion, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, Th Home Secretary *Feb* 25, 1158
Misappropriation of Trust Money, Que tion, Mr. H. S. Wright; Answer, Th Attorney General *Feb* 28, 1513
Pauper Parents, Support of, Questio Mr. Winterbotham; Answer, Th Home Secretary *Feb* 24, 1007
Prosecution of a Surgeon at Warwic Questions, Mr. H. H. Fowler, M Mac Neill; Answers, The Attorne General *Feb* 20, 754
Salford Gas Frauds, Questions, M Howorth, Mr. Howell; Answers, Th Home Secretary *Feb* 20, 749; Que tion, Mr. Howorth; Answer, Th Home Secretary *Feb* 21, 882; Que tion, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Hom Secretary *Feb* 24, 1029
West End Scandals, Debate on Com mittee of Supply *Feb* 28, 1526; Pe sonal Explanation, The Marquess Salisbury *Mar* 3, 1618
Yorkshire Provident Association, Que tion, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, Th Attorney General *Feb* 13, 20

Edgeware Magistrates, Question, Mr. Cobb Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 18, 56
High Sheriff, Office of, Question, Mr. Leighton; Answer, The Home Secretar *Mar* 3, 1622
Licensing—Death of Jennings, Question, M H. J. Wilson; Answer, The Home Secr tary *Mar* 4, 1773
Mayor's Court, London, Questions, M Pickersgill, Mr. A. O'Connor; Answer The Home Secretary *Feb* 20, 729
Oaths Act—Administration in Courts, Que tion, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Atto ney General *Mar* 4, 1771

Police
Pickets in Trade Disputes, Question Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham, Mr. J Rowlands; Answers, The Home Secr tary *Feb* 28, 1504
Police and the Dock Strike, Question Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham; Answer The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 183 Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, Th Home Secretary *Feb* 21, 888

[cont.

[cont.

Law and Justice and Police (England and Wales)—Police—cont.
Police Evidence, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14, 425
Superannuation, Question, Mr. H. Vincent; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 25, 1151

Prisons
Articles made in, Question, Mr. Quilter; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Home Department *Mar* 3, 1627
Chatham—John Daly, Questions, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 27, 1331
Death of a Prisoner at Manchester, Question, Sir R. Fowler; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14, 309
Labour, Questions, Mr. Quilter, Mr. Causton; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 24, 1012
Newgate, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 18, 568

Statute Law, Consolidation of, Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 20, 756
Statute of Edward III., c. 1, Address for Return *Mar* 3, 1760
Supreme Court of Judicature, Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1348

LAWRENCE, Mr. W. F., *Liverpool, Abercromby*
Arbitration in Trade Disputes, 1648
Indian Subjects and the Transvaal Government, 1159

LAWSON, Sir W., *Cumberland, Cockermouth*
Civil Service—Royal Commission Report, 210
Welsh Sunday Closing Commission, 1778

Leaseholders' Enfranchisement Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

Leaseholders (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

LEES, Mr. E., *Oldham*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1815

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. J. G. Shaw, *Bradford, Central*
Parliament—Business of the House, 1614
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 518, 521, 596
Supply—Buildings—South Kensington, 1191
Houses of Parliament, 1185

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, Oswestry*
Cyprus—Postal Communication, 1766
High Sheriff, Office of, 1622
Reservoirs and Waterworks, Inspection of, 1626
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1379

LENG, Mr. J., *Dundee*
American Mails, 1014
Importation of Store Cattle, 1627
Scotland
Grocers' Licences, 440
Post Office—Mails, 1638

LETHBRIDGE, Sir R., *Kensington, N.*
India—Works Department, 309

LEWIS, Sir C. E., *Antrim, N.*
Ireland—Special Commission, 1031

Licensing Acts (Appeals) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

Lichfield Cathedral Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 13, 181

Limited Owners of Land (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 3, 1760

Liquor Traffic Local Option (England) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Literature, Science, and Art
National Portrait Gallery, Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works *Feb* 20, 736

LLEWELLYN, Mr. E. H., *Somerset, N.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 791, 803, 805

Local Authorities (Scotland) (Acquisition of Lands) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175

Local Government (England and Wales)
Allotments at Banbury, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 17, 423
Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority, Questions, Captain Verney; Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board *Feb* 27, 1346; *Feb* 28, 1305

[*cont.*

Local Government (England and Wales)—cont.
County Councils
District Councils, Question, Mr. Tollemache; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board *Feb* 28, 1510
Elections, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 18, 566
Local Rates, Questions and Observations, Earl of Harrowby, Earl Stanhope, Lord President of the Council, The Marquess of Ripon, Lord Basing, Earl Fortescue, 1146, Lord Denman *Feb* 25, 1133
London County Council, Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 14, 306
Parliamentary Register, Question, Colonel Hughes; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 17, 416
Urban Main Roads, Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 13, 203
Harrow Weald, Sanitary State of, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 18, 565
Influenza Epidemic, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 13, 208
London Sewage, Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 28, 1495
Officers—Case of Mr. W. S. Foulsham, Question, Mr. F. Fulton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1643
Rates, Division of, Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 27, 1342
Vestries—Newington Vestry, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Mar* 3, 1639

Local Government Act—Commissioners
Question, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Mar* 3, 1623

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—President (*see* RITCHIE, Right Hon. C. T.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—Secretary to (*see* LONG, Mr. W. H.)

LOCKWOOD, Mr. F., *York*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1783, 1786, 1788, 1789
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 99

LONG, Mr. W. H. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Wilts, Devizes*
Labourers' Allotments—Twyford, 1161
Local Government Board
Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority, 1346, 1506
District Councils, 1510
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 783

LOWTHER, Right Hon. J., *Kent, Isle of Thanet*
Cruelty to Animals—Rabbit Coursing, 1323
Parliament—Business of the House—Supply, 1172

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W., *Cumberland, Penrith*
Charity Commissioners
Allotments Act, 1152
Schemes, 1769
Sutcombe, 752

LUBBOCK, Right Hon. Sir J., *London University*
Education—Elementary Schools, 1489
Parliament—Business of the House, 1521

Lunacy (Consolidation) Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 20, 725
Read 2ª and committed to Committee of the whole House *Mar* 3, 1620

Lunacy (Consolidation) Bill
Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 17, 443

MACARTNEY, Mr. W. E., *Antrim, S.*
Ireland—Dublin Telegrams, 733
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 628
Trees (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 538

MACDONALD, Mr. W. A., *Queen's Co., Ossory*
Blind, Deaf, and Dumb, 893
Ireland—Criminal Law, &c.—Connell, Dennis, 745
Dublin Barracks, Typhoid Fever in, 876
Scotland—Highlands and Islands, 1334

MACLEAN, Mr. J. M., *Oldham*
Parliament — Privilege — *Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 92

MACLURE, Mr. J. W., *Lancashire, S.E., Stretford*
Supply—West End Scandals, 1534

MAC NEILL, Mr. J. G. S., *Donegal, S.*
Argentine Republic, Emigration to, 430
Chili, Emigration to, 429
Ireland
Criminal Law, &c.—Slattery, Mr. J., 738
Dublin Barracks, 875, 1494
Evictions
Clongorey, 1028
Gweedore and Falcarragh, 1025
Fisheries of Donegal, 1492
Land Commission
Fair Rents, 191
Judicial Leases, 102
Olphert Estate, 420, 1621

[*cont.*

Mac Neill, Mr. J. G. S.—*cont.*
Prisons, Condition of, 429
Derry Gaol, 418
Special Commission Report, Res. 1868, 1873
Volumes of Evidence, 1777
Law and Justice and Police—Prosecution of a Surgeon at Warwick, 755
Parliament—Personal Explanation, 578
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 283, 358, 359
Portugal—English Clerks, 190
Supply—West End Scandals, 1558, 1564, 1594, 1597, 1599, 1607, 1608

McArthur, Mr. A., *Leicester*
Africa—Bechuanaland, 192
Zululand—Native Chiefs, 192, 1642
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1389

McArthur, Mr. W. A., *Cornwall, Mid., St. Austell*
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1379, 1380, 1381

McCartan, Mr. M., *Down, S.*
Ireland—Land Commission
Fair Rents, 315, 576
Judicial Rents, 186

McCarthy, Mr. J., *Londonderry*
Ireland—Londonderry Police, 1155

McDonald, Mr. P., *Sligo, N.*
Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1443
Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Hours of Sale Bill, 2R. 1310
Ireland—Prison Treatment of Mr. M'Hugh, 744

McKenna, Sir J. N., *Monaghan, S.*
Delagoa Bay Railway, 728

McLaren, Mr. W. S. B., *Cheshire, Crewe*
Parliament—Business of the House, 1649; Res. 1779

Madden, Right Hon. D. H. (Attorney General for Ireland), *Dublin University*
Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1443
Ireland
Criminal Law, &c., Act
Falcarragh—Alleged Intimidation, 1775
Kelly, Mr. J., 739
M'Enery, Mr. J., 888, 1165
O'Connor, Mr. H., 1316
Slattery, Mr. J., 1339, 1340, 1501
Education—Bailieborough National School, 1640
National Teachers, 1625
Land Commissioners
Cavan, 1775
Fair Rents, 576
Longford, 1629

Madden, Right Hon. D. H.—*cont.*
Landlord and Tenant
Clongorey Estate, 1343, 1502; Res. 1057, 1058, 1059, 1060
Olphert Estate, 1622
Law and Justice and Police
Edward III. Statute, Prosecution under, 1498
M'Keever—An Emergency Man, 1648, 1775
Irish National Teachers' Bill, 1778
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 332, 334, 335, 336, 338, 340, 341, 512

Maintenance of Destitute Parents Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 196

Major General Downes (Correspondence)
Address for Return *Feb* 27, 1351

Malta
Mission to the Pope, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 24, 1025

Marjoribanks, Right Hon. E., *Berwickshire*
Education—Science and Art Grants, 1640
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 694
Scotch Fishery Board, 1641
Supply—Westminster Hall, 1176
Weighing of Cattle Act, 1641

Markets and Fairs (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 165

Marum, Mr. E. P. M., *Kilkenny, N.*
Ireland
Drainage—General Code, 747
Kilkenny County Infirmary, 747
Kilkenny Lunatic Asylum, 1024
Law and Justice—Assize Case at Kilkenny, 878
Munster Coal Field, 876

Matthews, Right Hon. H. (Secretary of State for the Home Department) *Birmingham, E.*
Artisans' Dwellings, 1318
Church Revenues, 308
Coal Mines
Cruelty to Ponies, 195
Llanerch Accident, 42, 197
Longton—Explosion, 1015
County Council Elections, 566

[cont.
[cont.

MATTHEWS, Right Hon. H.—*cont.*
Cruelty to Animals Act—Rabbit Coursing, 1323
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill, 1R. 1444
Ireland—Special Commission, 313, 1156
Le Caron, 881
Pigott, 881
Report, Res. 1792, 1793, 1795, 1797, 1802
Law and Justice and Police
County Courts—Perjury in, 883, 1163
Criminal Law
Adulteration of Food, 734, 1336
Barnes, T.—Trivial Offences, 1162
Excise Prosecutions, 1348
Feely—Wrongful Conviction, 1355
Gay, C. J., Case of, 1159
Pauper Parents—Support of, 1007
Salford Gas Frauds, 749, 882, 1030
Edgeware Magistrates, 564
High Sheriff, Office of, 1622
Licensing Laws
Club House Licences, 302
Death of W. Jennings, 1774
Mayor's Court, London, 729
Metropolis
Pickets in Trade Disputes, 1505
Superannuation, 1151
Police
Evidence of Police, 425
London Strikes and the Police, 183, 308, 888
Prisons
Chatham—Daly, J., Treatment of, 571, 1331
Death of a Prisoner at Manchester, 310
Labour, 1012
Newgate, 569
Vaccination Acts—Prosecutions, 431
Metropolis
Police and Cabmen's Grievances, 203
Police, Increase of, 198
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 591, 1084, 1085
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 571
Supply—Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1231
Welsh Sunday Closing Commission, 183, 1778

MAXWELL, Sir H. E. (A Lord of the Treasury), *Wigton*
Parliament—Distribution of Papers, Res. 544, 675
Post Office—Orders, 1324
Telegraph Office, Ettingshall, 1350

MAYNE, Admiral R. C., *Pembroke and Haverfordwest*
Gibraltar—Dock Accommodation, 198
Pensions to Seamen, 1651

Members of Parliament (Charges and Allegations)—The Special Commission (see *Ireland*)

Merchandise Marks Act
Question, Mr. H. Vincent; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade *Feb* 17, 421
Select Committee on, ordered *Feb* 25, 1250

Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

Merchandise Marks Prosecution Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

Merchant Shipping (see *Board of Trade*)

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

Metropolis
Police
Cabmen's Grievances, Question, Mr. C. Bentinck; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 203
Increase, Question, Mr. James Rowlands; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 15, 198
Strikes, Questions, Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 183; Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 14 308

Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 296

Metropolis Rating Ground Values Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Metropolis Water Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168
Bill withdrawn *Feb* 21, 991

MIDLETON, Viscount
Parliament—Appointment of Standing Committees, Res. 553

Midwives Registration Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

MILLTOWN, Earl of
Parliament—Appointment of Standing Committees, Res. 559

Miners (Eight Hours) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's Co., Birr*
Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1207
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1396

MONKSWELL, Lord
Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill, 409

MONTAGU, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
Currency—Pre-Victorian Sovereigns, 1651
Tower Wharf, 1622
Transfer Stamps Duty, 1650

MONTEAGLE, Lord
Irish Land Titles, 857

MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne, *Denbighshire, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1081
Western Australia Bill, 894; 2R. 1368

MORGAN, Mr. O. V., *Battersea*
Australia (Western), Emigrants to, 1336
Food, Drugs, and Margarine Acts, 734, 1336
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 268
Trade Marks Protection Act — Colonial Legislation, 1336
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1377

MORGAN, Mr. P., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1420
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1076
Post Office—Telegraph Clerks, 440

MORLEY, Earl of
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1478
Parliament—Resignation of the Clerk Assistant, Res. 550

MORLEY, Right Hon. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Ireland
Boycotting Returns, 1169
Special Commission, 312, 1031
Parliament— Business of the House, 1032, 1518, 1519, 1520
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 668, 669, 673, 989, 990
Supply—West End Scandals, 1573

MORRISON Mr. W., *York, W.R., Skipton*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 645

MORTON, Mr. A. C., *Peterborough*
Currency—One Pound Notes, 1167
Metropolitan Assessment Returns, 1335
Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1208
Houses of Parliament, 1180, 1184, 1186
Land and Buildings—South Kensington, 1192, 1204

MOUNT, Mr. W. G., *Berks, Newbury*
Gibraltar Guard Room, 1012

Moveable Dwellings Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 26, 1315

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J., *Sheffield, Brightside*
Education
Fisherton National School, 1639
New Code, 1348
York Commercial School, 204
York School Board, 304, 730
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 959, 965
Parochial Charities of London, 314
Scotland, State-Aided Schools in, 570
Supply—Land and Buildings—South Kensington, 1194, 1203, 1205
Trade Marks Protection Act—Colonial Legislation, 1337

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

MURPHY, Mr. W. M., *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
Ireland
Bantry Harbour, 1016
Phœnix Park, Dublin—Band Stand, 1015
Tory Island, 1331
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1306
Postal Deliveries, 879

National Debt Redemption
Questions, Mr. H. H. Fowler, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 737

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168

NAVY
Administration—Royal Commission, Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 18, 577
Artillery Volunteers, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 27, 1337
Bantry Harbour, Questions, Mr. Murphy, Mr. E. Harrington; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 24, 1016
Cadets, Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 17, 432
Contracts—Asbestos Company, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 25, 1160
Docks
Galway, Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1339
Gibraltar, Questions, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth, Lord Brassey, Lord Elphinstone *Feb* 28, 1483

[*cont.*

NAVY—*Docks*—cont.
Strike, Questions, Mr. Norris, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 183
Explosion of Torpedoes, Question, Mr. E. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1509
Manœuvres, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 20, 759
Medical Department—Officers, Questions, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, The Secre ary for War *Mar* 3, 1624; Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Mar* 3, 1651
Pensions to Seamen, Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Mar* 3, 1651
Royal Yachts, Question Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 13, 190; Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 25, 1156
Sheerness, Influenza at, Statement by Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen *Feb* 20, 751; Question, Mr. E. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 24, 1016

Ships
"*Ajax*," Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty *Feb* 18, 566
"*Barracouta*," Questions, Mr. Leatham Bright; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 13, 193
"*Victoria*," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 13, 201; Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 27, 1347; Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary for War *Feb* 28, 1508

Victualling Yard, Deptford, Question, Mr. C. Darling; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 14, 305

Navy—Ships (United Kingdom)
Return ordered *Feb* 28, 1489

Naval Estimates
Arrangement of Votes, Motion *Feb* 28, 1612; Ordered to be referred to Committee on Public Accounts *Mar* 4, 1876; Question, Mr. Jennings; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 14, 301; Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty *Feb* 20, 736

Newfoundland
Fishery Rights, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 203

NEWNES, Mr. G., *Cambridge, E., Newmarket*
Excise Prosecutions, 1347

New Zealand
Post Office Orders, Question, Mr. L. Bright; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1324

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1442
Ireland
Connemara Railway, 1641
Light Railways, 574
Special Commission Report, Res. 1834
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 270
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1286
Supply—Bechuanaland, 1246
West End Scandals, 1577
Town Holdings, Res. 1251

Non-Pauper School Fees Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

NORRIS, Mr. E. S., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
Police and the Dock Strike, 183
Trade Disputes, Pickets in, 1504

NORTHBROOK, Earl of
Indian Councils Bill, 1R. 867

NORTON, Lord
Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill, 409

O'BRIEN, Mr. J. F. X., *Mayo, S.*
Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 289

O'BRIEN, Mr. P., *Monaghan, N.*
Ireland
Agrarian Crime, 740
Criminal Law, &c.—Slattery, Mr. J., 201
Land Acts—Anonymous Leaflets, 434
Special Commission Report, 758
Law and Justice—Boycotting—Billow and Fitzgerald, 202
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1611

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Cork Co., N.E.*
Daly, John—Prison Treatment, 1331
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 445, 447, 460, 461, 467, 468, 579

Occupying Tenants' Enfranchisement Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1443
Barracks (Consolidated) Fund Committee, 1441

[*cont.*

O'Connor, Mr. A.—*cont.*
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1412
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill, 1R. 1444
Ireland—Derry Income Tax Surveyor, 426
Mayor's Court, London, 729
Parliament—Business of the House, 1521, 1522, 1613
Supply
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1209
Superannuation and Retired Allowances, 1249, 1250, 1352
West End Scandals, 1555
Vaccination, Deaths from, 1331

O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1311
Ireland—Criminal Law, &c.
O'Mahoney, Mr. J. E., 1491
Special Commission Report, Res. 1711
Volumes of Evidence, 1776
Irish National Teachers Bill, 1778
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1259, 1265
Welsh Sunday Closing Commission, 1778

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 74
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 605, 607, 617, 621, 622, 626
Supply—West End Scandals, 1570, 1571, 1579, 1582, 1584, 1585, 1586, 1588, 1589 1590, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1611

Office Under the Crown (Vacation of Seats) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

O'Hanlon, Mr. T., *Cavan, E.*
Ireland—Bailieborough National School, 1640
Criminal Law, &c.—M'Enery, Mr. J., 1165
Land Commission—Cavan, 1775

O'Hea, Mr. P., *Donegal, W.*
Ireland—Cork Board of Guardians, 311
Criminal Law, &c.—Slattery, Mr. J., 199

O'Keeffe, Mr. F. A., *Limerick City*
Ireland—Criminal Law, &c.—M'Enery, Mr. J., 888
Drainage—Shannon, 875
Killaloe, Affray at, 1498

Orchards Rating Exemption Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 4, 1782

Outlawries Bill
c. Read 1° * *Feb* 11, 40

Outrage and Intimidation (Ireland)
Return ordered and presented *May* 4, 1876

Oxford University Commission Statute Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

Paget, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Army—Staff College, 1319
Horse and Wheel Tax, 1349

Parish Churches Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

Parish Councils Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

Parliament
LORDS—
Meeting of the Parliament *Feb* 11, 1
The Session of Parliament opened by Commission
Roll of the Lords—Delivered

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech delivered by The Lord Chancellor, 1
The Queen's Speech having been Reported by The Lord Chancellor, an Address to Her Majesty thereon moved by the Lord de Ramsey (the Motion being seconded by the Earl of Stradbroke) *Feb* 11, 6; Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*
Her Majesty's Answer to the Address Reported *Feb* 20, 725
Chairman of Committees, The Earl of Morley appointed, *nemine dissentiente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session *Feb* 11, 37
Committee for Privileges, Appointed *Feb* 11, 37
Sub-Committee for the Journals, Appointed *Feb* 11, 37
Appeal Committee, Appointed *Feb* 11, 37
Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Select Committee appointed *Feb* 17, 415; Report *Feb* 28, 1445
Resignation of the Clerk Assistant, Motion for Instruction to Committee on Retiring Allowance *Feb* 18, 545
Motion to approve of the appointment of the Honourable Edward Pierson Thesiger, C.B., as Clerk Assistant, in the room of Ralph Disraeli, Esquire, resigned, agreed to *Feb* 18, 545
Committee of Selection, Appointment of Chairman *Feb* 28, 1445
Standing Orders Committee, Appointed *Feb* 17, 416

West End Scandals
Personal Explanation, The Marquess of Salisbury *Mar* 3, 1618

PARLIAMENT—LORDS—*cont.*

Business of the House

Standing Committees, Res. agreed to *Feb* 18, 551; Appointment of Chairmen *Feb* 27, 1317

Committee of Selection for Standing Committees, Appointed *Feb* 18, 563; *Feb* 24, 993

New Peers

Feb 13—The Right Honourable Alexander William George Earl of Fife, K.T., created Marquess of Macduff, in the County of Banff, and Duke of Fife

Representative Peers for Ireland (Certificates)

Feb 24—Lord Kilmaine, *v.* Viscount Templeton, deceased

Earl Mount Cashell's Claim to Vote for Representative Peers for Ireland, Read *Feb* 13, 181

Representative Peers for Scotland (Certificates)

Feb 11—Viscount Strathallan and Lord Saltoun, *v.* Earl of Leven and Melville and Earl of Orkney

Minutes of Election *Feb* 13, 181

Sat First

Feb 11—The Lord Addington, after the death of his father

The Lord Seton, after the death of his father

The Lord Teynham, after the death of his father

Feb 24—The Lord Lamington, after the death of his father

Mar 3—The Lord Ampthill, after the death of his father

Took the Oath for the First Time

Feb 17—The Earl of Effingham

Feb 20—The Lord Saltoun

COMMONS—

Privileges, Committee appointed *Feb* 11, 40

Parliamentary Papers—Distribution, Res. *Feb* 17, 543; *Feb* 18, 675; Nomination of Select Committee *Feb* 25, 1250

Selection, Committee appointed *Feb* 14, 298

Standing Orders, Select Committee nominated *Feb* 14, 298

Public Accounts, Committee nominated *Feb* 13, 211

Ordered, that the Report of the Committee on Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply) of Session 1888 be referred to, *Feb* 25, 1170; Report *Feb* 26, 1315; *Feb* 27, 1351; Copy of Estimates ordered to be referred to, *Mar* 4, 1876

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons), Select Committee nominated *Feb* 27, 1351

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech

The Queen's Speech having been reported by Mr. SPEAKER; An humble Address thereon moved by Mr. ROYDEN (the Motion being seconded by Lord BROOKE) *Feb* 12, 123; Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 13, 211; Amendment proposed (Mr. Labouchere), 221; Amendment withdrawn; Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 14, 315; Amendment proposed (Mr. Parnell), 332; adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 17, 445; Debate adjourned. Personal Explanation by Mr. Mac Neill, 578. Resumed *Feb* 18, 584; Division on Mr. Parnell's Amendment; Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 19, 677; Amendment proposed (Dr. Clark); Amendment proposed to that Amendment (Mr. D. Crawford); Division on Mr. Crawford's Amendment; Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 20, 760; Division on Dr. Clark's Amendment; Amendment proposed (Mr. Stansfeld); Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 21, 895; Division on Mr. Stansfeld's Amendment. Further Amendment proposed (Mr. A. Acland); Division on Mr. Acland's Amendment; Debate adjourned. Resumed *Feb* 24, 1068. Amendment proposed (Mr. A. Thomas); Amendment withdrawn. Further Amendment proposed (Mr. C. Graham); Division on Mr. C. Graham's Amendment; Main question put, and agreed to *Feb* 24, 1127

Resolutions to give precedence to Order for resuming Debate on Address *Feb* 18, 584

HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS Reported *Feb* 28, 1488

Business of the House and Public Business

Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. J. C. Stephenson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 11, 42; Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Sexton; Answers The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 26, 1254; Questions, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Morley, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. A. O'Connor, Sir J. Lubbock, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury, The Speaker *Feb* 28, 1517; Questions, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Mar* 3, 1649; Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Mar* 4, 1769

Sittings and Adjournments of the House

Motion to give Precedence to Supply *Feb* 25, 1170; Division

Motion to give Precedence to the Debate on the Special Commission Report *Mar* 4, 1779; Division

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT – COMMONS—*Sittings and Adjournments of the House*—cont.

Ash Wednesday, Debate and Division *Feb* 18, 583

Motion for Adjournment of the House to discuss the Evictions at Clongorey, *Feb* 24, 1032

Committees

Standing Committees, Nomination of Chairmen *Mar* 4, 1779

Standing Committee—Territorial, Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1514

Public Petitions Committee, Nominated *Feb* 14, 402; Report *Feb* 20, 759

Select Committee — Sweating System, Ordered *Feb* 18, 545

Members

Lord G. Hamilton and Mr. Labouchere, Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty, The First Lord of the Treasury, The Speaker *Mar* 3, 1652

Suspension of Mr. Labouchere, *Feb* 28, 1571; Res. *Mar* 3, 1654

Miscellaneous

Journals, Order for Printing *Mar* 4, 1778

Press Gallery, Question, Mr. H. Vincent; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works *Mar* 3, 1621

Questions in the House, Question, Colonel Hughes; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 17, 443

Votes and Proceedings, Order of Printing *Feb* 11, 39

Privilege

"*Times*" *and Mr. Parnell*, Motion, Division *Feb* 11, 43

Rules and Order of Debate
(See The Speaker)

New Writs

During Recess: Dundee Burgh, *v.* Joseph Firth Bottomley Firth, esquire, deceased; for Lincoln County (North Kesteven or Sleaford Division), *v.* Right Honble Henry Chaplin, President of the Board of Agriculture for Great Britain; for Peterborough, *v.* Honble William John Wentworth Fitz-William, deceased; for Counties of Elgin and Nairn, *v.* Charles Henry Anderson, esquire, deceased; for Buckingham County (Northern or Buckingham Division), *v.* Houble Egerton Hubbard (now Lord Addington); for Brighton, *v.* Sir William Tinda[1]

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs During Recess*—cont.

Robertson, knight, deceased; for Lanark County (Partick Division), *v.* Alexander Craig Sellar, esquire, deceased

Feb 11—*For* Mid-Glamorganshire, *v.* Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot, esquire, deceased

Feb 14—*For* West Waterford, *v.* Jasper Douglas Pyne, esquire, deceased

Feb 24—*For* Lincolnshire (South Kesteven or Stamford Division), *v.* John Compton Lawrance, esquire, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice; for St. Pancras (North Division), *v.* The Honourable Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Cochrane-Baillie, now Lord Lamington, called up to the House of Peers

Mar 4—*For* Stoke-upon-Trent, *v.* William Leatham Bright, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

New Members Sworn

Feb 11—Captain Edmund Hope Verney, Buckingham County (Northern or Buckingham Division); John Leng, esquire, Dundee Burgh; The Right Honble Henry Chaplin, Lincoln Co. (North Kesteven or Sleaford Division); John Seymour Keay, esquire, Counties of Elgin and Nairn; Alpheus Cleophas Morton, esquire, Peterborough; Gerald Walter Erskine Loder, esquire, Brighton

Feb 14—James Parker Smith, esquire, for Lanarkshire (Partick Division)

Feb 24—Samuel Thomas Evans, esquire, County of Glamorgan (Mid-Division)

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

House of Commons—Police
Order to Commissioners *Feb* 11, 39

Parliamentary Elections Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

Parliamentary Elections (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

Parliamentary Voters (Qualifying Period) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

Parliamentary Voters Registration Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
Ireland
Special Commission, Cost of, 313; Report, 444
Parliament
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 113.
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 315, 333, 340, 341

Partnership Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 20, 725
Read 2ª and committed to Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law *Feb* 27, 1317

Passenger Trains (Correspondence)
Return ordered and presented *Mar* 3, 1760

PAULTON, Mr. J. M., *Durham, Bishop Auckland*
Ireland—Fishery Pier in Galway Bay, 750

Pauper Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Officers' Superannuation Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 403

PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, Barnard Castle*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 492

PEASE, Mr. A. E., *York*
Ireland—Criminal Law, &c.—Connell, Dennis, 745

Pensions
Perpetual Pensions, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 17, 422

PERSIA
Persian Kurds, Question, Mr. F. Stevenson; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 24, 1023

Personal Property Exemption Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

PHILIPPS, Mr. J. W., *Lanark, Mid*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1087, 1113, 1114
Railways—Hours of Servants, 194
Supply—West End Scandals, 1602, 1603

PICKARD, Mr. B., *York, W.R., Normanton*
Llanerch Colliery Explosion, 197

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
Law and Justice and Police
Gay, C. J., Case of, 1158
Mayor's Court, London, 729
Newgate Prison, 568
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 841
Scotland—Arran Murderer, 442

PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester*
Africa
Cape Coast—Riots at Moree, 1492
Gold Coast—Correspondence, 195
Flogging Natives, 1493
Niger Territories, 196
Sierra Leone—Mr. C. Crawford, 197
Church Revenues, 308
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1821
Parliament—Business of the House, 1172
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1221, 1222
Land and Buildings, South Kensington, 1197, 1201
West End Scandals, 1594, 1596, 1607, 1609

Piers and Harbours (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 170

Places of Worship (Sites) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

Places of Worship (Acquisition of Sites) (Wales) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Leeds, S.*
Supply—Land and Buildings, South Kensington, 1198, 1200

PLOWDEN, Sir W. C., *Wolverhampton, W.*
India—Local Councils, 567
Post Office—Mingshall New Village, 882
Telegraph Office—Ettingshall, 1350

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R. (First Commissioner of Works, &c.), *Dublin University*
National Portrait Gallery, 736
Parliament—Press Gallery, 1621
Supply—Buildings—Houses of Parliament, 1181, 1183
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1205, 1209
Report, 1312

Poisoned Flesh Prohibition Act (1864) Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175

Police (*see* titles *Law and Justice and Police, and Metropolis*)

Police (Metropolis) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

Pollen Fisheries (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)
Destitute Foreigners, Question, Sir J. Colomb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 24, 1001
Immigration of Foreign Paupers, Questions, Mr. H. Vincent, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 21, 889
Merthyr Tydvil Workhouse, Question, Mr. D. Thomas; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 24, 1008
Pauper Parents, Support of, Questions, Mr. Winterbotham; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 24, 1007

Poor Law Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168
Read 2° and committed for this day six months *Feb* 26, 1254

Poor Law (Ireland) Rating Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 544

Poor Law (Metropolis) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

PORTUGAL
English Clerks, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 13, 190
Portuguese in East Africa, Questions, Mr. Cremer; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 11, 40; *Feb* 12, 121; Questions, Sir G. Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 14, 305

Post Card Adhesive Stamp Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

POST OFFICE
America — Mails, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1014
Australian Colonies, Letters to, Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 28, 1511
Cyprus—Postal Communications, Questions, Mr. S. Leighton; Answers, The Postmaster General, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 4, 1766

Ireland
Cork Post Office, Question, Mr. Lane; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 28, 1503; *Telegraph Office*, Question, Mr. Lane; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 25, 1160

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE —*Ireland*—cont.
Dublin Telegrams, Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 20, 731
Knock, Postal Facilities in, Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The Postmaster General *Mar* 3, 1629
Telegraphic Service, Questions, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1010

Midlands—Non-Delivery of Irish Letters on Sundays, Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 21, 879

Miscellaneous
Abuse of Postal Service, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 17, 433
Newspaper Supplements, Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 14, 303
Working Expenses, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Postmaster General *Mar* 4, 1774

Money Orders
New Zealand—Post Office Orders, Question, Mr. L. Bright; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1324

Officials
Auxiliary Postmen, Questions, Mr. C. Graham; Answers, The Postmaster General *Feb* 20, 743; *Feb* 28, 1511
Employés, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 28, 1511
Letter Carriers, Christmas Presents to, Question, Mr. C. Graham; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 21, 870
Rural Postmen — Distribution of Pamphlets, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 25, 1153

Postage Cards, Halfpenny, Question, Mr. H. Heaton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 24, 1023

Post Offices and Postmasters
Bradford Post Office, Question, Mr. B. Reed; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 25, 1150
Mingshall New Village Post Office, Question, Sir W. Plowden; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 21, 882

Scotland
Islands—Postal Communication, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1013
Mails to New York, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The Postmaster General *Mar* 3, 1638

Telegraphs
Cardiff—Telegraph Clerks, Question, Sir E. Reed; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1514
Clerks, Question, Mr. P. Morgan; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 17, 440

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE—*Telegraphs*—cont.
Engineering Inspectors, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury *Feb* 20, 757
Ettingshall, Telegraph Office at, Question, Sir W. Plowden; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1350
Sunday Business, Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 18, 569

Post Office Telegraphs
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 18, 581

POWELL, Mr. F. S., *Wigan*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 945

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 379

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Civil Service, 1643
Ridley Commission, 1770

Presentation to Benefices Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 13, 181

PRIME MINISTER (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

Prisoners (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

Private Bill Commission Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 4, 1782

Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 & 1884
Address for Returns *Feb* 28, 1612

Public Health Acts Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 178

Public Libraries Act Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1251

Public Trustee Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 18, 545
Read 2ª and committed to Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c. *Feb* 24, 994

Public Trustee Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

Public Trustee Bill
Question, Mr. Warmington; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 20, 755
Appointment of Select Committee, Questions, Mr. H. Vincent, Mr. Warmington; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 726

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts
Question, Mr. J. Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 20, 728

Quarries Regulation Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 180

QUILTER, Mr. W. C., *Suffolk, Sudbury*
Prisons, 1012, 1627

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C. (Postmaster General), *Cambridge University*
Post Office
American Mails, 1014
Australian Colonies, Letters to, 1511
Bradford—Postal Arrangements, 1150
Cyprus—Postal Communications, 1767
Ireland
Cork Post Office, 1505
Telegraph Office, 1166
Deliveries of Irish Letters, 879
Dublin Telegrams, 732
Knock—Postal Facilities, 1629
Telegraph Service, 1010
Mingshall New Village Post Office, 883
Newspaper Supplements, 304
Officials
Auxiliary Postmen, 743, 1511
Employés, 1512
Letter Carriers, Christmas Presents to, 870
Rural Postmen—Distribution of Pamphlets, 1153
Postal Service, Abuse of, 433
Scotland
Mails to New York, 1639
Postal Communication — Islands, 1013
Telegraphs
Clerks, 440
Sunday Business, 569
Working Expenses, 1774

Railway Shareholders (Licensing Sessions) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175

Railway, &c., Bills
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 14, 404

Railways (*see* title *Board of Trade*)

RAMSEY, Lord de
Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 6

RASCH, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
Local Government—London Sewage, 1495

RATHBONE, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire, Arfon*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 245, 827
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1384

Rating of Machinery Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 166

REED, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
Russia—Carriage of Petroleum, 1495
Wales—Cardiff Telegraph Clerks, 1514

REED, Mr. H. B., *Bradford, E.*
Postal Arrangements in Bradford, 1150

Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill
Questions, Lord Norton, Lord Monkswell; Answers, The Secretary for India *Feb* 17, 409; Question, Captain Verney; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 18, 571

Registration Act Amendment Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 13, 182

Registration of Clubs Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 295

Registration of Voters (Borough of Belfast) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 18, 675

REID, Mr. R. T., *Dumfries, &c.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1702, 1735, 1748
Parliament — Privilege —*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 61
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 762

Religious Disabilities Removal Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 165

RENDEL, Mr. Stuart, *Montgomeryshire*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 943

Representation of the People Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168

Retired Officers' Civil Employment (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

RIPON, Marquess of
County Councils and Local Rates, 1143
Indian Councils Bill, 1R. 865

RITCHIE, Right Hon. C. T. (President of the Local Government Board), *Tower Hamlets, St. George's*
Allotments at Banbury, 424
Local Government Board
County Councils
Parliamentary Register, 417
Urban Main Roads, 204
Harrow Weald, Sanitary Condition of, 565
Influenza Epidemic, 208
London Sewage, 1495
Newington Vestry, 1639
Rates—Division, 1342

RITCHIE, Right Hon. C. T.—*cont.*
Local Government Act Commissioners, 1624
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 901, 903, 905, 909
Poor Law—Destitute Foreigners, 1001
Merthyr Tydvil Workhouse, 1008
Vaccination Acts, Deaths from, 1330

ROBERTS, Mr. J. B., *Carnarvonshire, Eifion*
County Courts Consolidation Bill, 1512
Law and Justice
County Courts, Perjury in, 883, 1163
Van and Wheel Tax, 1162

ROBERTSON, Mr. E., *Dundee*
Parliament—Members—Lord G. Hamilton and Mr. Labouchere, 1652
Supply—West End Scandals, 1571, 1572, 1574

ROBERTSON, Right Hon. J. P. B. (Lord Advocate), *Bute*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 705, 713
Presumption of Life Limitation (Scotland) Act, 1324
Scotland
Burgh Police and Public Health Bills, 206
County Council Elections, 422
Crofters—Commission, 1652
Emigrants, 753, 1327
Education
Code, 308
Glasgow School Board, 742
Lenzie Academy, 1004
School Boards, 1345
Schools—Forfar, 1630
State-Aided, 570, 885
Fishery Board, 1641
Grocers' Licences, 440
Highlands and Islands, 1333
Judicial Factors, 1020
Law and Justice and Police
Arran Murderer, 442

ROLLIT, Sir A. K., *Islington, S.*
Army—Barracks—Supply of Coal, 1163

ROSCOE, Sir H. E., *Manchester, S.*
Supply—Lands and Buildings, South Kensington, 1190
Technical Instruction Act, 748

ROWLANDS, Mr. J., *Finsbury, E.*
Army—Nordenfelt Gun Company, 1020
War Office Contracts, 742
Civil Service Writers, 1644
Metropolitan Police Force, 198
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 844, 895
Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1183, 1186
Land and Buildings, South Kensington, 1195
West End Scandals, 1605, 1606
Trade Disputes, Pickets in, 1505

[*cont.*

ROWNTREE, Mr. J., *Scarborough*
Sea Fishery Statistics, 1028

ROYDEN, Mr. T. B., *Liverpool, W., Toxteth*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 123

RUSSELL, Sir C., *Hackney, S.*
Ireland
Evictions at Clongorey, Res. 1053, 1055, 1056, 1060
Special Commission Report, Res. 1729
Supply—West End Scandals, 1560

RUSSELL, Mr. T. W., *Tyrone, S.*
Dublin Hospitals Bill, 1350
Ireland
Model Schools, 731
Post Office—Dublin Telegrams, 731
Special Commission—Daly, John, 1331
Report, Res. 1811
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 460, 461, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 621
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1275, 1276, 1280

RUSSIA
Carriage of Petroleum, Question, Sir E. Reed; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 28, 1495

St. Giles (Edinburgh Restoration) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

SALISBURY, Marquess of (Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
Ireland—Special Commission, 1765
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 21, 29, 35
West End Scandals, Personal Explanation, 1618

SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
Artisans' Dwellings, 1318
Lunacy Laws, 443
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 89
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 267

SAMUELSON, Sir B., *Oxfordshire, Banbury*
Supply—Land and Buildings, South Kensington, 1187

Sanitation of Houses Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 294

SAUNDERSON, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 386, 614

Savings Banks
Cardiff, Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 13, 185
Chelsea—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 3, 1646
Trustee, Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 25, 1159

Savings Banks
Return ordered *Feb* 18, 581

School Boards Elections (Scotland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

School Board for London Elections Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 176

School Board for London Superannuations Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177
2R. After Debate adjourned *Feb* 17, 538

SCOTLAND, Secretary for (*see* LOTHIAN, Marquess of)

SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR (*see* DARLING, Mr. M. T. Stormonth)

LORD ADVOCATE (*see* ROBERTSON, Right Hon. J. P. B.)

SCOTLAND
Burgh Police and Public Health Bills, Questions, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 13, 206
County Council Elections, Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 17, 422

Crofters
Colonists, Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 20, 753
Commission—Highlands and Islands, Questions, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh, Dr. Macdonald; Answers, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 27, 1333; Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Mar* 3, 1652
Emigrants, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 27, 1327

Death Duties, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 25, 1157

[*cont.*

SCOTLAND—*cont.*
Education
Education Code, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 14, 308; Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 17, 443
Fee-Paying Schools, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 20, 752
Fee-Paying (*Scotland Schools*), Return ordered *Mar* 3, 1654
Forfar School Board, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Mar* 3, 1630
Glasgow School Board, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer The Lord Advocate *Feb* 20, 742
Grants to Schools, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1517
Lenzie Academy, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 24, 1003
Lenzie School Board, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 27, 1344
State-aided Schools, Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 18, 570; Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 21, 884

Fishery Board, Question, Mr. Marjoribanks; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Mar* 3, 1641
Grocers' Licences, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 17, 440
Judicial Factors, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 24, 1020
Law and Justice and Police—Arran Murderer, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer The Lord Advocate *Feb* 17, 442

Post Office
Mails, Question, Mr. Leng; Answer, The Postmaster General *Mar* 3, 1638
Postal Communication—Islands, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Postmaster General *Feb* 24, 1013

Presumption of Life Limitation Act, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Feb* 27, 1324
Succession Duty, Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 28, 1506

Sea Fisheries of the United Kingdom
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 11, 120

SEALE-HAYNE, Mr. C., *Devon, Ashburton*
Local Government — Division of Rates, 1342
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 821

SELBORNE, Earl of
Parliament—Resignation of the Clerk Assistant, Res. 548

Select Vestries
l. Bill *pro formâ*; read 1ª * *Feb* 11, 5

Servitudes Redemption (Scotland) Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 13, 182

SETON-KARR, Mr. H., *St. Helen's*
Africa—Delagoa Bay Railway, 1769
Colonisation Committee, 1773
Scotland—Crofter Colonists, 753
Western Australia Constitution Bill, 2R. 1374

SEXTON, Right Hon. T. (Lord Mayor of Dublin), *Belfast, W.*
Army and Navy Estimates—Arrangement of Votes, Res. 1612
Dublin Hospital Bill, 749, 1350
Ireland
Agrarian Crimes, 740
Criminal Law, &c.
Connell, Dennis, 746
Newbridge—Arrests, 880
O'Connor, Henry, 1316
O'Mahony, Mr. J. E., 1491
Slattery, Mr. J., 1304
Dublin Telegrams, 733
Government Advertisements, 1329
Land Acts—Anonymous Leaflets, 434
Land Purchase Bill, 1252
Landlord and Tenant
Clongorey Evictions, Res. 1032, 1046, 1047, 1048, 1049, 1050, 1051, 1052, 1058, 1059; Arrests, 1026, 1253, 1343 1501, 1614
Special Commission
Daly, Mr. J., 572, 1331
Report, Res. 1718, 1719, 1720, 1732, 1734, 1793, 1794, 1797, 1802
Volumes of Evidence, 1777
National Debt Redemption, 738
Parliament—Business of the House, 1254; Res. 1779
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 991
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1276, 1280, 1289, 1291, 1309
Supply—West End Scandals, 1611

SHEEHAN, Mr. J. D., *Kerry, E.*
Irish Butter Trade, 885, 1030

SHEEHY, Mr. D., *Galway, S.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 397

Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Extracts Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 168

Ships (*United Kingdom*)
Return ordered *Feb* 28, 1489

Shops (Weekly Half Holiday) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 296

SIDMOUTH, Viscount
Gibraltar Dock, 1483, 1488
Hares Preservation Bill, 2R. 410

Slavery Law Amendment Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 544

Small Holdings Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

Small Holdings Committee
Questions, Mr. J. Collings, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1516

SMITH, Right Hon. W. H. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Strand, Westminster*
Blind, Deaf, and Dumb, 893
Cardiff Telegraph Clerks, 1514
Church of England—Incompetent Clergymen, 1513
Civil Service—Examinations, Class I. 1516
Colonisation Committee, 1773
Friendly Societies, 894
India
Crawford Case, 189
National Congress, 437
Ireland
Land Purchase Act—Advances, 756
Special Commission, 992
Cost of, 313
Report, 444, 756, 891; Res. 1656
Volumes of Evidence, 1776
Irish National Teachers Bill, 1778
Labour, Trade, and Commerce
Arbitrations in Trade Disputes, 1649
Berlin Labour Conference, 1773
Eight Hours Labour, 1168
Lunacy Laws, 443
Naval and Military Administration, 577
Parliament
Business of the House, 42, 1032, 1173, 1517, 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, 1523, 1649, 1781
Members—Lord G. Hamilton and Mr. Labouchere, 1653
Mr. Labouchere's Suspension, Res. 1656
Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell; Res. 118
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 150, 151, 165, 761, 766, 1125
Questions in the House, 443
Sittings and Adjournments of the House—Ash Wednesday, Res. 583
Territorial Committee, 1515
Public Trustee Bill, 756
Scotland
Education Code, 444
Grants, 1517
Small Holdings Committee, 1516
Statute Law, Consolidation of, 756
Superannuation Bill, 1169
Supply
Lands and Buildings, South Kensington, 1201
South Africa, 1247, 1248, 1249

[*cont.*

SMITH, Right Hon. W. H.—*cont.*
West End Scandals, 1571, 1574, 1578, 1593, 1606
Re-arrangement of Votes (*see* above, Parliament—Business of the House)
Supreme Court of Judicature, 1348
Tithes Bill, 1351
Town Holdings, Res. 1251
Transvaal, 1168
Western Australia (Constitution) Bill, 758, 894; 2R. 1397

SMITH, Mr. S., *Flintshire*
Australian Colonies — Natives — Flogging, 432
Bi-metallism, 1325
India
Bombay Factory Labour, 1320
Coolies in Assam Tea Gardens, 1632
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 159, 1115
Western Australia (Constitution) Bill, 2R. 1395

SMITH-BARRY, Mr. A. H., *Hants, S.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 531, 617, 626

Soldiers' and Sailors' Disabilities Removal Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 167

Soldiers' and Sailors' Disabilities Removal (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

SOLICITOR GENERAL (*see* CLARKE, Sir E.)

SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND (*see* DARLING, Mr. M. T. Stormonth)

Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

SPEAKER, The (Right Hon. ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL), *Warwick and Leamington*
Committees
Ruling of the Chairman by which a Motion was carried cannot be overruled by the Speaker *Feb* 12, 1571
Miscellaneous
Feb 11, 119; *Feb* 13, 183, 185; *Feb* 17, 468; *Feb* 18, 573, 598; *Feb* 19, 688, 690, 723; *Feb* 20, 755, 762; *Mar* 3, 1707; *Mar* 4, 1843, 1845
Privilege
Speeches made by Members outside the House cannot be judged by the Speaker as a breach of Privilege *Mar* 3, 1653
Rules and Order of Debate
Debate on the Address—A preliminary discussion on a matter upon which

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, The—*cont.*
there is an Amendment on the Paper is out of order in the general discussion on the Address *Feb* 13, 221
Whether an Amendment qualifying an Amendment to an Amendment can be brought forward will depend on the decision of the House on the Question, whether the words proposed to be left out be retained. Should that proposal be negatived and the second Amendment be inserted, then it would be competent to move the Amendment *Feb* 19, 723
An Amendment cannot be moved when it raises a discussion on a Bill of which notice has been given by the Government *Feb* 20, 762
A Member cannot speak but once on a Main Question without the indulgence of the House *Feb* 20, 766
It is incompetent to dwell on a matter which is the subject of a Bill in Parliament; it can be called attention to in general terms *Feb* 24, 1075
Supply
Arrangement of Votes — Motion for Adjournment of the House to discuss the new Arrangement of Votes should be made on the Committee of Supply *Feb* 28, 1522, 1523
If the Vote on Account is passed it is for the House to decide whether it will preclude any further question being raised on the re-arrangement *Feb* 28, 1521
If the existing power of the Public Accounts Committee be exceeded in considering the new Form of Votes, then an Instruction will be required to enable the Committee to consider the special question *Feb* 28, 1522

SMACK, Mr. J., *Kerry, N.*
Irish National Teachers Bill, 1778

STANHOPE, Earl
County Councils and Local Rates, 1141

STANHOPE, Right Hon. E. (Secretary of State for War), *Lincolnshire, Horncastle*
Army
Africa—Troops in Natal and Zululand, 426
Auxiliary Forces—Bisley Common, 1510
Volunteers—Ammunition, 727; Disqualification of, as Voters, 417
Barracks—Dublin, 876, 1494
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1422, 1423, 1440, 1442, 1443
Contracts—War Office Contracts, 743
Education—Staff College, 1319
Gibraltar—Guard Room, 1012
Medical Officers, 1624

STANHOPE, Right Hon. E.—*cont.*
Miscellaneous
Soldiers' Discharge, 1623
Soldiers in Uniform at Theatres, 1350
Typhoid in Curragh Camp, 1019
Ordnance Department
Explosion of Torpedoes, 1509
New Magazine Rifles, 1489
Nordenfelt Gun Company, 1021
Store—Tower Wharf, 1622
"*Victoria*"—110-ton Guns, 1508
Regiments
Waterford Artillery, 1003, 1333
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 984

STANHOPE, Hon. P. J., *Wednesbury*
Ceylon—Officers of the Crown, 1636

STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, Lord
Hares Preservation Bill, 2R. 410; Committee, 725

STANSFELD, Right Hon. J., *Halifax*
Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 473, 767, 777, 805, 905

Statute Law Revision Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 20, 725
Read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the whole House *Mar* 3, 1619

Statute Law Revision Bill
Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Attorney General *Feb* 14, 311

Steam Boilers Bill
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 19, 724

Steam Engines Bill
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 12, 179

STEPHENS, Mr. H. C., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 813

STEVENSON, Mr. F. S., *Suffolk, Eye*
Education — National Schools — Political Speeches, 1151
Friendly Societies, 894
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 235, 799, 800
Persian Kurds, 1023
Turkey—Moussa Bey, 440

STEVENSON, Mr. J. C., *South Shields*
Parliament—Business of the House, 42

STEWART, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Spalding*
Irish Light Railways, 574

[*cont.*

STEWART, Mr. M. J., *Kirkcudbright*
India—Civil Service—Age of Candidates, 435
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 691

STRADBROKE, Earl of
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 14

Strikes Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 3, 1760

STUART, Mr. J., *Shoreditch, Hoxton*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 835

SULLIVAN, Mr. D., *Westmeath, S.*
Ireland—Land Purchase Commission Cases, 734
National School Teachers, 871, 1624

SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Dublin, College Green*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 634

SUMMERS, Mr. W., *Huddersfield*
Turkish Courts at Aleppo, 1332, 1507

Superannuations (Officers of County Councils) Bill
. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14, 299

Superannuation Bill
Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 25, 1169

SUPPLY
Estimates presented during the present Session ordered to be referred to the Committee of Supply (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 24, 1127
(For Army Estimates and Navy Estimates) *see* those titles

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Re-arrangement of Votes, Referred to Committee of Public Accounts *Feb* 27, 1444
Copy ordered and presented *Feb* 28, 1488
Questions, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. Buchanan, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. A. O'Connor, Sir J. Lubbock, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury, The Speaker *Feb* 28, 1517

CIVIL SERVICE (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES 1889-90

Class I.
Buildings of the Houses of Parliament
Public Buildings (Great Britain)
Land and Buildings, South Kensington
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings

SUPPLY—*cont.*

Class II.
Foreign Office
Board of Agriculture

Class III.
County Courts
Revising Barristers (England)
Industrial Schools, Great Britain
Register House, Edinburgh
Crofters' Commission

Class IV.
Universities, &c., Scotland

Class V.
Diplomatic Services
Consular Services
Colonies, Grants in Aid
South Africa

Class VI.
Committee *Feb* 25, 1177; Report *Feb* 26, 1312
Superannuation and Retired Allowances, Committee *Feb* 25, 1249; *Feb* 27, 1352; Report *Feb* 28, 1611
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland, Committee *Feb* 27, 1352; Report *Feb* 28, 1611

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, VOTE ON ACCOUNT
£3,725,103—Committee *Feb* 28, 1523

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland)
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 11, 119

Sweating System
l. Re-appointment of Committee *Feb* 14, 297
Ordered that Evidence be referred to Select Committee *Feb* 18, 545

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 956

TANNER, Dr. C. K., *Cork Co., Mid*
Army—Waterford Artillery, 1002, 1333
Companies (Memorandum of Association) Bill, 2R. 848
Foreign Goods (Mark of Origin) Bill, 2R. 401
Ireland
Cork Union, 1004, 1149
Board of Guardians, 310
Criminal Law, &c.—Slattery, Mr. J., 200
Disturbance at Coulagow Church, 435
Law and Justice and Police
Cork Justices, 427
Mayor of Cork, 311, 441
Tipperary—Conduct of Police, 208
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 335, 336
Sittings and Adjournments—Ash Wednesday, Res. 584
School Board for London (Superannuation) Bill, 2R. 538
Supply—West End Scandals, 1582, 1583, 1608

[*cont.*

Technical Education Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175

Technical Instruction Act, 1889
Questions, Sir H. Roscoe, Mr. Channing; Answers, The Vice President of the Council *Feb* 20, 748

TEMPLE, Sir R., *Worcester, Evesham*
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1781
Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 931, 933
School Board for London (Superannuations) Bill, 2R. 538, 539, 540

Tenancies Rating Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175

Tenure of Land (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 165

TEYNHAM, Lord
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1470
Trust Companies Bill, 2R. 998

Theatres (London) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 296
Bill withdrawn *Mar* 4, 1876

Theatres (London) (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20, 848

THOMAS, Mr. A., *Glamorgan, E.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1069, 1075, 1085

THOMAS, Mr. D. A., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Incompetent Clergymen, 1513
Poor Law—Merthyr Tydvil Workhouse, 1008
Welsh Emigrants, 1503

Tithe Rent-Charge (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 172

Tithe Rent-Charge (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 296

Tithe Rent-Charge Recovery and Redemption Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 25, 1252

Tithes Bill
Question, Viscount Cranborne; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 27, 1351

TOLLEMACHE, Mr. H. J., *Cheshire, Eddisbury*
District Councils, 1510

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1441
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1411
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 965
Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1332

Town Holdings
Re-appointment of Committee; Motion *Feb* 25, 1251

Trade and Commerce — (see *Labour, Trade, and Commerce*)

Trade and Navigation
Copy ordered and presented *Feb* 12, 122

Trading (Registration) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 179

TREASURY—First Lord (*see* SMITH, Right Hon. W. H.)

TREASURY—Financial Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

TREASURY—Patronage Secretary to (*see* AKERS-DOUGLAS, Mr. A.)

Trees (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 175
Read 2° *Feb* 17, 538
Considered in Committee *Feb* 24, 1128

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. Sir G. O., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
Ireland—Landlord and Tenant—Caretakers, 750, 1017
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 341, 465, 466
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1291, 1294

Tribunals of Commerce Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 177

Trust Companies Bill
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 18, 551
Read 2ª and committed to Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c. *Feb* 24, 998

Trustee Savings Banks Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 24, 1128

Trustee Savings Banks
Return ordered and presented *Feb* 18, 577

TUITE, Mr. J., *Westmeath, N.*
Civil Service—Writers' Half-Holiday, 1165
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1272

TURKEY
Aleppo, Turkish Courts at, Questions, Mr. Summers; Answers, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 27, 1332; *Feb* 28, 1507
Crete, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 27, 1341
Moussa Bey, Question, Mr. F. Stevenson; Answer The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs *Feb* 17, 440

UNITED STATES (*see* America)

University Education (Ireland) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 169

Urban Sanitary Authorities (Further Powers) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 19, 724

Vaccination Acts
Deaths from, Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. A. O'Connor; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board *Feb* 27, 1329
Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Home Secretary *Feb* 17, 431

VERNEY, Captain E. H., *Bucks, N.*
Labourers' Allotments—Twyford, 1160
Local Government—Buckingham Rural Sanitary Authority, 1346, 1505
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 789, 791
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1270
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 571

VINCENT, Mr. C. E. H., *Sheffield, Central*
Army—Volunteers, Ammunition for, 727
Immigration of Foreign Paupers, 889
Merchandise Marks Act, 421
Merchant Shipping—Boats, 746
Parliament—Press Gallery, 1621
Police Superannuation, 1151
Public Trustees Bill, 726

Volunteer Fire Brigades (Exemption from Juries) Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 174

Voters' Successive Occupation Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17, 544

WADDY, Mr. S. D., *Lincolnshire, Brigg*
Parliament—Privilege—*Times* and Mr. Parnell, Res. 90

WALES
Cardiff Telegraph Clerks, Question, Sir E. Reed; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 28, 1514

WALES—*cont.*
Sunday Closing Commission, Questions, Mr. Kenyon; Answers, The Home Secretary *Feb* 13, 182; Questions, Sir W. Lawson, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answers, The Home Secretary *Mar* 4, 1778

WALLACE, Mr. R., *Edinburgh, E.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, 892
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 723, 760

WAR DEPARTMENT (*see* Army)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Secretary of State (*see* STANHOPE, Right Hon. E.)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Under Secretary of State (*see* HARRIS, Lord)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Financial Secretary (*see* BRODRICK, Hon. W. St. J.)

WARING, Colonel T., *Down, N.*
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 2R. 1262, 1263, 1265, 1294, 1298
Supply—Board of Agriculture, 1214

WARMINGTON, Mr. C. M., *Monmouth, N.*
Companies (Winding-up) Bill, 2R. 1407, 1419
Public Trustees Bill, 726, 755

WATT, Mr. H., *Glasgow, Camlachie*
British Guiana, 570
Navy Estimates, 736

WEBSTER, Sir R. E. (Attorney General), *Isle of Wight*
Companies (Winding-up) Bill 2R. 1416, 1417, 1418, 1419
County Court Consolidation Bill, 1512
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1786, 1788, 1789, 1865
Law and Justice and Police
County Court Registration, 1031
Misappropriation of Trust Money, 1513
Oaths Act—Administration in Courts, 1771
Warwick, Prosecution of a Surgeon at, 755
Yorkshire Provident Association, 210
Statute Law Revision Bill, 312
Supply—West End Scandals, 1538, 1540, 1542, 1543, 1549, 1550, 1552, 1553, 1555, 1556, 1557, 1558, 1559, 1560, 1563, 1564, 1566, 1567, 1569, 1576, 1586, 1588, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1592, 1597

WEBSTER, Mr. R. G., *St. Pancras, E.*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 748
Postage of Newspaper Supplements, 303
Yangtze, Navigation of, 423

[*cont.*

Weekly Wages Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 12, 171

WEMYSS, Earl of
Examinations for Official Appointments, Res. 1445, 1482, 1483

WEST INDIES
British Guiana, Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 18, 570

Western Australia Constitution Bill
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13, 211
Read 2° and committed to Select Committee *Feb* 27, 1353

Western Australia Constitution Bill
Question, Sir G. Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 14, 305; Questions, Mr. A. S. Hill, Sir G. Campbell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury *Feb* 20, 758; Questions, Mr. G. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury, The Under Secretary for the Colonies *Feb* 21, 894

WHITMORE, Mr. C. A., *Chelsea*
National Portrait Gallery, 736
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 897

WILSON, Mr. H. J., *York, W.R., Holmfirth*
Barracks (Consolidated Fund) Committee, 1442
Licensing Laws—Death of W. Jennings, 1773
Parliament—Business of the House, 1523

WINTERBOTHAM, Mr. A. B., *Gloucester, Cirencester*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 830
Poor Law—Support of Pauper Parents, 1007

WOODALL, Mr. W., *Hanley*
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1780

Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown
Order for Select Committee *Feb* 26, 1315

WORKS, First Commissioner (*see* PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R.)

WORTLEY, Mr C. B. STUART (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Sheffield, Hallam*
Prisons, Articles made in, 1628

WRIGHT, Mr. H. S., *Nottingham, S.*
Law and Justice—Misappropriation of Trust Money, 1513

WYNDHAM, Mr. G., *Dover*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 482

YERBURGH, Mr. R. A., *Chester*
Ireland—Special Commission Report, Res. 1868

END OF VOLUME CCCXLI., AND FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1890.

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